Making Old Things New Again: The Northridge Psalter, with Antiphons Based on Lessons from the Revised Common Lectionary

Bryan Scott Page
Southern Methodist University, bspage@mail.smu.edu

Follow this and additional works at: https://scholar.smu.edu/theology_music_etds

Part of the Composition Commons, and the Liturgy and Worship Commons

Recommended Citation
https://scholar.smu.edu/theology_music_etds/13

This Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by the Perkins Thesis and Dissertations at SMU Scholar. It has been accepted for inclusion in Doctor of Pastoral Music Projects and Theses by an authorized administrator of SMU Scholar. For more information, please visit http://digitalrepository.smu.edu.
MAKING OLD THINGS NEW AGAIN

THE NORTHRIDGE PSALTER, WITH ANTIPHONS BASED ON LESSONS FROM THE REVISED COMMON LECTIONARY

Approved by:

Dr. Marcell Silva Steuernagel
Assistant Professor of Church Music
Director of the Master of Sacred Music Program
Director of the Doctor of Pastoral Music Program

Dr. C. Michael Hawn
University Distinguished Professor Emeritus of Church Music

Rev. Dr. John Thornburg
Second Reader

Marisu Fenton
Community Advisor, Northridge Presbyterian Church
MAKING OLD THINGS NEW AGAIN

THE NORTHRIDGE PSALTER, WITH ANTIPHONS BASED ON LESSONS FROM THE REVISED COMMON LECTIONARY

A Thesis Presented to the Graduate Faculty of the
Perkins School of Theology
Southern Methodist University
in
Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the degree of
Doctor of Pastoral Music
by

Bryan Page
B.M., Trumpet Performance and Composition, University of Montevallo
M.S.M., Westminster Choir College of Rider University

March 5, 2024
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This thesis is the result of much work by many people. I am grateful to my professors and advisors, Dr. C. Michael Hawn and Dr. Marcell Silva Steuernagel; my readers, Marisu Fenton and Rev. John Thornburg; my peer review group, Suzanne Bouvier-Page, Rev. Jessie Light-Wells, Zach Light-Wells, Darnell St. Romain, and Hannah St. Romain; my editor, Mischa Bouvier; my 11th hour layout hero, Darnell St. Romain; the 2020 DPM Cohort at SMU, David Anderson, Dr. Bryan Black, Michael Jordan, Alan Moser, Darnell St. Romain, and Darrell St. Romain; my pastor, Rev. Betsy Swetenburg; the Northridge Presbyterian Church staff, Worship Committee, and Chancel Choir; my initial advocates and supporters, Rob Raymond and Rev. Susan Sytsma-Bratt; and all my friends and family who have offered tremendous support, encouragement, feedback, and love over these past four years.
ABSTRACT

Responsive psalmody is one of the primary musical vehicles for presenting the Psalms in worship by choir and congregation. Existing responsive psalmody features congregational antiphons with texts derived directly from the psalms. Working with the Revised Common Lectionary, this thesis presents fifty newly written and composed antiphons with texts derived from the accompanying RCL lessons. The goal of this method is to emphasize prophetic connections between the Old Testament lesson and Gospel lesson via the antiphons.

This thesis also features a history of lectionary development, a detailed account of the creative process, rubrics for presenting the responsive psalmody in worship, musical-theological analysis, and psalm reflections.
Table of Contents

**ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS** ........................................................................................................ iv

**ABSTRACT** .......................................................................................................................... v

**LIST OF TABLES** ................................................................................................................. iv

**LIST OF FIGURES** ............................................................................................................... v

**DEDICATION** ........................................................................................................................ v

**INTRODUCTION** .................................................................................................................. 1
  - Methodology and Outline ...................................................................................................... 6
  - What Is God’s Word Saying to Us Today? ........................................................................... 8

**CHAPTER ONE** ...................................................................................................................... 11
  - A History of Lectionaries ................................................................................................... 15
  - The Psalms in Worship ...................................................................................................... 19
  - The Revised Common Lectionary ...................................................................................... 21
  - Psalms in Various Contexts ............................................................................................. 30

**CHAPTER TWO** ...................................................................................................................... 34
  - Introduction ....................................................................................................................... 34
  - The Creative Process Outlined ........................................................................................ 37
  - The Creative Process Brought to Fruition ....................................................................... 67

**CHAPTER THREE** ................................................................................................................. 70
  - Introduction to The Northridge Psalter ............................................................................ 70
  - Part One: Rubrics ............................................................................................................. 71
  - Part Two: Antiphons ......................................................................................................... 84
  - Part Three: Pointed Psalter ............................................................................................. 140
  - Antiphons in Various Contexts ...................................................................................... 281

**CHAPTER FOUR** ...................................................................................................................... 283
  - Introduction ....................................................................................................................... 283
  - Theological Analyses ....................................................................................................... 285
  - Musical Analyses ............................................................................................................ 293
  - Psalm Reflections ............................................................................................................ 305
  - Book One: Psalm 1–34 .................................................................................................... 308
  - Book Two: Psalms 42 & 43–72 ......................................................................................... 322
  - Book Three: Psalms 77–89 .............................................................................................. 328
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Book Four: Psalms 91–105</td>
<td>332</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Book Five: Psalms 107–150</td>
<td>336</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CHAPTER FIVE</strong></td>
<td>350</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>350</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feedback and Observation</td>
<td>352</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Influences, Path, and Purpose</td>
<td>355</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>APPENDIX</strong></td>
<td>361</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>REFERENCES</strong></td>
<td>413</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## LIST OF TABLES

Table 1.1 ......................................................................................................................... 24
Table 1.2 ......................................................................................................................... 26
Table 1.3 ......................................................................................................................... 27
Table 1.4 ......................................................................................................................... 27
Table 1.5 ......................................................................................................................... 28
Table 1.6 ......................................................................................................................... 29
Table 1.7 ......................................................................................................................... 29
Table 2.1 ......................................................................................................................... 38
Table 2.2 ......................................................................................................................... 41
Table 2.3 ......................................................................................................................... 43
Table 2.4 ......................................................................................................................... 44
Table 2.5 ......................................................................................................................... 47
Table 2.6 ......................................................................................................................... 56
Table 2.7 ......................................................................................................................... 58
Table 2.8 ......................................................................................................................... 59
Table 2.9 ......................................................................................................................... 60
Table 2.10 ...................................................................................................................... 60
Table 2.11 ...................................................................................................................... 61
Table 2.12 ...................................................................................................................... 66
Table 3.1 ......................................................................................................................... 71
Table 3.2 ......................................................................................................................... 72
Table 3.3 ......................................................................................................................... 74
Table 3.4 ......................................................................................................................... 75
Table 3.5 ......................................................................................................................... 77
Table 3.6 ......................................................................................................................... 78
Table 3.7 ......................................................................................................................... 79
Table 3.8 ......................................................................................................................... 80
Table 3.9 ......................................................................................................................... 81
Table 3.10 ..................................................................................................................... 83
Table 4.1 ......................................................................................................................... 285
Table 4.2 ......................................................................................................................... 286
Table 4.3 ......................................................................................................................... 288
Table 4.4 ......................................................................................................................... 289
Table 4.5 ......................................................................................................................... 290
Table 4.6 ......................................................................................................................... 291
Table 4.7 ......................................................................................................................... 291
Table 4.8 ......................................................................................................................... 292
LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1: Antiphon for Psalm 8, “The Holy Kiss of the Trinity...” .................................................. 5
Figure 2: Antiphon for Psalm 42 & 43, “Our feet are bound; our throats are dry...” .................... 50
Figure 3: Antiphon for Psalm 15, “The world glows with the glint of diamonds...” ..................... 51
Figure 4, A–H: The Northridge Psalter Psalm Tones ........................................................................ 55
Figure 5: Psalm 127:5 set to Psalm Tone 6 .......................................................................................... 63
Figure 6: Psalm 118:25 set to Psalm Tone 6 ....................................................................................... 64
Figure 7: Psalm 150:1–2 set to Psalm Tone 4 ..................................................................................... 65
Figure 8: Psalm Tones 1, 3, and 5 ..................................................................................................... 76
Figure 9: Psalm Tone 2 ..................................................................................................................... 77
Figure 10: Psalm Tone 4 .................................................................................................................. 78
Figure 11: Psalm Tone 6 ................................................................................................................... 80
Figure 12: Psalm Tone 7 (Tonus peregrinus) ................................................................................... 81
Figure 13: Psalm Tone 8 ................................................................................................................... 82
Figure 14: Accompaniment sample from Psalm 13, “The waters of grace...” ................................. 294
Figure 15: Accompaniment sample from Psalm 85, “The patient flow of water...” ....................... 294
Figure 16: Set {0, 2, 5, 8} at the end of Psalm 85, “The patient flow of water...” ....................... 295
Figure 17: Mirror writing in Psalm 19, “The heart and mind of God...” ........................................ 295
Figure 18: Three-part voice stacking in Psalm 24, “Will you eat at the feast...” ......................... 296
Figure 19: Sanctus section from Psalm 29, “How shall we be born again?” ............................. 298
Figure 20: Three textures in Psalm 42 & 43, “Our feet are bound, our throats are dry...” ....... 299
Figure 21: Antiphon opening, Psalm 126, “In a cold and barren land...” ................................... 300
Figure 22: Antiphon opening, Psalm 80, “When nations rise and fall...” ..................................... 302
Figure 23: Antiphon closing, Psalm 80, “When nations rise and fall...” ...................................... 302
Figure 24: Tresillo rhythms in Psalm 95, Suffering from thirst... .................................................. 303
Figure 25: Opening measures of Psalm 116, “Walk with us, talk with us...” ............................ 304
Figure 26: IN DULCI JUBILO quote, Psalm 150, “When the world demands...” .................... 305
DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to Suzanne: my wife, best friend, and most ardent supporter.
INTRODUCTION

“Listen! I am standing at the door, knocking; if you hear my voice and open the door, I will come in and eat with you, and you with me.

Revelation 3:20 (New Revised Standard Version Updated Edition)1

When Paul McCreesh and the Gabrieli Players released their 2003 recording of J. S. Bach’s (1685–1750) St Matthew Passion (1727), the album liner notes featured an interview between music critic and journalist Stephen Pettitt and conductor Paul McCreesh. Pettitt asked McCreesh, “Paul, you’ve brought yet another recording of the St Matthew Passion to the marketplace. Do we really need it?” McCreesh answered, “the history of the performance of any piece changes from generation to generation, and it’s important to document that.”2 McCreesh essentially tells Pettitt that it is important to keep making old things new again.

The act of making old things new again occurs in most houses of worship on a weekly basis. “Listen for what God’s Word is saying to us today.”3 A version of this familiar trope prepares congregations for daily scripture lessons as preachers begin their exegesis. God’s Word is unpacked, and when successfully accomplished, the preacher extends Scripture’s essence into our context, affecting lives and promoting transformation. The sermon is Spirit-filled, and new life is breathed into an ancient story. “What is God’s Word saying to us today? Listen and find out! The old shall be made new again!”

1 All biblical quotes in this thesis are from New Revised Standard Version Updated Edition (NRSVUE) unless noted otherwise.
2 Paul McCreesh, Bach St Matthew Passion, (Hamburg, Germany: Arkiv Produktion, 2003), liner notes.
There are different types of church leaders: pastors and preachers, worship planners, liturgists, pastoral musicians, lay leaders, as well as other staff and volunteer positions. Paul Westermeyer says that a pastoral musician “is called to lead the music of a Christian community. She or he does this by leading the people’s praise, prayer, proclamation, and story with God’s gift of music to the glory of God and the edification or sanctification of the neighbor.”\(^4\) Working together with pastors, pastoral musicians are called to magnify, support, and augment God’s Word, offering musical exegesis. This is a tall order—unpacking the Word of God for the people of God. Regardless of who is performing the work—pastor or pastoral musician—exegesis requires great study and planning.

For congregations using lectionary resources such as the Revised Common Lectionary (RCL) planning can be done in advance, and one fundamental resource for the pastoral musician is the Psalter.\(^5\) The Psalter is represented in the RCL for nearly every Lord’s Day and Feast Day. Psalms are a dependable resource for musicians and have been set to music over the centuries by countless composers. Psalms are the epitome of spiritual poetry, filled with parallelism, imagery, anaphora, hyperbole, and most importantly, raw humanity;\(^6\) they express feelings of orientation, disorientation, and new orientation;\(^7\) they are filled with contextual clues to ancient cultic and tribal life;\(^8\) and some of their words are ubiquitous beyond religious contexts.\(^9\) However, in their natural state, psalms are little ancient faith essays; dusty-covered diary entries; expressions of

\(^9\) Psalm 23 is undoubtedly the most well-known psalm, and alongside John 3:16, one of the most well-known scripture passages, with references to both appearing often in secular society.
joy, sadness, frustration, anger, complaint, and fear from a people and culture contextually removed from ours by countless generations. Therefore, a question arises: how do pastoral musicians breathe new life into these ancient words?

One answer lies in the RCL construction. On most Sundays and Feast Days in a three-year cycle, the RCL includes an Old Testament lesson, an Epistle reading, and a Gospel lesson, with a Psalm of the Day in response to the Old Testament lesson.\(^{10}\) The wisdom of the RCL is that selected scriptures are thematically linked, most specifically the Old Testament lesson and the Gospel lesson. For example, consider Trinity Sunday, Year A.\(^{11}\) With its theme *beginnings and endings*, the lessons (including the Psalm of the Day) are seen in Table I.1:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OLD TESTAMENT</th>
<th>Genesis 1:1–2, 4a</th>
<th>Creation story</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PSALM</td>
<td>Psalm 8</td>
<td><em>Hymn/creation psalm</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EPISTLE</td>
<td>2 Corinthians 13:11–13</td>
<td><em>Paul’s final greetings</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GOSPEL</td>
<td>Matthew 28:16–20</td>
<td><em>Jesus’ Great Commission</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table I.1

For worship leaders regularly crafting services, these links quickly become apparent; for congregants coming to receive the Word for an hour on Sunday mornings, these connections need to be unpacked and made clearer. Therefore, it is the prophetic calling of worship leaders—preachers, liturgists, pastoral musicians—to illuminate these thematic links, continually exposing Scripture as both instructional and the Living Word of God, making the old new again.

---

\(^{10}\) Not all biblical poetry is found in the Psalter. For example, during Advent, Years A, B, and C, the specified Psalm of the Day may be a canticle from Isaiah or Luke. During Eastertide, the Old Testament lesson is replaced with a lesson from Acts.\(^{11}\)

There are several ways to present the Psalms in worship. John Witvliet outlines options in his book *The Biblical Psalms in Christian Worship*, from non-musical, to partially musical, to fully musical. They include solo reading, choral reading, responsive or antiphonal reading, reading with musical refrain, chant, psalm tones with pointed text, Anglican chant, Gelineau Psalmody, plainchant, responsive psalmody, metrical psalmody (classic congregational hymn form), solo or choral anthems, and organ or instrumental settings.\(^{12}\)

This thesis offers poetic and musical resources connecting the daily lessons through responsive psalmody with newly written texts and newly composed music.\(^ {13}\) Many existing responsive psalmody resources derive antiphon texts from the psalms themselves. The responsive psalmody in this thesis is unique because the antiphon texts are newly created to illuminate shared themes between daily lessons. For example, the antiphon text created for Trinity Sunday, Year A, is, “The Holy Kiss of the Trinity breathed life into the world!”\(^ {14}\) Each word and phrase relate to one of the three daily lessons (Genesis: “breathed life into the world” – 2 Corinthians: “holy kiss” – Matthew: “Trinity”). Paired with newly composed and adapted psalm tones for the cantor, this set of responsive psalmody uses the various strengths of the entire gathered congregation to bring the daily lessons to life—music is explicitly written for congregation, choir, cantor, and accompanist, as well as additional instrumentalists. Figure 1.2 shows the antiphon (melody, harmony, and accompaniment) for Psalm 8 on Trinity Sunday, Year A.


\(^{13}\) Responsive psalmody is a musical form alternating between a chanted psalm and a sung response, or antiphon. 

When presented in worship, each responsive psalm functions as an anthem presented by the gathered congregation, giving the assembly an opportunity to breathe new life into God’s Word, leaving with an *aide-mémoire* for the daily lessons, a new entry into the Church’s Song—“He put a new song in my mouth, a song of praise to God!” (Ps. 40:3a)
Methodology and Outline

The methodology for this new responsive psalmody can be shown in two distinct parts: creation and presentation. The creation of the antiphons is solitary work, while presentation is done in community. The creation phase was in two parts: antiphon and psalm tone. It began with choosing specific psalms to include in the thesis after which came an in-depth study of the accompanying RCL lections for each psalm chosen. In most cases, writing the text was the first step—a synthetization of words, phrases, and themes found in the RCL—followed by composing the music. The music was formatted for readability by choir and accompanist.

Following the antiphon creation, a psalm tone was composed. Eventually, some psalm tones were discarded, and a total of seven were adopted for use with certain genres of psalms. With a diverse collection of psalm tones for use, a new pointing method was developed to be used with each tone. The pointing method was then applied to two different biblical translations and formatted for readability by cantor and accompanist.

Once each responsive psalm was complete, an opportunity to present them in community was sought, with two distinct communities chosen. The first was my current worshiping context, Northridge Presbyterian Church, the namesake of The Northridge Psalter. Second was a peer review group of musicians and theologians to offer solicited feedback on each responsive psalm, specifically the antiphons. Feedback was collected in two ways: through direct conversations with staff and members of Northridge Presbyterian Church; and through formal, targeted meetings with the peer review group. Feedback was collected, considered, and applied. The final products are contained in this thesis, presented in five chapters.

Chapter one offers a brief history of the development of the lectionary from Jewish Torah traditions through the current iteration of the RCL, discussing some psalm and scriptural
omissions and other psalm-based and inspired music and poetry. Much of chapter one relies on the detailed lectionary history by John Reumann, as well as a survey of works by Malcolm Guite, Richard Bruxvoort Colligan, Nick Cave, and Paul Simon.

Chapter two details the full creative process for the thesis: *lectio divina*, text writing and compositional process, peer review sessions, and editorial process. There is also a discussion of how responsive psalmody promotes *communitas* and liminality. Chapter two relies on the ideas and research of Victor Turner as well as current, popular pointing methods typically found in Anglican and Episcopal traditions.

The bulk of the thesis is chapter three, *The Northridge Psalter*: a collection of fifty newly written and composed responsive psalm settings. Part one is an introduction and primer outlining rubrics for a new pointing method. Part two is divided into two sections. Section one presents the antiphons: the complete musical score for the cantor, choir, and accompanist, organized with full accompaniment with both vocal melody and harmony at the top of the page, accompanied psalm tone at the bottom of the page. Section two is the pointed text in both NRSVUE and Common English Version (CEV) formatted with the accompanied psalm tone at the top of each page for the cantor and accompanist.

---

15 Only one hundred five of the one hundred fifty psalms are found in the RCL, some appearing multiple times. Five canticles are found in the RCL.
17 This collection, containing nearly half the psalms and all the canticles found in the RCL, will be volume one, with a second volume planned.
18 See Figure I.1.
19 The New Revised Standard Version (NRSV) is the standard translation used in many Reformed worship traditions and the recommended version for the Presbyterian Church (U. S. A.), the tradition in which I serve. Since its publication in 2022, I have chosen to use the NRSVUE in place of the NRSV moving forward.
20 The CEV offers “a fresh translation . . . using everyday words and phrases so that the Bible can be understandable by everyone.” For more information, see “CEV Bible,” Contemporary English Version, https://cev.bible (accessed July 15, 2021).
21 Psalm 23 uses King James Version (KJV) only. Psalm 136 uses NRSVUE only.
Chapter four is divided in two parts: a thesis analysis and psalm reflections. Part one offers two sections: theological analysis and musical analysis for twenty antiphons. In part two, psalm reflections are offered for each of the fifty psalms in the thesis. Selected reflections include hyperlinks directing readers to video presentations of the responsive psalms. Psalm reflections rely on the monumental work of Erhard S. Gerstenberger as well as research by Fred R. Anderson and Calvin Seerveld.

Chapter five is a conclusion offering notes on the effectiveness of the thesis including a project memoir, results from the peer group, and reactions from worshipers—the final step in the creative process. It also includes attributions to Benjamin Britten (1913–1976), Igor Stravinsky (1882–1971), D. H. Lawrence (1885–1930), and Ned Rorem (1923–2022).

Lastly, an appendix contains reproducible unison congregation parts for printed and digital worship aids. Though all antiphons in The Northridge Psalter are presented with vocal melody (and harmony, if applicable) and accompaniment in chapter three, selected settings have reproducible instrumental obligatos and percussion parts.

What Is God’s Word Saying to Us Today?

“Why do you make things?” As a composer, I have been asked this question countless times, particularly when setting well-known texts to music. I even asked this question of myself regarding this thesis: “Do we really need another set of responsive psalmody? Do not the 

Gelineau Psalter, Hal Hopson’s The People’s Psalter, and Fred Anderson’s Singing God’s

---

22 At the time of writing, our peer group had had one meeting, with others planned. The feedback was both challenging and edifying, and the group is tremendously gracious with their comments.
23 In setting texts such as Tomas à Kempis’ “Write your blessed name,” William Blake’s “The Lamb,” or Charles Wesley’s “Love divine, all loves excelling,” I have been asked, “What’s wrong with the setting(s) we have?”
Psalms would say that for a pastoral musician, composing new music for the Church Song is not just an activity, but a responsibility. And while he recognizes that not everyone will compose to the same level and output, he says that we must all do so “for the glory of God and the good of the neighbor precisely in our time and place.”

Speaking about his mid-twentieth century realizations of seventeenth-century English basso continuo songs, British composer Benjamin Britten said he “believed that there could be no ‘ultimate realisation’ and that each generation should make its own, composed in personal and immediate terms.” Britten was referring to a specific compositional project (breathing new life into a baroque harmonic notation system). However, his mandate is a general, underlying call to artists: keep making things, or more precisely, keep making old things new again.

When we ask ourselves “What is God’s Word saying to us today,” are we not at least obliged to try and answer? If art is truly a reflection of life, shouldn’t artists make new things every day? And whether we read from the NRSVUE or the CEV, the King James Version, or even The Message, we must recognize that biblical stories are from a context vastly different than our own. As worship leaders, we strive to breathe contextual life into these stories, searching their timeless essence so that they may speak to contemporary issues.

In his book Praying and Believing in Early Christianity, Maxwell E. Johnson discusses liturgical theology and the doctrine of lex orandi, lex credendi—“the law of praying establishes the law of believing”—and how belief systems are formed, both for individuals and in

---

27 Westermeyer, 32.
28 Westermeyer, 32.
community. Early in the text he says, “one can—or should be able to—read the theology, belief, and doctrines of any given church by means of what its liturgies pray, say, sing, and direct.”\textsuperscript{31} He goes on later to emphatically say, “Christians act morally or ethically because of what they believe, and what they believe is continually shaped by worship, by how they are formed by the words and acts of worship, by the divine encounter with the God of grace and love meditated in the liturgy via its spoken words, texts, acts, gestures, and sacramental signs.”\textsuperscript{32} Therefore, it is crucial that the responsive psalmody in this thesis represent a high theological standard, as their liturgical presence involves praying, saying (in the oration of the Psalm by the cantor), singing, and direction.

So, as readers peruse this collection, it is my intent that they find music and words that draw them into a deeper contemplation of Scripture and the faithful and prophetic work of the RCL. “What is God’s Word saying to us today?” When this question is asked during worship, I am confident that these responsive psalms will allow congregations to “sing and find out!” And when old things are made new again, God’s Word can be taken out into the world—into any context—refreshed and renewed by the presence of the Holy Spirit.

\textsuperscript{31} Maxwell E. Davis, \textit{Praying and Believing in Early Christianity: The Interplay between Christian Worship and Doctrine} (Collegeville, Minnesota: Liturgical Press, 2013), x.

\textsuperscript{32} Davis, 98.
CHAPTER ONE

When [Jesus] came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up, he went to the synagogue on the Sabbath day, as was his custom. He stood up to read, and the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was given to him. He unrolled the scroll and found the place where it was written: “The Spirit of the LORD is upon me, because he has anointed me to bring good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to set free those who are oppressed, to proclaim the year of the LORD’s favor.” And he rolled up the scroll, gave it back to the attendant, and sat down. The eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed on him. Then he began to say to them, “Today this scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing.” Luke 4:16–21

According to the Consultation on Common Texts (CCT) the creators of both the Common Lectionary (CL) and the Revised Common Lectionary (RCL), “A lectionary is a collection of readings or selection from the Scriptures, arranged and intended for proclamation during the worship of the People of God.”1 Furthermore, a lectionary could be a set of readings for a single Sunday, a weekend revival, a preaching season, a liturgical season, or a year or multi-year calendar. The RCL, offering three lessons and a Psalm of the Day for every Lord’s Day and Feast Day worship service in a three-year cycle, is the latest and most current in the development of lectionaries.2 From early worshiping Jewish communities to contemporary non-denominational churches, God’s Word is read aloud and proclaimed to those gathered. And just as no ordo is, in fact, ordo, eschewing a prescribed lectionary to formulate an independent scriptural progression is a lectionary.3

In his article, “A History of Lectionaries: From the Synagogue at Nazareth to Post-Vatican II,” John H. R. Reumann—the late pastor, professor, scholar, and author of New

---

2 For purpose of this thesis, specific mentions of lectionary resources refer to the RCL.
Testament commentaries—offers comprehensive insights on lectionary development from biblical times through the late twentieth century.\(^4\) According to Reumann, the purpose of a lectionary is “to set forth an orderly succession of passages which reflect the calendar and fit the public worship pattern of the group and which can be repeated periodically so as to cover scriptural content which is important to the community’s life.”\(^5\) Let us dissect this statement. The initial description of “an orderly succession of passages” does not specifically call for *lectio continua* (continuous reading) of the Bible, although it could; rather, it refers to scripture supporting a progressive or thematic story arc. This could be “semi-continuous,” that is to say reading in order while omitting some passages, or “eclogadic,” where selected readings (pericopes) are purposely assigned without prioritization of continuous order.\(^6\) For example, in the RCL, during the four Sundays of Advent, Year A, the Old Testament lessons are Isaiah 2:1–5, Isaiah 11:1–10, Isaiah 35:1–10, and Isaiah 7:10–16, respectively.\(^7\) This is not *lectio continua*, but eclogadic: from the Third to the Fourth Sunday of Advent, the lectionary reaches backwards from chapter thirty-five to chapter seven. The Gospel readings are similar, journeying through Matthew 24, 3, 11, and 1, respectively. These lessons are nonsequential; however, they are explicitly chosen to guide worshipers through Advent, toward the celebration of Christmas.

Following the definition of “an orderly succession of passages,” one must identify what “calendar,” “public worship pattern,” and “repeated periodically” mean in their own context before a lectionary is adopted or created. The RCL calendar is a three-year cycle (Years A, B, and C), comprised of Advent, Christmastide, Ordinary Time (Baptism of the Lord through

---

Transfiguration Sunday), Lent, Holy Week, Eastertide, Pentecost, and Ordinary Time (Trinity Sunday through Christ the King Sunday). Many Christian churches follow this calendar to some degree, at minimum recognizing Christmas and Easter, at maximum observing specific transition days and celebrations during liturgical seasons.

The final statement, “scriptural content which is important to the community’s life,” is Reumann’s most contextual and subjective clause, revealing the incapacity of the RCL or any adopted lectionary to sufficiently serve every community. In the RCL, certain passages are omitted. Apropos this thesis, of the Psalter’s one-hundred fifty psalms, only one-hundred five psalms (plus five canticles) are found in the RCL, some psalms appearing multiple times. This does not mean that worshiping communities using the RCL cannot reach outside its pericopic prescription and read other passages. And when they do, they recognize that the wisdom of the RCL is not comprehensive; that God’s Word speaks to individuals and communities in various ways; that the RCL is a tool, not a rule; and that a lectionary is not the Bible.

For this thesis, I respectfully add one clause to Reumann’s lectionary definition: “and to show prophetic connections between the Old Testament and the New Testament lessons.” There is wisdom in the lectionary, specifically the RCL, most notably seen in prophetic connections between Old Testament lessons and Gospel lessons. Take for example the Second Sunday of Advent, Year A. The Old Testament lesson from Isaiah 11:1–10 tells of a shoot from the stump of Jesse, and of a wise man who will be enigmatic in society, judging the poor with righteousness. The Psalm of the Day is Psalm 72:1–7, 18–19, prophesying the son of a king who

---

9 For example, Psalm 23 is used six times in the three-year cycle of the RCL: thrice in Year A, twice in Year B and once in Year C.
will judge the poor with justice. In the Epistle reading, Roman 15:4–13, the Apostle Paul quotes Isaiah 11:1. And in the Gospel lesson from Matthew 3:1–12, we hear John the Baptist preaching, preparing the way for the Lord, fulfilling the prophetic vision of Isaiah. These connections are not haphazard. On the contrary, the connections between the Old Testament lesson, the Psalm of the Day, and the Gospel lesson were specifically chosen to reinforce each other.¹¹

But these connections can only be made when more than one lesson, or pericope, is read. If only the Isaiah passage is used, it appears as unrequited prophecy. If only the Matthean passage is heard, how are the people to know that they are hearing prophetic fulfillment? If only the Romans passage is used, the people hear a prophetic quote from Isaiah with no background information. And if just the Psalm of the Day is sung or read responsively, only a plea for political benevolence is heard. Therefore, the wisdom of the RCL lies in the full presentation of its pericopic connections. When all lessons are read (and sung) aloud, prophecy and an ancient call for grace are heard, followed by reference to prophetic fulfillment. The promise of God is made manifest. Is not the purpose of Scripture then to be fulfilled?

In the Lukan epigraph above, the phrase “found the place”—*He unrolled the scroll and found the place where it was written*—in the original Greek is heuren. Contextually, heuren means to find the “prescribed passage marked in the scroll” from a contemporary lectionary that paired prophetic and Pentateuch readings.¹² When Jesus says, “Today this scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing,” we see a model for this prophetic lectionary; Jesus personifying the first Gospel reading.¹³

---

¹³ There is debate as to the validity of this argument, and to whether the words Jesus spoke—“Today this scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing”—were his commentary or words from a lectionary. Regardless of the debate, this passage presents a model of juxtaposing Old Testament prophecy with New Testament gospel.
A History of Lectionaries

Following Luke’s contextual account, we begin by discussing the history of Jewish torah. Reading Scripture aloud to the gathered community is central to Jewish worship, an inherited practice found in Deuteronomy 31:10–12, 2 Kings 22:8–13; 23:1–3, and Nehemiah 8.14 When God’s people are gathered, experiencing God’s sacramental Word is fundamental, originating from oral torah traditions where Scripture was spoken aloud in tandem with printed torah commenting on written law with contextual humanity. Lectionaries were being developed during biblical times, juxtaposing Pentateuch readings with prophetic readings, showing signs of an eclogadic practice. And while church leaders consciously sought prophetic connections, continuous and semi-continuous readings were still in effect.15

Ancient and medieval church worship practices—inspired by the synagogue model, along with “the new Gospel and Jesus’ Lordship, church needs, and emerging calendrical, dogmatic, and ethical factors”—made way for more developmental lectionary shaping.16 Examples from Justin Martyr (c.100–c.165) and Jerome (c.342/347–c.420) show pericope organization for Sunday worship and daily mass. Specifically, the fourth-century Apostolic Constitution established a five-lesson sequence of “reading of the law and the prophets, of our epistles and the Acts, as well as the Gospels.”17

---

15 There is dispute as to whether some New Testament books, particularly Mark and even Matthew, were written as lectionaries for worship services. The argument is that these books are organized according to the Jewish festal liturgical Year, particularly Pentecost, New Year, Tabernacles, Dedication, and Passover. Even John’s Gospel has been subject to discussion that it was written based on its organization around Jewish festivals. The validity of these arguments lies in the human tendency to modify rather than recreate. Thus, Jewish festivals, both festal and sabbatical, were models on which worship practices developed in the Christian church. For more discussion on this topic, see Reumann, “A History of Lectionaries,” 121–122.
Liturical calendar development mirrored lectionary development. Specifically Lenten preparation for Easter baptisms significantly shaped the continuous and semi-continuous Epistle reading in the lectionary curriculum. Commemoration of saints was another factor in lectionary development. Contextual and subjective considerations, such as agricultural growing seasons, historical events, and geographic location, also contributed to lectionary shaping. One important development in the liturgical calendar came in 1334 when Pope John XXII (1244–1334) designated the Sunday after Pentecost to be the Festival of the Holy Trinity, setting into motion the implementation of the largest portion of Ordinary Time—Trinity Sunday through Christ the King Sunday.18

The subsequent step in the evolution of lectionaries and corporate worship came during the Protestant Reformation. It was during this monumental sixteenth-century movement that saw three distinct institutional lectionary traditions develop, juxtaposed with individual and regional lectionary decisions, and in some cases the rejection of lectionaries. In 1570, the Council of Trent (1545–1563) established a fixed lectionary, the Missale Romanum, for the Church of Rome. The Church of England preserved the Gospel and Epistle readings, tending more toward lectio continua. Martin Luther (1483–1546) adopted established Western lections in the vernacular for preaching and reading, although he disagreed with Epistle choices. Outside of these three traditions, Ulrich Zwingli (1484–1531) practiced lectio continua and John Calvin (1509–1564) preferred one Gospel reading per Sunday, a practice adopted by John Knox (c.1514–1572) for the Church of Scotland. Other worshiping traditions such as “Free Churches” rejected lectionaries altogether.19

---

18 Christ the King Sunday was instituted in the Catholic Church in 1926 and moved to the Sunday before Advent in 1970.
Slight alterations during the next five centuries produced many lectionary iterations. But in the twentieth century, comprehensive change was on the way. “The Book of Common Prayer lectionary was revised in 1944, 1946, and . . . 1956. Lutherans in the U.S.A. and Canada who cooperated in the Service Book and Hymnal (1958) made a number of changes from the inherited lessons.”20 In 1896 the Eisenach Conference of German Evangelical Churches produced a revised lectionary, as did the Congregational-Christian Church in 1948, the Methodist Church in 1966, and the United Church of Christ in 1969.

In 1962, Pope John XXIII (1881–1963) called the Second Vatican Council to deliberate and enact radical reform in the Catholic Church. From this Second Vatican Council (Vatican II) came the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, or Sacrosanctum Concilium, establishing a new three-year Order of Readings that took effect November 30, 1969. This three-year cycle portions the Gospels into Matthew for Year A, Mark (augmented with John) for Year B, Luke for Year C, with John used each year during Eastertide. Gospel lessons were predominantly semi-continuous, as were Epistle lections, but Old Testament readings were chosen to support the Gospel lesson for the day, either through reinforcement, contrast, or by providing background context.21 The Epistles had their own semi-continuous sequence and were not directly supportive of the Gospel. Therefore, the 1969 lectionary lesson construction was three-fold: Old Testament, Epistle, and Gospel.

Protestants adopted this ordo with modifications, and in 1974 the Consultation on Church Union (COCU) published the COCU Lectionary.22 In 1983 the Consultation on Common Texts

---

21 As discussed earlier, this practice mirrors the three types of parallelism found in Hebrew poetry: synonymous, antithetical, and synthetic.
22 In the ecumenical spirit of World Council of Churches (WCC), and in response to the Second Vatican Council, the COCU was comprised of the Protestant Episcopal Church, The Methodist Church, the United Church of Christ, and the United Presbyterian Church in the United States of American (UPCUSA).
(CCT) published the Common Lectionary (CL), which included three pericopes for each Lord’s Day and feast day worship: Old Testament, Epistle, and Gospel. The CL was intended as experimental, and after six years (two three-year cycles) the CCT collected and reviewed feedback. There were five distinct categories of critique offered: “a) the use of Scripture; b) the place of women in the lectionary; c) problems of the common calendar; d) the need for a cycle of first readings more directly linked to the gospel of the day in the Sundays after Pentecost; and e) sensitivity to the way some Scripture texts are heard by Christian congregations today.” One recurring comment pertaining to use of Scripture was the need for a psalm (or canticle) to be chosen to follow the first (Old Testament) reading to reinforce the nature of the liturgical day or character of the scriptural theme. Considering all areas of feedback, the CCT published the Revised Common Lectionary (RCL) in 1992. This resource is available in both online and print forms, and is constantly being revised, updated, and edited. The RCL therefore is patterned after the Roman Catholic Church’s three-year cycle Lectionary for Mass from 1969 with its use of three reading (Old Testament, Epistle, Gospel) and a responsive Psalm of the Day.

The history of the lectionary is the history of corporate worship. Wherever God’s people are gathered, they long to hear God’s Word, and leaders must decide what to read. (“Listen for what God’s Word is saying to us today.”) Reumann reminds us that the purpose of the lectionary is “to set forth an orderly succession of passages which reflect the calendar and fit the public worship pattern of the group and which can be repeated periodically so as to cover scriptural content which is important to the community’s life.” To this, I add: “and to show prophetic

---


connections between the Old Testament and the New Testament.” There is wisdom in seeking guidance, and the wisdom of the RCL is the latest prophetic iteration of the lectionary.

The Psalms in Worship

There is a long tradition of psalms being used in worship, and therefore their prominence in the second iteration of the RCL is apropos. Lectionaries were primarily used for corporate Lord’s Day and Feast Day worship, and rubrics for daily readings, personal devotionals, and prayer services developed simultaneously. From their presence in the canonical offices in monastic traditions, to Anglican Morning and Evening Prayer, to their musical significance in Calvinistic and Lutheran worship, the psalms took prominence in shaping these practices. Pre-Reformation, psalm usage in monastic practices informed the developing cathedral traditions, where psalms were sung responsively by choir and congregation, eventually by divided and multiple choirs.

During the Reformation, several approaches to presenting psalms during worship were established, mostly informed by the reformers’ differing views on what was known in the fourth century as the “new consensus.”26 The question the new consensus raised persists today: are the psalms words of humankind to God, or words of God to humankind? John Calvin fell on the side of the former, insisting that the psalms were instructive, teaching us “how to pray, praise God and conduct our lives.”27 From this belief, psalms were given significant standing in Calvinistic worship, promoting full congregational psalm-singing in the vernacular. Louis Bourgeois (c.1510–1559) enabled the development of metrical psalms to sing en masse thanks to his work on the 1551 edition of The Genevan Psalter. Martin Luther had a different perspective, viewing

---

27 Wallace, Words to God, Word from God, 10, quoting John Calvin.
the psalms as prophetic texts foretelling the life of Christ. They “were not only words for the 
prayers of the faithful, but were also to be understood as part of the total prophetic witness in 
Scripture, as God’s word to the people.”

While these differing views are not mutually 
exclusive, and many theologians and religious thinkers hold both views in tandem, the question 
persists: are the psalms words of humankind to God, or words of God to humankind?

In the RCL, psalms are selected either for their prophetic properties or their capacity to 
support the accompanying lectionary readings by drawing prophetic connections. However, 
psalms are not officially considered readings: “The psalm is a congregational response and a 
meditation on the first reading, and is not intended as another reading.” Therefore, we are left 
with a threefold-lesson paradigm (Old Testament, Epistle, Gospel) and a congregational response 
(Psalm of the Day), the wisdom of the RCL encouraging “churches to recover the practice of 
sung psalmody on a weekly basis.”

For example, consider the Second Sunday in Lent, Year A. The Old Testament lesson is Genesis 12:1–4a: God tells Abram to leave his country, promising to make him a father of many nations. The Epistle lesson is Romans 4:1–5, 13–17, a reflection on the Genesis lesson. The Gospel lesson is John 3:1–17: Jesus and Nicodemus discuss being born again. The Psalm of the Day is Psalm 121: the psalmist’s eyes fixed on the mountain (ascent to the temple/heaven), trusting God’s provisions. While this psalm is not prophetic, its 

essence reflects on and supports the accompanying lectionary lessons, recognizing “God’s
presence and protection for all journeys.” And since Psalm 121 is well-known, there are multiple musical settings to choose from when singing this psalm in worship.

There certainly are prophetic psalms, such as Psalm 22 and Psalm 118, finding fulfillment toward the end of Jesus’ life. But what of the multitude of psalms that do not prophesy but tell stories of the psalmist and their contemporaries? What of Psalm 8, the great creation psalm; or Psalms 42 & 43 (considered one large work), oscillating between lament and praise; or Psalm 100, Jubilate Deo, the great hymn? What of the lament psalms where the psalmist is surrounded by enemies, thrown into pits, laughed at, scorned, and mocked? While these and many other psalms hold prominence as “heart psalms” for individuals and communities, they are more like little ancient faith essays rather than prophecies. They teach us about the psalmists, their communities, and cultures—they are reflections on humankind in community with God. They show great emotional range: awe, thanksgiving, sorrow, uncertainty, joy, anger, trust. As Walter Brueggemann tells us, they show signs of orientation, disorientation, and new orientation. They bind together all humanity at the foot of the cross as people who need God’s plan for salvation, unable to save ourselves.

The Revised Common Lectionary

As mentioned earlier, a lectionary is not the Bible. It is a resource intended to guide pastors, pastoral musicians, lay leaders, and congregations through the Bible. This must be stated outright because of scriptural omissions in the RCL. Scripture teaches us, from both the Old Testament (“You must neither add anything to what I command you nor take away anything from it”—Deut

---


4:2a) and the New Testament (“if anyone adds to [the prophecy of this book], God will add to that person the plagues described in this book; if anyone takes away the words of the book of this prophecy, God will take away that person’s share in the tree of life and in the holy city, which are described in this book.” – Rev 22:18b–19) to neither add to nor take away from the Bible. And while the contextual application of these passages can be debated, the RCL (or any lectionary for that matter) does not claim to be the Holy Word of God; rather, a tool to guide communities and its leaders through patterns of worship—daily, seasonally, yearly. Other tools for guiding communities outside of corporate worship contexts are Church School and Confirmation curriculum as well as private and small group devotional guides. The RCL offers private devotional guides called daily readings to “expand the range of biblical reading in worship and personal devotion by providing daily citations for the full three-year cycle of the [RCL]. These readings complement the Sunday and festival readings: Thursday through Saturday readings help prepare the reader for the Sunday ahead; Monday through Wednesday readings help the reader reflect on and digest what they heard in worship.”

For example, in the RCL, the Creation Story is truncated. Genesis 1:1–2; 4a is read on Trinity Sunday, Year A and at the Easter Vigil, Years A, B, and C.35 Genesis 1:1–5 is read on The Baptism of the Lord, Year B.36 While significant portions of the Creation Story are omitted, the epitome of the story is told on significant dates in the lectionary calendar. The remainder of the Creation Story is found in daily readings.

Another omission from the RCL (in both corporate worship and daily reading) is 2 Samuel 13, the story of the rape of Tamar. This story is situated in a multi-chapter narrative about David: the story of David and Bathsheba (2 Sam 11–12), told on the Tenth and Eleventh Sundays after Pentecost, Year B; and the story of Absalom’s death (2 Sam 18), told on the Twelfth Sunday after Pentecost, Year B. And while Absalom’s death is found in the unfolding of Tamar’s story and would support the prophetic fulfillment of generational sin (Exod 20:5), it is understandable that this part of the story be excluded from reading in corporate worship for its sensitive and taboo subject matter.\(^{37}\)

One significant Gospel omission is the beginning of the New Testament, the Genealogy of Jesus (Matt 1:1–17). While this may seem an obvious passage to omit from the lectionary—a congregation’s lack of patience to hear preachers recite the names of Jesus’ family tree—it is not included in the daily readings either. And while perfunctory, Matthew 1:1–17 is an ancestral cord connecting the Old and New Testaments, drawing a throughline from Abraham to Jesus.

Mentioned earlier, only one-hundred five of the one-hundred fifty psalms (plus five canticles) are used in the RCL; however, in the daily readings, all but Psalm 136 is used.\(^{38}\) The omission of forty-five psalms, almost one third of the Psalter, is significant, with some only presented in portion.\(^{39}\) Before discussing omissions, let us first categorize the psalms. While there are differing views on psalm categorization, this thesis will reference two systems: Brueggemann’s orientation / disorientation / new orientation paradigm (describing voice and perspective of the psalmists), and Roger E. Van Harn and Brent A. Strawn’s eight psalm types (describing purpose and intent of the psalm). According to Van Harn and Strawn, there are eight

\(^{37}\) A conversation with Rev. Betsy Lyles Swetenburg, where she mentioned the omission of this story.

\(^{38}\) Psalm 136 is absent from the daily readings, purportedly due to its responsive design, as daily readings are meant for private devotion, and therefore there is no option for a responsive reading.

\(^{39}\) For example, read during Ordinary Season, Year C, Psalm 5:1–8 is used, omitting 9–12.
major types of psalms: wisdom, royal, lament (individual and community), song of thanksgiving (individual and community), song of trust, hymn, storytelling, and liturgy.⁴⁰ They also categorize some psalms as mixed, holding properties of multiple types. Table 1.1 shows these types of psalms, how many of each type are in the entire Psalter, and how many are in the RCL. When discussing omissions, it is important to note representation of different psalm types in the RCL. For example, the bulk of the psalms are laments (sixty), both individual (forty-five) and community (fifteen). It is understandable that more laments are omitted than storytelling psalms (five) or community songs of thanksgiving (five).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TYPE OF PSALM</th>
<th>NUMBER IN PSALTER</th>
<th>NUMBER IN RCL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wisdom (Torah)</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Royal</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual Lament</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Lament</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual Song of Thanksgiving</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Song of Thanksgiving</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Song of Trust</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hymn</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Storytelling</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liturgy</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1.1

⁴⁰ Van Harn and Strawn, *Psalms for Preaching and Worship*, xxv–xxix. Their categorization does not include creation psalms, a very popular type of psalm, but instead puts them into the category of “hymn.”
Apropos the consideration of the story of David, Bathsheba, and Absalom, the first omission is Psalm 3, with its superscription “written by David when he was running from his son Absalom.” Other early omissions include Psalms 6, 7, 10–12, and 18. Psalm 21, a royal psalm, may have been omitted because of its similarity to its neighbor, Psalm 20, another royal psalm. Poetically speaking, the omission of Psalm 28 is striking: the imagery of “the pit,” the hymnic “The LORD is my strength and my shield,” and the alternation between personal and community advocacion. However, as an individual lament, its omission is understandable.

Other omissions include Psalms 35, 38, 39, 44, 53, and 55–61. The audacity of Psalm 64 (“But God will shoot his arrow at them; they will be wounded suddenly. / Because of their tongue he will bring them to ruin; all who see them will shake with horror.”) might be cause for its omission. Psalms 73–76 are omitted, as are Psalms 83, 87, and 88. Psalm 94’s opening imprecation “O LORD, you God of vengeance, you God of vengeance, shine forth!” along with the accusation that the evildoers “crush your people, . . . kill the widow and the stranger; they murder the orphan,” and the prediction that God will “repay them for their iniquity and wipe them out for their wickedness; the LORD our God will wipe them out” could have been contributing factors to its omission. Both discussed omissions are laments: Psalms 64 (individual) and 94 (community).

Psalms 101 and 102 are omitted, along with Psalms 108–110. Psalm 115, one of the eight psalms of liturgy, is omitted as well. Psalms 117, 129, and 134 are omitted. Psalm 135, a storytelling psalm, is also omitted, its structure like a liturgy, mentioning kings that God has struck down (Sihon and Og) and calling for individual families (houses of Israel, Aaron, and Levi) to “bless the LORD.” Psalms 140–142 and Psalm 145 are also omitted.

---

41 Five of the eight psalms of liturgy are represented in the RCL.
The Bible is replete with poetry. And while the Psalter is the Bible’s largest centralized collection of psalms (songs, hymns, prayers, and poems), poetry is not confined to the Psalter. Arguably the most distinctive feature of the Psalms is parallelism, a popular Hebrew poetic technique employed in every psalm, practically in every verse. C. S. Lewis (1898–1963) touted parallelism as “one [poetic technique] that survives in translation.”42 There are three types of parallelism: synonymous, antithetical, and synthetic.43 Psalms are constructed in lines (verses) containing either two (bicola) or three statements (tricola). It is the relationship between the initial cola and the second or third cola where parallelism occurs.

Synonymous parallelism is the most common and easiest to identify, occurring when two similar statements are coupled to reinforce each other. Table 1.2 demonstrates synonymous parallelism in Psalm 19:1, “The heavens are telling the glory of God; and the firmament proclaims his handiwork.”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>INITIAL STATEMENT</th>
<th>SYNONYMOUS PARALLELISM</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The heavens</td>
<td>the firmament</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>are telling</td>
<td>proclaims</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the glory of God</td>
<td>his handiwork</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1.2

In this example, similarities are used to strengthen the statements. With synonymous parallelism, the psalmist employs economy of material via language layering, much like using a thesaurus.

---

Antithetical parallelism is the opposite: two dissimilar statements coupled together providing contrast. Table 1.3 shows antithetical parallelism in Psalm 34:10, “The young lions suffer want and hunger, but those who seek the LORD lack no good thing.”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>INITIAL STATEMENT</th>
<th>ANTITHETICAL PARALLELISM</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The young lions</td>
<td>those who seek the LORD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>suffer want and hunger</td>
<td>lack no good thing</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1.3

Here the psalmist presents two contrasting examples, further strengthening both. One cannot help but want to “seek the LORD” and “lack no good thing” when the option is to “suffer want and hunger.” By using contrast, the psalmist bolsters their message.

Finally, synthetic parallelism expounds on a statement rather than restating it. Table 1.4 show an example found in Psalm 23:4, “Even though I walk through the darkest valley, I fear not evil; for you are with me; your rod and your staff—they comfort me.” Here, there is no restatement; rather, a tricola with an initial statement and two statements of supportive material:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>INITIAL STATEMENT</th>
<th>SYNTHETIC PARALLELISM</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Even though I walk through the darkest valley, I fear not evil</td>
<td>for you are with me</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>your rod and your staff—they comfort me</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1.4
In this famous passage, the sole disorientation verse of Psalm 23, the psalmist offers two reasons to “fear no evil”: “for you are with me” and “your rod and your staff—they comfort me.” Therefore, the synthetic parallelism in Psalm 23:4 supplies a litany of reasons not to fear evil.

Poetry is found throughout Scripture in the forms of hymns, canticles, and sermons, in both the Old and New Testament: Song of Moses (Ex 15:1–18), Song of Miriam (Ex 15:21), Song of Hannah (1 Sam 2:1–10), Song of Mary (Luke 1:46–55), Song of Simeon (Luke 2:29–32), The Christ Hymn (Phil 2:6–11), and The Beatitudes (Matt 5:3–12). In each example, parallelism is employed. Table 1.5 shows parallelism in the Song of Moses, (Exod 15:4):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>INITIAL STATEMENT</th>
<th>SYNONYMOUS PARALLEISM</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pharoah’s chariots and his army</td>
<td>his elite officers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>he cast into the sea</td>
<td>were sunk in the Red Sea</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1.5

Here, we see the synonymous parallelism add specificity to the statement: “chariots and his army” become “elite officers,” and “the sea” becomes “the Red Sea.” Table 1.6 demonstrates parallelism in the Song of Mary, Magnificat, (Luke 1:52–53):

44 While the Beatitudes which open the Sermon on the Mount not regularly mentioned as Biblical poetry, they employ parallelism and poetic language, and have been set to music by several composers including César Franck (1822–1890), Albert Hay Malotte (1895–1964), and Arvo Pärt (born 1935).
INITIAL STATEMENT | ANTITHETICAL PARALLELISM
---|---
He has brought down the powerful from their throne and lifted up the lowly
he has filled the hungry with good things and sent the rich away empty

Table 1.6

In this example from the *Magnificat*, we see justice enacted: the powerful are “brought down” and the lowly are “lifted up.” The hungry are “filled . . . with good things” while the rich are “sent . . . away empty.” Table 1.7 reveals the parallelism litany in the Christ Hymn, (Phil 2:9).

| INITIAL STATEMENT | SYNTHETIC PARALLELISM |
---|---|
Therefore God exalted him even more highly and gave him the name
that is above every other name

Table 1.7

In the Christ Hymn is a litany of what God did for Christ: God “exalted him,” “gave him a name,” but not only a name: one “that is above every other name.” This synthetic parallelism leaves no doubt that Christ is the beloved Son of God.

In these three examples, each type of parallelism is employed: synonymous, antithetical, and synthetic. Parallelism was a common expressive tool for those who spoke, sang, or transcribed these words. As mentioned earlier, C. S. Lewis believed parallelism to be ubiquitous, the one poetic technique surviving translation. Therefore, parallelism is a technique also surviving transcription, the words verbatim secondary to the essential message. Many sources are available of metrical psalmody (which can be sung to new or existing hymn tunes), psalm
paraphrases, and responsive psalmody. Certain mainline denominational hymnals include Psalters or large selections of psalms set to music.

**Psalms in Various Contexts**

In *David’s Crown: Sounding the Psalms*, English poet, musician, Anglican priest, and academic Malcolm Guite uses modern language and the poetic form corona (a series of poems where the last line of each poem becomes the first line of the next poem) to write sonnet responses to the Myles Coverdale (1488–1569) psalm translations. As poetic responses and not translations, Guite does not provide a new reading of each psalm, *cola* for *cola*, but leans into the essence of each psalm by adopting the inherent imagery. For example, in Psalm 23, Guite speaks of the Shepherd (specifically calling the name of Christ) guiding us from life into death, and beyond death into life eternal. These poetic responses paint a new prophetic picture of the psalm, using familiar phrases to retool and reshape the psalm, preserving its essential qualities.

On his website, Richard Bruxvoort Colligan is described as “a freelance psalmist serving the wider, ever-evolving church.” His hymn “God, Be the Love to Search and Keep Me” (text and tune by Colligan) is found in both *Glory to God* and *Voices Together*. His compositional work-in-progress is called *Psalm Immersion*, and his compositions are available to purchase

---


through his website. Colligan uses language and character of the psalms as a springboard for new psalmic texts. For example, in his setting of Psalm 8, he alludes to the psalm’s creative language while crafting a new, truncated version: “If we all belong to God, how do we live? / Looking up at the night sky / and the work of your fingers / it’s amazing that you are mindful of us . . . It’s a wonder to have life / in its splendor and glory / with the suffering of God in our midst . . . Walking here in this small world / with our human companions / We’re commissioned to take care of the earth.” Some of the text is repeated within verses, and the text “If we all belong to God / how do we live?” is the refrain. Colligan’s music is accessible to a wide audience and his compositions offer flexibility of instrumentation (voices, guitar, keyboard, bass, percussion), making them adaptable to many contexts. Currently, Colligan has completed one hundred thirteen psalm settings.

Beyond the sacred worship context, psalms hold a prominent place in secular society. Two contemporary artists used the word “Psalms” in recently released albums: Seven Psalms by Nick Cave and Seven Psalms by Paul Simon, both artists purposely using the biblically ubiquitous number “Seven” in their albums’ titles. Cave’s endeavor, in collaboration with long-time musical partner Warren Ellis, is a spoken word album accompanied by ambient music. The album is twenty-four minutes long and, irrespective of its title, contains eight songs, the final song a twelve-minute instrumental-only track. Cave’s lyrics are filled with words echoing the language and essence of the Psalter itself, the album containing such titles as “Have Mercy on Me,” “I Have Trembled My Way Deep,” and “Splendor, Glorious Splendor.”

Simon’s offering is quite different, a proverbial period at the end of a long musical career. His Seven Psalms is presented as one continuous track with a recurring refrain resembling

---

rondo form. On the album, Simon collaborates with his wife Edie Brickell, trumpeter Wynton Marsalis, and choral ensemble Voces8. Titles such as “The Lord,” “Your Forgiveness,” and “The Sacred Harp” are filled with lyrics that could have been drawn directly from the Psalter.

Both artists address God throughout their albums, and both respond to and comment on events in their lives: Cave to both sweet and harsh childhood memories and Simon to the current state of a post-pandemic world (COVID-19) and the twilight of his career. These artists are doing what psalmists did in their day: responding to God and God’s presence in (and perceived absence from) their lives. The psalmists were simultaneously angry and grateful; sad and hopeful. Cave and Simon display similar dichotomous emotions from track to track, song to song, often within a single song.

When we listen for what God’s Word is saying to us today, we see contemporary examples from both the sacred and secular world revealing widespread appeal and familiarity of the psalms. Their presence in mainline hymnals shows the successful mission of the CCT for “churches to recover the practice of sung psalmody on a weekly basis.” Malcolm Guite’s collection, aptly presented as a corona, reveals the cyclical nature of a lifetime spent studying and loving the psalms. His offering provides a continuation of the psalmic tradition: responding to a response of God’s presence in the world. Richard Bruxvoort Colligan identifies as a psalmist, his output both embracing and challenging traditional psalm texts, adapting them for use in multiple contexts. Nick Cave calls his spoken-word devotions “psalms” and Paul Simon calls his lifetime reflections “psalms.”

As Children of God, we respond to God’s presence in our lives in a myriad of ways. This thesis, particularly the psalm antiphons, is a response to God’s presence in my life through

\[51\] “Consultation on Common Texts,” 6.
lectionary reflections. By engaging with God’s Word through the lectionary’s pericopic lens, the psalm antiphons draw us closer to prophetic and salvific themes in Christ. And when sung by the gathered congregation, the communal response binds us closer together in recognition that God is always present in our lives, whether it is perceived or not.
CHAPTER TWO

*The law of the Lord is perfect,*
   *reviving the soul;*
*t
dece*ees of the Lord are sure,
   *making wise the simple;*
the precepts of the Lord are right,
   *rejoicing the heart;*
the commandment of the Lord is clear,
   *enlightening the eyes;*
the fear of the Lord is pure,
   *enduring forever;*
the ordinances of the Lord are true
   *and righteousness altogether.*
More to be desired are they than gold,
   *even much fine gold;*
sweeter also than honey
   *and drippings of the honeycomb.*

*Psalm 19:7–10*

Introduction

When one speaks of “The Creative Process,” it can be said and heard with a capitalized article “The,” denoting authoritarianism: One creative process to serve all creative endeavors. I will not present my creative process in this manner. Rather, it will be completed in a more egalitarian manner: “The creative process of this thesis.” With a well-honed creative process for music composition—variations notwithstanding—this thesis represents a much broader endeavor than previously undertaken in my past work, the scope of which includes creating poetry to be set to music, a rigorous academic research portion, and documenting the creative process. However, I believe that the merit of any creative process includes two basic steps: identify a problem and comprehensively address the problem. There may be a final concrete solution, but this is not the goal: the goal is to address the problem in a manner satisfactory to the addressee. And problems vary in degree of gravitas, from an utter lack of represented voices in a particular artistic arena to what Ned Rorem identified as his creative impetus: “Why do I write music? Because I want to
hear it—it’s that simple. . . I compose from necessity, and no one else is making what I need.”¹

Whatever the problem, the artist is driven to address said problem using their artistic voice and skill. And while results may satisfy the individual, it can lead to more work for others to address the problem from another context or perspective, driving the engine for perpetual creativity.

A distinctive take on the creative process reflects an examination of Psalm 19 by C. S. Lewis, specifically verses 9–10 (KJV). Of the proclamation that God’s laws are “sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb,” Lewis says,

This was to me at first very mysterious. ‘Thou shalt not steal, thou shalt not commit adultery’ –I can understand that a man can, and must, respect these ‘statutes,’ and try to obey them, and assent to them in his heart. But it is very hard to find how they could be, so to speak, delicious, how they exhilarate.²

He goes on later to say,

A fine Christian and a great scholar to whom I once put this question said he thought that the poets were referring to the satisfaction men felt in knowing they had obeyed the Law; in other words, to the ‘pleasures of a good conscience’. . . when he said he ‘delighted in the Law’ [it] was very like what one of us would mean if he said that somebody ‘loved’ history, or physics, or archaeology.³

Lewis continues to speak about the dangers of loving the Law over loving the person; however, I will stop here and discuss how these thoughts relate to the creative process. The entire creative

---


³ Lewis, 65–66.
process outlined in this chapter is admittedly laborious. A great deal of work goes into creating one responsive psalm, much less fifty. However, while loving God and God’s people, I also love the art of composition: the study of harmony, melody, and rhythm; analysis; history; structure and form. All these pursuits delight me—“more to be desired are they than gold.” There would be no creative process were there not joy found in the process of creating, editing, and collecting feedback. Therefore, a kinship to Lewis’ consideration of the Psalmist’s delight in the Law and my delight in the creative process exists, combined with Rorem’s admission: “I want to hear it.”

Before discussing the creative process, however, the problem must be identified. In the context of the worshiping communities using the lectionary, specifically the RCL, four biblical lessons are available to choose from on a given Lord’s Sunday service: Old Testament, Psalm, Epistle, Gospel. The primary choice is the Gospel lesson, relating directly to Jesus’ life, the principal focus in Christian worship. Second is the Old Testament lesson, its reading often proceeding the Gospel. And while Epistles are often ordered as semicontinuous throughout the lectionary, and not always directly linked to the other two lessons, what remains is the Psalm. As noted in chapter one, the Psalm of the Day first officially appeared in the 1992 RCL as a response to the Old Testament lesson and is intended to be presented in a musical fashion: Gregorian chant, hymn, choral anthem, responsive psalm, or Anglican chant. Whichever vehicle is used for its presentation, it is commonly recognized that the Psalm of the Day is to be sung.

---

4 As discussed in chapter one, according to the RCL, the Psalm of the Day is not considered a lesson, but a congregational response.
The Creative Process Outlined

It was this recognition that prompted the original thesis idea. One summer Sunday in 2017, I was searching for a responsive setting for Psalm 14 and recognized that, given the choices available, the psalm would function only as a stand-alone piece of music, disconnected from the other lessons. This was made more evident by the psalm’s placement between the Old Testament and Gospel lessons. There seemed to be a missed prophetic opportunity, specifically with the responsive antiphon. Available responsive antiphon texts were drawn directly from the psalm itself, thereby reinforcing its insular nature. If psalms were written in response to God’s presence in the psalmists’ lives, did they not have prophetic qualities? Or at least comment on the plight of humanity? At most they foreshadowed Christ’s passion and death, at least identifying common human responses to God: thanksgiving, praise, lament, anger, fear. Therefore, the problem was apparent: Were there resources linking the Old Testament and Gospel lessons via the Psalm of the Day? And if not, how could this problem be solved?

I set out to create solutions in the form of newly composed responsive psalmody: a newly written and composed antiphon and a newly composed psalm tone. In the tradition of responsive psalmody, the antiphon would be sung by the gathered community while a cantor chanted the psalm. Over time, a creative process developed, shown in Table 2.1:

| 1) | Identify liturgical days and/or specific psalms. |
| 2) | Perform *lectio divina*, identify common themes in Old Testament and Gospel lessons. |
| 3) | Create a short poem emphasizing these themes. |
| 4) | Set the poem to music. |
| 5) | Prepare the psalm for cantoring with a new pointing system. |
6) Introduce draft material to a peer group for feedback, making edits if/when necessary.

7) Introduce the final product to a worshiping community.

Table 2.1

Setting parameters and establishing constants allows for greater freedom throughout the creative process. When structural decisions are predetermined, it leaves room to spend time on more detailed variables. Thus, the creative process flows freely through this best practice, unencumbered by the need to reinvent the wheel for each new endeavor.\(^5\)

While reflective of a wide range of human emotions, psalms were written before the time of “God with us.” Therefore, Christology found in the psalms is prophetic, pointing toward a Messianic promise. The antiphon’s purpose in these responsive psalms is linking the Old Testament and the Gospel readings, rather than the traditional one: responding to the psalm. Therefore, in their present form, the antiphon’s potential efficacy is maximized by magnifying prophetic connections. Every effort in this thesis is two-fold: 1) present the psalm in a simple, clear, and efficient way, and 2) engage the full gathered community in the work of prophetic exegesis.

On October 9, 2021, unranked Texas A&M’s football team defeated number one University of Alabama by a score of 41 to 38 in front of a record 106,733 home crowd. With the end of the game in sight, the Texas A&M student section began singing a school song, cajoling the entire audience to join, uniting the fans in a communal celebration of an improbable victory.\(^6\)


\(^6\) My son and I attended this game and were rooting for Alabama.
Victor Turner would describe this experience as *communitas*: a gathered community losing their individual, multi-faceted identities to adopt a collective, singular identity as fans, ultimately celebrating the victory of those they came to cheer on—the football team. In the same article, Turner describes another phenomenon often accompanying and facilitating *communitas*—*liminality*. Liminality is a transitional experience marked by crossing a time threshold, during which identity is temporarily lost or suspended and transformation may occur. Turner says that “Liminal entities are neither here nor there; they are betwixt and between the positions assigned and arrayed by law, custom, convention, and ceremonial.” At the football game, fans entered a liminal state during the euphoria of an unexpected win, spontaneously uniting in celebration as passive participants in a song of victory.

This reflects the theological dichotomy of *Chronos* (human time) and *Kairos* (God time). *Chronos* is the human perception of time experienced most frequently: driving, grocery shopping, going to work—generally going about daily life. When we experience time governed by the clock, we experience *Chronos*. Conversely, *Kairos* is how theologians speak of time relative to God,biblically rooted in 2 Peter 3:8—“But do not ignore this one fact, beloved, that with the Lord a day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like one day.” Through Peter’s words, we learn both that God is not confined to *Chronos*, and that *Kairos* is unfathomable to humanity. However, a hint of *Kairos* can be experienced, referenced by phrases such as “time stood still,” or “the day went by just like (finger snap) that.” Occasions when people are not concerned with getting somewhere or doing something; rather, simply content to

---

exist “in the moment.” Therefore, the pursuit of *communitas*, liminality, and *Kairos* stand as priorities for worship leaders when constructing liturgy. When we cross the threshold (liminality) from daily life into corporate worship (*communitas*), we are being brought into a closer relationship with God through communion with God (*Kairos*).

One of the most distinctive characteristics of responsive psalmody, specifically when the psalm is chanted, is the blend of active and static rhythm. The response, or antiphon, is governed by active rhythm: a regulated tempo, delineated by beat, reinforced by accompaniment, binding together all participants under the unifying governance of rhythm. In some instances, tempo alterations occur by way of *ritardando* or *accelerando*, occasionally arriving at a new tempo; but these are facilitated by the accompaniment and intended to be perceived strongly by those singing. Chant, however, is governed by static rhythm, dictated by the cantor’s understanding and presentation of the inherent rhythm of the sung text. The accompaniment is *colla voce*, the length of phrases determined by the number of words in each *cola*, offset by terminations in the chant melody.

This dichotomy is what makes responsive psalmody unique: the oscillation between active and static rhythm. Active rhythm is an element strongly associated with music, identified by words such as tempo and beat, and can be related to *Chronos*. Static rhythm, however, does not conform to a set tempo, or allow for steady accompaniment of a beat, and can be related to *Kairos*. Chant is its own opposition: a heightened proclamation of words, caught in the liminal space between speech and song, framed as music but presented as oration. Therefore, responsive psalmody both moves forward through time with the response and is held in suspended time with the psalm tone.
A microcosm of corporate worship, responsive psalmody is an entrée into a liminal space; a way to experience *Kairos*; a vehicle designed to transport a gathered community toward *communitas*, into a space for meditation on God’s Word where they might respond to these little ancient faith essays called psalms. And if the Trinity is the fundamental example of *communitas*, then Jesus is the ultimate example of liminality: straddling the threshold of humanity and divinity (“fully human, fully God”), not bound by humanity’s ways and customs, yet choosing to be temporarily tethered to them. Thus, the urgency to prophetically connect the Old Testament text to the Gospel story via the psalm antiphons.

Assigning psalms to specific days was initially determined by two factors: lectionary resources and preacher discretion. My current context has changed—initially Northridge’s worship was lectionary based—and the lectionary is used sparingly, most often during certain liturgical seasons (Lent, Holy Week, Eastertide). When the lectionary is used, the Psalm is preselected; when the lectionary is not used, the process is as follows in Table 2.2:

| 1) | Identify the selected lesson. |
| 2) | Find that lesson in the lectionary (could be multiple days). |
| 3) | Identify the Psalm of the Day(s) that best fits the season or preaching theme. |
| 4) | Identify the other accompanying lessons. |

Table 2.2
The first step in the creative process is *lectio divina*. At its core, *lectio divina* is a meditation on the Word of God.\(^{10}\) The practice of *lectio divina* has a rich and storied history in Christianity with biblical roots in Romans 10:8–10.

But what does it say? “The word is near you, on your lips and in your heart” (that is, the word of faith that we proclaim); because if you confess with your lips that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For one believes with the heart and so is justified, and one confesses with the mouth and is so saved.

The development of *lectio divina* has the fingerprints of many great theologians and religious leaders from the third century onward: Origen of Alexandria (c. 185–c. 253), Ambrose of Milan (c. 339–397), Saint Augustine (354–430), Saint Bernard of Clairvaux (1090–1153), John Calvin, Pope John Paul II (1920–2005), and Pope Benedict XVI (1927–2022). *Lectio divina* is found in such theological documents as *The Rule of St. Benedict* (c. 530) and *Dei verbum* (1965), one of the principal documents of the Second Vatican Council.\(^{11}\)

To engage in *lectio divina*, the reader is called to spend solitary time with God’s Word. The four movements, or steps, of *lectio divina* are 1) reading, 2) meditation, 3) prayer, and 4) contemplation. A twenty-first-century Protestant version of *lectio divina* both expands and compresses this process, translating it for use within the context of a community gathering. A leader will read aloud a scriptural passage, asking attendees to identify a specific word or phrase that grabs their attention. The leader will read the scriptural passage a second time, asking

---


\(^{11}\) Studzinski, 38, 77, 118, 145, 177, 189–191.
attendees to keep that word or phrase in mind. The leader will read a third time and ask attendees to meditate on how that word or phrase shaped their hearing of God’s Word. This adaptation of lectio divina is shown in Table 2.3:

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1)</td>
<td>Read the Psalm.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2)</td>
<td>Read the Old Testament lesson, Epistle, and Gospel lesson.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3)</td>
<td>Read a second time, identifying thematic words or phrases in each lesson.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4)</td>
<td>Read a third time, identifying thematic common words or phrases between lessons.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5)</td>
<td>Focus on common themes between the Old Testament lesson and the Gospel lesson.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2.3

The identification of themes is handwritten (never typed) to facilitate the freedom to work away from the computer and avoid distractions such as email and social media, a practice in line with lectio divina.

Following lectio divina, and focusing on the identified words, phrases, and themes, work begins on creating a poem to become the antiphonal response psalm text. The Psalm is considered at the beginning of the lectio divina process; however, the purpose of the antiphon is to expose links between the Old Testament and Gospel lessons, revealing prophetic connections between the two. This relationship is the impetus for creating and presenting the congregational antiphon. The Psalm is a response to God’s presence; the antiphon binds the lessons together. Jeremy Begbie encourages this practice when he calls theologians “to live inside the world of these texts and inhabit them so deeply that we begin to recognize links, lines of association, and webs of

---

meaning that may not always be laid out explicitly or at any length but nevertheless give Scripture its coherence, contours, and overall directions.”

The poems are to be short, simple, and memorable. A novice poet, my intent is to structure each poem using parallelism, a poetic device found in the psalms. With parallelism, a statement is made, followed by a statement that reinforces it (synonymous parallelism), contrasts it (antithetical parallelism), or expounds on it (synthetic parallelism) through litany. When accomplished successfully, the text flows with great ease between psalm and antiphon.

To write the poem, common words and phrases are used and, by trial and error, statements are created which make both a prophetic connection and a theological claim. For example, consider Psalm 122, designated for the First Sunday of Advent, Year A. The accompanying RCL lessons are Isaiah 2:1–5, Romans 13:11–14, and Matthew 24:36–44. The antiphon for Psalm 122 reads: “Flood the valley of darkness and death and carry me to the mountain of light and life.” In this poem, antithetical parallelism is used (See Table 2.4):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>INITIAL STATEMENT</th>
<th>ANTITHETICAL PARALLELISM</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>flood (Matthew)</td>
<td>carry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>valley</td>
<td>mountain (Isaiah)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>darkness (Romans)</td>
<td>light (Isaiah)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>death</td>
<td>life</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2.4

---

Each of these words—“flood,” “valley,” “darkness,” “death,” “carry,” “mountain,” “light,” “life”—convey biblical allusion and carry theological weight. Specific to the lessons, the word “flood” comes from the Gospel, the word “darkness” from the Epistle, and the words “mountain” and “light” from the Old Testament. In this poem, when the congregation asks God to “flood the valley of darkness and death,” their hope is that the water will rise and “carry us to the mountain of light and life.” While reflecting nature’s laws, this text uses images of God delivering God’s people from lowliness to glory. In the antiphon, the statement is one sentence, parallelism is successfully employed, and no words are expendable.

Naturally, there will be deviation from the norm, such as when the psalm or another scripture lesson has an inherently musical text. One example is Psalm 34:1–10, 22, designated for All Saints’ Day, Year A. The Epistle for that day is Revelation 7:9–17. Found in verse 12 (CEV) is the Song to the Lamb sung by the angels, the elders, and four living creatures: “Amen! Praise, glory, wisdom, thanks, honor, owe, and strength belong to our God forever and ever! Amen!” Given the context, this text was ideal for the sung congregational response.

The power of poetry and poetic speech lies in its ability to be offset from normal discourse. It is a liminal language. Poetic speech takes a statement, idea, thought, emotion, truth, law, or experience that is too vast to be told at full length and compresses it to its essence. It “invites us to slow down as a way to pay careful attention.”

The form of responsive psalmody alternates between portions of the psalm text and the antiphon. Typically, the antiphon is presented by the choir or cantor, two or more verses of the psalm are

---

16 Taylor, 129.
chanted by the cantor, and the antiphon is sung again, this time by the choir and congregation. This sequence is repeated until the entire psalm, or designated portion of the psalm, has been presented, at which time the antiphon is sung once more to close the composition. The psalm text is an example of sequential form, its text progressing linearly, either presenting a narrative or developing a concept. The antiphon is an example of cyclic form, an unchanging text interrupting the flow of the sequential text. What emerges is a song with a refrain, a form that is “somewhere between sequential and cyclic structures.” The text sung by the cantor flows through the progression of the psalm, while the text sung by the congregation is unchanged. Like a hymn with multiple stanzas and a repeated refrain, there are two distinct differences. First, only the cantor sings the sequential psalmic material while the gathered assembly sings the antiphon. Second, the stark contrast between the antiphonal music (Chronos) and the chant-based psalm tone (Kairos). This dichotomy facilitates the responsive psalm form, the treatment of musical elements for the various participants making these responsive psalms unique.

There is also a consideration of musical forces. These responsive antiphons are intended for presentation in one of four ways, shown in Table 2.5:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Antiphon – choir and congregation accompanied by organ</th>
<th>Psalm – cantor accompanied by piano</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Antiphon – choir and congregation accompanied by organ</td>
<td>Psalm – cantor accompanied by piano</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Antiphon – choir and congregation accompanied by piano</td>
<td>Psalm – cantor accompanied by guitar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Antiphon – choir and congregation accompanied by organ</td>
<td>Psalm – cantor accompanied by guitar</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2.5

The accompaniments are written to be played either on piano or organ. Toggling between accompaniment instruments further emphasizes the distinction between antiphon and psalm. And while both antiphon and psalm tone could be accompanied by piano, it is not recommended.¹⁸

In a survey of existing hymnals and dedicated antiphonal psalmody collections two constants are observed.¹⁹ First, the antiphon texts are drawn from the psalm itself, either verbatim or a poetic rendering. Second, the antiphonal music is typically a unison vocal line and a functionally supportive homophonic accompaniment. Considering the first observation, the goal of those existing settings is to point back to and emphasize the psalm. As stated earlier, the objective of this thesis is that antiphons draw prophetic connections between Old Testament lessons and Gospel readings, specifically by way of the antiphon text. As such, antiphons are intended to make a bold and enduring musical statement to match the poetic statement.

To make a bold and enduring statement regarding the aspects of the antiphonal music, three audiences must be considered: congregation, choir, and accompanist, each being involved in distinctive ways. A top-down compositional method is employed whereby (1) the melody (sung by the congregation) will be the most accessible musical material, (2) the additional vocal harmonies (sung by the choir) more challenging, and (3) the accompaniment (including music for the organist, pianist, guitarist, and other instrumentalists) the most challenging. By treating

ⁱ⁸ See chapter four, psalm settings, Psalm 31 (hyperlink), for an example of a presentation in this manner.
these three audiences on a sliding scale of musical aptitude, the intent is that the responsive psalm will function as a mass-participatory anthem presented by the gathered community.  

For the congregation, the melody is envisioned as both engaging and accessible to sing after one presentation by cantor or choir. This includes adherence to either major or minor tonalities or modal constructs (supported by the accompaniment), standard time signatures (4/4, 3/4, 6/8, etc.), rhythms and melodic gestures inherent to the text, mainly syllabic text setting, and a comfortable range and tessitura.

For the choir, the addition of a lower harmony (and descants when appropriate) expands the vocal texture. Harmonies are supported by the accompaniment and employ more intricate rhythms (duplets, triplets, melismata, syncopations) or simple counterpoint such as canonical singing.

For the accompanist, whether presented on organ or piano, the music reflects a higher degree of difficulty, intending to either meet or exceed musical expectations and further expand and enrich the musical texture. This includes harmonic intricacies (expanded tertian and quartal harmonies, planing, non-chord tones, substitution chords), counterpoint, musical quotes, and expansive ranges.

Figure 2 is the antiphon for Psalm 42 & 43, “Our feet are bound; our throats are dry...” The congregation sings the straightforward quarter-note hymnic melody. The choir is encouraged to sing in canon (two- or three-part). The accompaniment is simultaneously supportive and independent: the left hand presents the melody layered accordingly in canon, while the right hand presents a countermelody. Each element is straightforward and accessible for the

---

20 I have used this approach in my One & Done Choir model at Covenant Presbyterian, Huntsville, AL (2003–2016), and Northridge Presbyterian, Dallas, TX (2016–current). Based on conversations with participants, the result is that of an experience that is both rich theologically and engaging musically.
designated participants: the melody for the congregation, the canonic counterpoint for the choir, and the simultaneously supportive and heterophonic accompaniment for the keyboardist. Together, they promote a rich musical texture, the result of which resembles a mass-participatory anthem. Yet, this can be done without a congregational rehearsal, encouraging real-time participation during worship.

Figure 3 is the antiphon for Psalm 15, “The world glows with the glint of diamonds...” One of the more complex antiphons, there are rhythmic shifts between 4/4 and 8/8 (3+3+2). This alteration from strict simple meter to a tresillo rhythm is presented first in the accompaniment before the choir sings the antiphon. The vocal rhythms are well-supported by the accompaniment throughout the antiphon. The vocal harmonies are primarily in thirds, supporting and reinforcing the melody, and the harmony voice presents no counterpoint. The overall result is a gentle and elegant musical texture with a distinct dancelike quality.

Creating both text and music affords a unique advantage to find immediate lyricism. As both text writer and composer, I have full authority to modify the text and/or music to suit the needs of the overall composition, a benefit not available in every text-setting endeavor.
Figure 2: Antiphon for Psalm 42 & 43, “Our feet are bound; our throats are dry...”
English Romantic poet William Wordsworth (1770–1850) believed poetry to be “the spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings.” Wordsworth could as easily have been speaking of other creative arts, including music composition. And while he held beliefs about a full

---

creative process for poetry (observation – recollection – contemplation – imaginative excitement), he did not expound upon the editorial process—whittling down the bulk from the “spontaneous overflow” into something manageable and presentable; something practical—possibly because that process presents no Romantic implications. The editorial process, however laborious, is a crucial step in the creative process, particularly with music to be “performed” by people of varying musical aptitude and potentially no rehearsal. For me, the editorial process is the most time-consuming part of the creative process. Once a complete draft of an antiphon is ready, editing can last up to a week, including reworking harmonies, rhythms, and counterpoint; revoicing accompaniment chords; creating and recreating introductory and cadential material; adjusting keys for both tessitura and ease of reading for all musicians; and creating descants, percussion, and other instrumental parts. Given the brevity of each antiphon (the shortest is three measures, the longest is twelve measures), score direction is limited. Each antiphon has an initial metronome marking. Few have other tempo alterations (new metronome markings, rit., accel., a tempo, fermatas) and no prescribed dynamics. Congregational vocal melodies are syllabic (one note per syllable); however, choral vocal harmonies often employ melismatic writing (more than one note per syllable). Articulations in the accompaniment such as tenuto, staccato, and marcato are used sparingly. Slurs are used occasionally as well as indications for piano rolls when necessary but not intuitively implied.

While my other compositions are edited with more specific score direction, that method seemed heavy-handed in this context, and control of these interpretive aspects are left to the discretion of those in charge of presenting them to their congregations.
In responsive psalmody, psalm tones are vehicles for delivering the psalm texts. According to Roger E. Van Harn and Brent A. Strawn, there are eight types of psalms: wisdom, royal, lament (individual and community), song of thanksgiving (individual and community), song of trust, hymn, storytelling, and liturgy. These are further codified into: laments; contemplative hymns; liturgy and storytelling; celebratory hymns; songs of trust; songs of royalty and wisdom; songs of thanksgiving. In this thesis, psalms in each category are paired with specific psalm tones, seven original and one pre-existing (tonus peregrinus). Figures 4: A–H show all psalm tones.

---

22 Roger E. Van Harn and Brent A. Strawn, editors, Psalms for Preaching and Worship: A Lectionary Commentary (Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2009), xxv–xxix. Their categorization does not isolate creation psalms, a very popular type of psalm; rather, it groups them into the category of “hymn.”

23 Psalms 22 and 137 use a pre-existing chant, tonus peregrinus (wandering tone), as their lament texts (one individual and one community) are particularly disorienting.
C) Liturgy and Storytelling

D) Celebratory Hymn

E) Song of Trust

F) Songs of Royalty & Wisdom
G) Psalm 22 and Psalm 137 (Tonus peregrinus)

Each of the seven original tones is divided into four sections. Tonus peregrinus is divided into two sections, indicated by an asterisk *. Parenthetical material varies per psalm tone. The basic form of the psalm tones is shown in Table 2.6.24

H) Songs of Thanksgiving

Figure 4, A–H: The Northridge Psalter Psalm Tones

---

24 Psalm tones 1, 3, and 5 are comprised of recitation, moving, and resting notes; psalm tones 2, 4, and 7 include an incipit; psalm tones, 2, 4, 6, 7, and 8 include additional moving notes.
1) *First verse, first cola
   a. (Incipit and) Recitation note
   b. (Moving and) resting note / small tick marks the end of the section

2) First verse, second cola
   a. (Incipit and) recitation note
   b. Moving and resting note / partial bar line marks the end of the section

3) Second verse, first cola
   a. (Incipit and) recitation note
   b. (Moving and) resting note / small tick marks the end of the section

4) *Second verse, second cola
   a. (Incipit and) recitation note
   b. Moving and resting note / double bar line marks the end of the section

Table 2.6

Forty-nine of the fifty psalms set to music in this thesis use one of these psalm tones for their response. Psalm 136 is the outlier and does not use a classic psalm tone format because its poetic call-and-response form demands special treatment. Each verse is a bicola: the first cola a statement, the second cola a repeated response—“for his steadfast love endures forever” (NRSVUE) or “God’s love never fails” (CEV). While New International Version (NIV) is not used in this thesis, its response is a common one—“His love endures forever.” Therefore, there are three options for response: “God’s love endures forever. / God’s love endures forever.”

25 In the response, the gender specific pronoun “His” is replaced with “God’s.”
“God’s love was sent to save us; / God’s love will never fail us!”; and “We are God’s sons and daughters. / God’s love, it never falters!”

In the Psalm 136 setting, the music supports this responsive form, and never oscillates between antiphon and psalm tone. Rather, the music resembles a hymn and is repeated after the full presentation of two complete verses. While each statement is followed by a response, parallelism is still employed throughout. For example, consider the first cola of each verse:

1Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good. / 2Give thanks to the God of Gods / 3Give thanks to the Lord of lords: / 4to him who alone does great wonders, / 5who by his understanding made the heavens, / 6who spread out the earth upon the waters, / 7who made the great lights— / 8the sun to govern the day, / 9the moon and stars to govern the night.

These are constructed as tricola, the first cola of verses 1–3, 4–6, and 7–9 functioning as either synonymous or synthetic parallelism, while the second cola is always the response. As this form is singular in the Psalter, Psalm 136 necessitated special treatment.

We now turn our attention to psalm pointing. Pointing is a method of syncing words not interlined with unmetered music, showing both recitation and movement.26 Chant is unmetered music and can be monophonic or homophonic. Monophonic examples are Gregorian chant, or early twentieth century Solesmes notation. Homophonic examples are Anglican chant or other forms of choral chant. Whatever the specific chant genre, chant pointing is practical due to

---

26 While some responsive psalm resources are interlined, psalm text phrases are of varying and irregular length, causing interlining to be both a typesetting and visual challenge. Some responsive psalters use interlined texts in their formatting: *The Grail/Gelineau Psalter* (1972), *The Psalter: Psalms and Canticles for Singing* (1993), and *The People’s Psalter* (2008).
variable lengths of psalm text sung on recitation notes. Table 2.7 is a recreated sample of a pointed psalm text in a classic Anglican style from *The Saint Paul’s Cathedral Psalter*.27

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PSALM IV.—<em>Cum invocarem.</em></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>HEAR me when I call O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>thou hast set me at liberty when I was in trouble *</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>have mercy upon me and</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. O ye sons of men * how long will ye blas-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>honor : and have such pleasure in vanity and</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>after</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2.7

*The Saint Paul’s Cathedral Psalter* contains no music, only pointed psalms for use in cathedral traditions and contexts with singers who have memorized certain Anglican chants. Symbols used in this pointing method are found in Table 2.8:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SYMBOL</th>
<th>MEANING</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>vertical lines</td>
<td>bar lines in the music</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>colons :</td>
<td>the double vertical lines</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>periods . (in text)</td>
<td>dactyls (stressed syllable followed by two unstressed syllables)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>anapæsts (two unstressed syllables followed by a stressed syllable)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>asterisks *</td>
<td>a pause for breathing</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2.8

Bar lines in Anglican chant (along with variations in chant styles) denote moving from recitation tones (tenor) to moving tones, to resting tones (termination). In its simplest form called single chant, Anglican chant is constructed in the following system, shown in Table 2.9:

1) First verse, first cola
   a. Recitation note
   b. Two moving notes
   c. Resting note

2) First verse, second cola
   a. Recitation note
   b. Four moving notes
   c. Resting note

3) Second verse, first cola
   a. Recitation note
   b. Two moving notes
table 2.9

In a double Anglican chant, the form repeats with new musical material. Triple or quadruple Anglican chants exist but are rare and follow the same pattern. For this thesis, the new psalm tones are loosely patterned after the single Anglican chant model without being bound to its strict internal harmonic structure.

The underlying theory of any pointing system is based on stressed and unstressed syllables. To “point” a text, one must find the final stressed syllable in each cola on which will occur the resting note. This could be the ultimate, penultimate, or antepenultimate syllable in the cola. If there are moving notes in the psalm tone that proceed the resting note, one must work backwards to find preceding stressed syllables. This process is repeated for each cola in the psalm. For example, Psalm 121:1–2 (NRSVUE), shown in Table 2.10, reads:

1I lift up my eyes to the hills—
from where will my help come?

2My help comes from the Lord,
who made heaven and earth.
In 121:1–2, the words “hills,” “come,” “Lord,” and “earth” are the final stressed syllables in each *cola*. A case could be made to stress “help” in 121:1b rather than “come.” Another example, Psalm 51:1–3 (NRSVUE), shown in Table 2.11, reads:

| 1 Have mercy on me, O God,                  |
|                                           |
| according to your steadfast love;         |
| according to your abundant mercy,         |
| blot out my transgressions.               |
| 2 Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity,     |
| and cleanse me from my sin.               |
| 3 For I know my transgressions,            |
| and my sin is ever before me.             |

Table 2.11

In 51:1c, the first syllable of “mercy” is stressed, and in 51:1d the second syllable of “transgressions” is stressed. In 51:2a, the second syllable (of the four-syllable word) “iniquity” is stressed. In 51:2b “sin” is stressed, although a case could be made to stress “my.” In 51:3, “transgressions” has the same stress as in 51:1d and the second syllable of “before” is stressed.

In some psalms, such as Psalm 51:1, verses are constructed as *quadcola*, or double *bicola*. Other examples, such as Psalm 51:14, are constructed as *tricola*. In each of these *cola* constructions, a judgement call was made with pointing.
Some psalms include the Greek word *Selah* meaning musical or liturgical interlude or pause.\(^{28}\) Even when presented with *tricola*, the psalm tones are meant to be used with pairs of verses: odd verse is set to the first half of the psalm tone, even verse is set to the second half. When the thematic flow of the poetry has an uneven grouping of verses, a judgement call was made. Needing to choose one verse to point with the entire chant, the clear choice was the longest verse in a section. In some instances, this necessitated the elimination of a recitation note, as there were only enough syllables for the moving notes. See Figure 2.16 for an example.

The pointing method in this thesis, designed to be easily reproduced by any word processing software uses brackets [ ], parentheses ( ), and braces { } to show stress and movement.\(^{29}\) Bracketed ellipsis […] indicate that an omitted portion of music, either an incipit or a resting tone.\(^{30}\) In all cases, hyphens - are used outside of these markings to show syllable division.\(^{31}\) For ease of reading, single line breaks between texts indicate a full chant presentation. In instances of recitation note/resting note, brackets show movement to the resting note. In instances of recitation note/moving note/resting note, brackets show syllabic motion on moving notes and parentheses show melismatic motion on moving notes. Braces are used to show multi-syllabic division on a single moving note. Figure 5 shows how brackets, parenthesis, and braces are used in Psalm 127:5 (NRSVUE) with psalm tone 6.

\(^{28}\) Psalm 9:16 includes *Higgaion* (solemn pause or musical interlude) as well as *Selah*.

\(^{29}\) See chapter three for specific detail on the new pointing method.

\(^{30}\) In the case of […] replacing the incipit, both the vocal and accompaniment music is omitted. In the case of […] replacing a resting tone, the accompaniment music is played but the vocal music is omitted, followed immediately by the moving notes, both vocal and accompaniment.

\(^{31}\) See Figures 2.15, 2.17, and 2.17 for examples of the way hyphens are used for syllabic division.
Psalm 127:5 (NRSVUE)

5a Happy is the man who [has]

5b his quiver (full) [of] them.

5c He shall not be put to [shame]

5d when he speaks with his {ene}-[mies in the] gate.

Figure 5: Psalm 127:5 set to Psalm Tone 6

Figure 5 demonstrates three pointing directions: brackets, parenthesis, and braces. In verse 5a the word “has” is sung on the cadence note C. In verse 5b, the word “full” is slurred on the B and G moving notes and the word “of” is sung on the second B moving note. In verse 5c the word “shame” is sung on the E cadence note. In verse 5d the first two syllables of the word “enemies” are sung on the first E moving note (accompanied by the B♭ chord) and the last syllable of the word “enemies” and the words “in the” are sung on the next three moving notes, D, C, and E.

In Figure 6 from Psalm 118:25 (NRSVUE are shown bracketed ellipsis [...] on a recitation note:}
Psalm 118:25 (CEV)

25a Save [us],

25b we be-[seech you, O] Lord!

25c O Lord, we be-[seech you],

25d [...] (give) [us suc]-cess!

Figure 6: Psalm 118:25 set to Psalm Tone 6

To accomplish the ellipsis in the Psalm 118:25d, the Dmaj7 chord in the accompaniment is played, followed immediately by the G chord, at which time the cantor sings the words “give us success!” on the moving notes.

In Figure 7 from Psalm 150:1–2, we see the use of the bracket ellipsis [...] on the incipit:
Psalm 150:1–2 (NRSVUE)

1a [...] Praise the Lord! Praise God in his [sanctu]-ary;

1b praise him in his mighty [firma]-ment!

2a [...] Praise him for his [mighty] deeds;

2b praise him according to his sur-[passing] greatness!

Figure 7: Psalm 150:1–2 set to Psalm Tone 4

Here the incipit notes for both verses 1a and 2a are omitted, and the cantor and accompaniment both begin on the B♭ Major chord (1a) and G minor choir (2a).

A significant part of the creative process involves receiving and assimilating feedback. Patterned after John Bell and Graham Maule’s Wild Goose Worship Group, this peer review group is comprised of the Rev. Jessie Light-Wells, Zach Light-Wells, Hannah St. Romain, Darrell St. Romain, and Suzanne Bouvier-Page.32 Jessie is Parish Associate for Belonging at First Presbyterian Church, Dallas. Zach is Director of Music at First Presbyterian Church, Dallas. Hannah St. Romain is Accompanist for Traditional Service at Lake Highlands UMC, Dallas. Darnell St. Romain is Associate Director of Liturgical Music at Prince of Peace Catholic Church.

---

Plano, Texas. Suzanne Bouvier-Page is Vice President of Operations for Children’s Health Foundation, Dallas. Each person brings a different perspective to the peer review process. All are singers and either professional or volunteer church musicians; some are instrumentalists; some are theologians and critical theological thinkers. All have varying degrees of experience in Catholic and Protestant church settings.

The process is straightforward. We meet at my house for an hour and a half and sing through antiphons, offering suggestions on the entire antiphon product: texts, melodies, harmonies, rhythms, accompaniments, and more complex musical issues such as specific voicings, gathering tones/entering pitches, tessituras, anacruses, and keyboard notations and articulations. Each participant is given a scorecard to fill out as seen in Table 2.12:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Psalm 1</th>
<th>Voice:</th>
<th>Accompaniment:</th>
<th>Theology:</th>
<th>Use:</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1. Hard</td>
<td>1. Easy</td>
<td>1. Disagree</td>
<td>1. No</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2.12

While participants are encouraged to fill out the scorecard, the most fruitful feedback comes from immediate reaction and conversation. There have been multiple instances where a problem was identified, and a solution was immediately discovered. Case in point, in the antiphon for Psalm 2, “God’s light from the mountain...”, the opening pitch E was challenging to find because the accompaniment did not prepare the singers to find that pitch. An alternate
accompaniment chord was suggested, implemented, and changed in the moment. The next day it was updated in the music writing software. This type of immediate feedback is one example of how these peer review sessions are beneficial to the creative process.33

The Creative Process Brought to Fruition

Years ago, at a contemporary music festival, I participated in a heated discussion between two composers, both of whom had opposing views on what constitutes a composition. Composer A argued that once a composition was on paper, it was complete. Composer B argued that a composition had to be realized, aurally brought to fruition, before it was complete. During the discussion, it became apparent that Composer A’s creative process consisted singularly of solitary composition. Contrastingly, Composer B had a much broader creative process that included collaboration between other artists and an audience. Composer A resolutely believed that music composition was a solitary endeavor, while Composer B promoted the idea that music composition was but one part of a larger community activity. Ultimately, I sided with Composer B and maintain that position today. The solitary act of creation is only one part of the creative process. Without community engagement, the purpose of that creation goes unrealized.

This is likened to the distinction between potential and kinetic energy. While both are energy, potential energy serves no purpose but to eventually become kinetic energy. A similar philosophical/metaphysical/acoustical question: If a tree falls in the woods and no one or nothing is around, does it make a sound? While this raises other questions of narcissism and self-

33 On a personal note, these people are all good friends as well as trusted colleagues. Thanks to my wife, Suzanne Bouvier-Page, there is always food, drinks, and a space congenial to making music. The St. Romains have an infant daughter Zadie whom they bring, and our teenage daughter Sarah babysits her while we work. The Light-Wells announced that they would become first-time parents at our December 2023 meeting. Not only is this time productive but edifying and strengthening for our personal relationships. And though we planned to meet four times, life happens, and we were only able to meet three times, getting through half of the antiphons.
centeredness, the truth is that yes, a sound is made. But what ultimate purpose does that sound have?

The intention of these responsive psalms is that they be used in worship. If each is only used once, while two are gathered, then they have achieved their purpose. Selfishly, I desire a greater use and a wider impact. As of the writing of this chapter, at least ten of these compositions have been presented in worship at my home church, Northridge Presbyterian in Dallas, Texas. During the months and years to come, it is intended that more of them be used. Only then will the potential energy of these compositions become kinetic, affecting sonically and theologically the worship of a gathered community.

This creative process is long and arduous, but ultimately gratifying. Developing a system in which to create is work itself. However, developing this process—these creative rubrics—was a fruitful endeavor. They help channel energy, promote deeper creativity, and facilitate the ability to work under time constraints. The downside to this method can be a formulaic approach or product, the upside an efficient and positive creative experience and a prolific output. Russian composer Igor Stravinsky believed in creating rubrics or constraints for the creative process to flourish artistically:

“My freedom will be so much the greater and more meaningful the more narrowly I limit my field of action and the more I surround myself with obstacles. Whatever diminishes constraint diminishes strength. The more constraints one imposes, the more one frees one’s self of the chains that shackle the spirit.”

---

34 Hyperlinks to performances are available in chapter four. See “Psalm Reflections”.
35 Stravinsky, 65.
This quote has governed my creative process for decades and continues to do so. What I believe Stravinsky to be saying is that establishing constants enacts limited variables by which solutions are found that are most accessible in a certain context. When working within a creative system, constants maintain stability and security. The more constants, the more freedom to work with variables. With a multitude of variables, the task at hand can become overwhelming, and creativity can be stymied. A healthy balance of constants and variables facilitates a system in which creativity can flourish through necessary parameters.

Theologically, engaging in the creative process puts one in *communitas* with God. Theologian, author, and priest W. David O. Taylor says, “If all of creation’s sounds worship God, precisely by fulfilling their created purpose, then humanity’s calling is to give particular voice to creation’s sonic praise and to do so in all sorts of ways, for all sorts of reasons, in all sorts of contexts.”

Theologically creative endeavors bind us together with other artists who use their gifts to glorify God and promote meaningful corporate worship. Is this not the artist’s intended trajectory; reflective of vocation; a contribution to the church worldwide? When God calls us into community, it is not to be passive; we are called to be active participants, bringing forth the gifts we have been given, both as an offering to God and for the edification of the people of God. And in all endeavors, as we strive to bring forth God’s kingdom on earth, we long to hear the words, “Well done thou good and faithful servant . . . enter thou into the joy of thy lord” (Matt 25:21).

---

36 Taylor, 79.
CHAPTER THREE

For learning about wisdom and instruction,
for understanding words of insight,
for gaining instruction in wise dealing,
righteousness, justice, and equity;
to teach shrewdness to the simple,
knowledge and prudence to the young—
let the wise, too, hear and gain in learning
and the discerning acquire skill,
to understand a proverb and a figure,
the words of the wise and their riddles.

Proverbs 1:2–6

Introduction to The Northridge Psalter

This chapter is presented in three distinct parts: part one is rubrics for the new pointing method; part two is the complete full-score antiphons; part three is the pointed psalms. In part two, each antiphon is presented with voice(s) and keyboard accompaniment and the psalm tone. In part three, each psalm is pointed in both NRSVUE and CEV (see below for two exceptions). The psalm tone is included at the top of each pointed psalm page.

The antiphons are typeset for full choir participation. In most cases, the melody is intended for sopranos and tenors, leading the congregation, while the lower harmony is reserved for altos and basses. Some psalms are marked to be sung canonically, in expanded three- or four-part harmony, or in unison. The psalm tone is printed at the bottom of the antiphon page for choristers to conveniently follow the cantorial music.

The fifty psalms in this collection are paired with a new pointing method (discussed below). Forty-eight of the psalms are pointed in both NRSVUE and CEV. Psalm 23 is pointed only in King James Version (KJV) and Psalm 136 is pointed only in NRSVUE. The psalm tone is printed at the top of each pointed psalm page for the convenience of the cantor and accompanist. The psalm tone includes the vocal line and keyboard accompaniment in stemless
chant notation, as well as chord symbols for use by additional instruments.\(^1\) Stemmed notes at the end of the psalm tones indicate the end of static rhythm and a return to active rhythm in preparation for the antiphon. In each case, except for Psalm 136, the antiphon is sung before the first presentation and after final presentation of the psalm tone.

**Part One: Rubrics**

As discussed in chapter two, pointing is a method of syncing words not interlined with unmetered music, showing both recitation and movement. The underlying theory of any pointing system is based on stressed and unstressed syllables. To “point” a text, one must find the final stressed syllable in each *cola* on which will occur the resting note. This could be the ultimate, penultimate, or antepenultimate syllable in the *cola*. If there are moving notes in the psalm tone that proceed the resting note, one must work backwards to find preceding stressed syllables. This process is repeated for each *cola* in the psalm. The pointing method in this thesis uses the symbols shown in Table 3.1:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SYMBOL</th>
<th>PURPOSE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>[ ] brackets</td>
<td>syllabic division on moving notes / movement to a resting tone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>( ) parentheses</td>
<td>syllabic slurs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>{ } braces</td>
<td>multiple syllables on one moving note</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[...] bracketed ellipsis</td>
<td>absence of incipit / absence of recitation tone(^2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- hyphens</td>
<td>used to separate syllables when using brackets, parentheses, or braces</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3.1

---

\(^1\) Capo instructions are included for guitar.

\(^2\) In the latter usage, the accompanist plays the recitation chord, followed immediately by the moving note chord.
The Psalms are each typeset in four single-spaced lines, separated by a space, showing their correspondence with the psalm tone. Psalm 22 and Psalm 137, which use psalm tone 7 (*tonus peregrinus*), are single-spaced in two lines each, separated by a space, showing their correspondence with the psalm tone. While every effort has been made for the pointing to match exactly with the *cola* construction of the psalm, there are instances where judgement calls were made regarding textual flow when the verses and *cola* construction did not reflect as such. See Table 3.2 for an example of Psalm 2:10–12 (NRSVUE):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Psalm 2:10–12 (NRSVUE)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10 Now therefore, O kings, be [wise];</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>be warned, O rulers (of) [the] earth.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 Serve the Lord with [fear];</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>with trembling 12 (kiss) (his) feet,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>or he will be [angry],</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>and you will per-[ish in the] way,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>for his wrath is quickly [kindled.]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Happy are all who take (re)-[fuge in] him.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3.2

Here, the *cola* construction and verse division are incongruous, specifically in verses 11–12, and therefore a determination was made as to the most practical way to point the text.

The antiphons, intended to be sung by the choir and congregation, include initial tempo markings, limited articulation markings, and no dynamics. In contrast, the psalm tones, intended to be sung by the cantor, include no expressive direction. Much freedom is given to cantor and accompanist to determine the most appropriate way to present the psalm texts in their own
context. In all cases, the cantor should use both the psalm text and the musical affect of the psalm tone to determine expressive elements of the chant, such as speed, dynamics, articulation, and timbre. For example, Psalm 137 is a community lament, and thus envisioned that it be sung pensively and with a dark timbre—“By the rivers of Babylon—there we sat down, / and there we wept when we remembered Zion”—whereas the celebratory hymn Psalm 150 should be sung with enthusiasm and a bright timbre—“Praise the Lord! Praise God in his sanctuary / praise him in his mighty firmament!” Affectual variations within psalms may occur as well, such as with the individual lament Psalms 42 & 43 (considered one large work). In Psalm 43:4, the psalmist promises to “go to the altar of God, / to God my exceeding joy / and I will praise you with the harp, / O God, my God.” This is immediately followed by the refrain in verse 5, “Why are you cast down, O my soul, / and why are you disquieted within me? / Hope in God, for I shall again praise him, / my help and my God.” The cantor and accompanist are trusted to interpret moments such as these, making musical and theological determinations for appropriate presentation.

One distinct feature of these responsive psalms is the new pointing method, developed for several reasons. First, I needed a method that was reproducible with standard word processing software. The classic Anglican chant pointing method (discussed briefly in chapter two), while proven effective, poses issues when attempting to replicate using Microsoft Word or Apple Pages, using symbols not readily accessible within these programs. For example, double lines || and asterisks * pose no issue to recreate, while dots or other symbols over words to indicate movement are more challenging to implement. Some modern responsive psalms use bold and italics. While this is easily reproducible, mixtures and font alterations do not always display with the same clarity on the printed page, specifically with mixtures of fonts in multisyllabic words.
Second, as discussed in chapter two, classic Anglican chants follow a strict musical form, alternating between harmonic movement of four and six chords, shown in Table 3.3:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>First verse, first <em>cola</em> (four chords)</th>
<th></th>
<th>First verse, second <em>cola</em> (six chords)</th>
<th></th>
<th>Second verse, first <em>cola</em> (four chords)</th>
<th></th>
<th>Second verse, second <em>cola</em> (six chords)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Table 3.3

Many modern chants also maintain a shorter, yet strict formal structure, shown in Table 3.4:
Of the eight chants in this thesis (seven original), there are six distinct musical forms, with varying lengths of moving note patterns and incipits. This formal diversity required more flexibility for options to indicate musical movement, specifically with syllabic groupings. See Figures 8–13 and Tables 3.5–3.10 below for the formal structure of the psalm tones:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 3.4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

1) First *cola*

   a. Recitation note
   b. One to two moving notes
   c. Resting note

2) Second *cola*

   a. Recitation note
   b. One to two moving notes
   c. Resting note
PSALM TONES 1, 3, 5:

1) First verse, first cola
   a. Recitation note
   b. Resting note

2) First verse, second cola
   a. Recitation note
   b. One moving note
3) Second verse, first *cola*
   a. Recitation note
   b. Resting note

4) Second verse, second *cola*
   a. Recitation note
   b. One moving note
   c. Resting note

Table 3.5

Figure 9: Psalm Tone 2

**PSALM TONE 2:**

1) First verse, first *cola*
   a. Two-note incipit
   b. Recitation note
   c. One moving note
   d. Resting note

2) First verse, second *cola*
a. Recitation note
b. Two moving notes
c. Resting note

3) Second verse, first cola
   a. Recitation note
   b. One moving note
   c. Resting note

4) Second verse, second cola
   a. Recitation note
   b. Two moving notes
   c. Resting note

Table 3.6

Figure 10: Psalm Tone 4
**PSALM TONE 4:**

1) First verse, first *cola*
   
   a. One-note incipit
   
   b. Recitation note
   
   c. Two moving notes
   
   d. Resting note

2) First verse, second *cola*
   
   a. Recitation note
   
   b. Two moving note
   
   c. Resting note with moving note

3) Second verse, first *cola*
   
   a. One-note incipit
   
   b. Recitation note
   
   c. Two moving notes
   
   d. Resting note

4) Second verse, second *cola*
   
   a. Recitation note
   
   b. Two moving notes
   
   c. Resting note

Table 3.7
**PSALM TONE 6:**

1) First verse, first *cola*
   
   a. Recitation note
   
   b. Resting note

2) First verse, second *cola*
   
   a. Recitation note
   
   b. Three moving notes
   
   c. Resting note

3) Second verse, first *cola*
   
   a. Recitation note
   
   b. Resting note

4) Second verse, second *cola*
   
   a. Recitation note
   
   b. Four moving notes
   
   c. Resting note

Table 3.8
Figure 12: Psalm Tone 7 (*Tonus peregrinus*)

**PSALM TONE 7 (*TONUS PEREGRINUS*):**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1) First <em>cola</em></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. Two-note incipit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Recitation note</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. Three moving notes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. Resting note with moving note</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2) Second <em>cola</em></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. Recitation note</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Three moving notes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. Resting note with moving note</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3.9
### Figure 13: Psalm Tone 8

#### PSALM TONE 8:

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1) First verse, first <em>cola</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. Recitation note</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Two moving notes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. Resting note</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2) First verse, second <em>cola</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. Recitation note</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Two moving notes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. Resting note</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3) Second verse, first <em>cola</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. Recitation note</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Two moving notes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. Resting note</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4) Second verse, second <em>cola</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. Recitation note</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Two moving notes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Third, and most importantly, developing a new pointing system was apropos to creating a new type of antiphon. As discussed earlier, most available antiphons use explicit or derived psalmic language. In this thesis, the antiphon texts are newly created to emphasize prophetic connections between Old Testament and Gospel lessons present in the RCL. Along with new texts, music was created in my own compositional language. Speaking about his mid-twentieth century realizations of seventeenth-century English basso continuo songs, Benjamin Britten said he “believed that there could be no ‘ultimate realisation’ and that each generation should make its own, composed in personal and immediate terms.” Thus, a new approach to antiphon writing, combined with newly composed psalm tones of varying musical structure, necessitated the creation of a new pointing system. “See, I am making all things new” (Rev 21:5, emphasis added).

The pointing method is meant to be simple and intuitive, with a nod to existing methods. Presenting the psalms in the clearest, most intelligible manner is paramount, as the antiphons are both a functional response to the psalm and prophetic commentary on the accompanying lectionary lessons. Thus, the cantor’s priority is to present the text to be understood by all, the congregation called to full participation. “The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge; / fools despise wisdom and instruction” (Prov 1:7).

---

3 More details about my compositional voice are found in chapter four.
Part Two: Antiphons

Presented in part two are fifty newly composed antiphons with texts based on the accompanying lessons in the RCL, listed below.

Psalm 1 “The heart of the world…”
Psalm 2 “God’s light from the mountain…”
Psalm 4 “Our souls have been transformed…”
Psalm 5:1–8 “Drowning in our sins…”
Psalm 8 “The Holy Kiss of the Trinity…”
Psalm 9:9–20 “Loud! Brash!”
Psalm 13 “The waters of grace…”
Psalm 14 “Heaven rejoices when sinners return to the Lord.”
Psalm 15 “The world glows with the glint of diamonds…”
Psalm 16 “God of words, test our faith…”
Psalm 17 “God blesses us with blessings…”
Psalm 19 “The heart and mind of God…”
Psalm 22 “Jesus drank the sour wine…”
Psalm 23 “We, your sheep…”
Psalm 24 “Will you eat at the feast…”
Psalm 25:1–10 “Will you sit and watch and wait?”
Psalm 29 “How shall we be born again?”
Psalm 31:9–16 “God be in my feet, in my hands, in my mouth…”
Psalm 32 “We are bound to our nakedness…”
Psalm 34:1–10, 22 “Amen! Praise, glory, wisdom…” (congregational version)

Psalm 34:1–10, 22 “Amen! Praise, glory, wisdom…” (choral only version)

Psalm 42 & 43 “Our feet are bound; our throats are dry…”

Psalm 46 “God bless the shepherds who care for God’s sheep.”
   “You are our shepherd, we are your sheep.”
   “Jesus, remember us, though we have strayed.”

Psalm 49:1–12 “Vanity of vanities!”

Psalm 51:1–17 “Praise God in the light…”

Psalm 65 “Follow your faith to the feast and fountain!”

Psalm 67 “As we prayed by the water…”

Psalm 72:1–7, 10–14 “In a dream, God’s light showed the way…”

Psalm 77 “Flaming wind send down from heaven…”

Psalm 80 “When nations rise and fall…”
   “Though earth shall pass away…”

Psalm 85:1–2, 8–13 “The patient flow of water…”

Psalm 89:1–4; 19–26 “Our Lord does not dwell in cedar mansions…”

Psalm 91 “Fight the good fight…”

Psalm 95 “Suffering from thirst…”

Psalm 96 “A new song of light!”

Psalm 104:24–34, 35b “The Spirit in the clouds…”

Psalm 104:24–34, 35b “The Spirit found a home…

Psalm 104:24–34, 35b “The Spirit will invite…”

Psalm 105:1–11, 45b “What shall we ask…”
Psalm 107 “To the children of wrath . . .”

Psalm 114 “Christ surprises us with water . . .”

Psalm 116 “Walk with us, talk with us . . .”

Psalm 118:19–29 “The prophets spoke . . .” (of a feast and banquet)

“The prophets spoke . . .” (of a gentle rabbi)

Psalm 121 “From the mountain . . .”

Psalm 122 “Flood the valley of darkness and death . . .”

Psalm 126 “In a cold and barren land . . .”

“In the chasm, dark and drear . . .”

Psalm 127 “God, Restorer of Life!”

Psalm 130 “My voice is mute . . .”

Psalm 131 “When we trust your mystery . . .”

Psalm 136 “God’s love endures forever.”

“God’s love was sent to save us; God’s love will never fail us!”

“We are God’s sons and daughters. God’s love, it never falters!”

Psalm 137 “Our cities are empty . . .”

Psalm 149 “Praise be to Christ . . .”

Psalm 150 “When the world demands . . .”
Psalm 1
"The heart of the world..."

Antiphon adapted from:
1 John 5:9-13
John 17:6-19;
Acts 1:15-17, 21-26

The heart of the world rejected you,
but your heart welcomes all!

Fine
Antiphon adapted from:
Exodus 24:12-28
2 Peter 1:16-21
Matthew 17:1-9

Psalm 2
"God's light from the mountain..."

God's light from the mountain shatters our darkness:

We are God's beloved!

psalm tone 6

D C Gsus G A sus A D7m7 Em7 Fmaj7 B+ Gsus G
Psalm 4
"Our souls have been transformed..."

Antiphon adapted from:
1 John 3:1-7
Luke 24:36b-48
Acts 3:12-19

Our souls have been transformed by Christ's presence in the world!

psalm tone 1
C  D  B sus  Bm  E  A maj 7  Bmaj 7  F maj 7  E maj 7  G maj 7
Psalm 5:1-8
"Drowning in our sins..."

Drowning in our sins, Christ's buoyant grace makes us cry aloud:

"Alleluia! Amen!"

Psalm tone 1

Capo 2: C D B sus B m E A m7 B maj7 C maj7 F maj7 E m7 G m7 F# m7 A maj7

play stemmed notes only on return to antiphon
Psalm 8
"The Holy Kiss of the Trinity..."

Trinity Sunday, Year A

Antiphon adapted from:
Genesis 1:1-2:4a
Matthew 28:16-20
2 Corinthians 13:11-13

Capo 3: G
Bm D Em7 Gm Dm Em7 Gm
B7 D7 Em7 Gm Dm Em7 Gm
B7 D7 Em7 Gm Dm Em7 Gm
Psalm 9:9-20
"Loud! Brash!"

Antiphon adapted from:
1 Samuel 17:(1a, 4-7, 19-23), 32-49
2 Corinthians 6:1-13
Mark 4:35-41

Loud! Brash! The storms come crashing in! But our faith in God delivers us and leads us home.
Psalm 13
"The waters of grace..."

Antiphon adapted from:
Genesis 22:1-14
Romans 6:12-23
Matthew 10:40-42

The waters of grace will carry us all into the welcoming arms of our God.

Psalm tone I

C
D
B sus
Bm
E
A maj 7
Bmaj 7
F maj 7
E maj 7
G maj 7
Psalm 14
"Heaven rejoices when sinners return to the Lord."
Psalm 15
"The world glows with the glint of diamonds..."

world glows with the glint of diamonds, but God's light - the light of
love and life - never burns out!

Antiphon adapted from:
Micah 6:1-8
1 Corinthians 1:18-13
Matthew 5:1-12

4th Sunday after Epiphany, Year A
Psalm 16
"God of words, test our faith..."

2nd Sunday after Easter, Year A

Antiphon adapted from:
Acts 2:14a, 22-32
1 Peter 1:3-9
John 20:19-31

God of words, test our faith; God of flesh, doubts dispelled; God of breath, all our sins forgiven.
Psalm 17
"God blesses us with blessings..."

Antiphon adapted from:
Genesis 32:22-31
Romans 9:1-5
and Matthew 14:14-21

10th Sunday after Pentecost, Year A

God blesses us with blessings to give them away, that the whole world should be blessed.
Antiphon adapted from:
Exodus 20:1-17
1 Corinthians 1:18-25
John 2:13-22

Psalm 19
"The heart and mind of God..."

The heart and mind of God are tuned to

justice, honor, love, respect, and peace.

psalm tone 2

A m9 Bbmaj7 Cm7 Dm9 Am9 Bbmaj7 Ebm7 Fm9
Psalm 22
"Jesus drank the sour wine..."

Antiphon adapted from:
Isaiah 52:13-53:12
Hebrews 10:16-25
John 18:1-19:42

Capo 4: Bm
E\textsuperscript{bem}  A  G  D  G  F\textsuperscript{maj7}  G  A\textsuperscript{sus}  Bm

Play stemmed notes only when returning to antiphon
Psalm 23
"We, your sheep..."

We, your sheep who have gone a-stray, have now come home.
Psalm 24
"Will you eat at the feast..."

Will you eat at the feast of the Lamb?

Will you rule the city on the hill?
Will flowing wine replace all your tears?
Yes, Lord! We believe! You make all things new!

Will you rule the city on the hill?
Will flowing wine replace all your tears?
Yes, Lord! We believe! You make all things new!

Antiphon adapted from:
Wisdom of Solomon 3:1-9
Isaiah 25:6-9,
Revelation 21:1-6a
John 11:32-44

Capo 5: F
G7
Em7
G
Dm7
A7
F7
Bm7
Am7
C
Gm7
Dm7
B
Emaj7
Dm7
C7
F7
Psalm 25:1-10

"Will you sit and watch and wait..."

Will you sit and watch and wait? Will the Promise Keeper come?

Will the earth turn again for us?

Psalm tone 1

Capo 1: G  A  Fesus  F#m  B  Emaj7  Fmaj7  Cmaj7  Bm7  Dimaj7

A♭  B♭  Gsus  Gm  C  Fmaj7  Gm7  Cm7  E♭maj7
Psalm 29

"How shall we be born again?"

Trinity Sunday, Year B

Antiphon adapted from:
Isaiah 6:1-8
Romans 8:12-17
John 3:1-17

\[ \text{Capo 3: G} \]
Bb   D   Es   Gb  Em   Bm   Cmaj7  Em  Dm9  Bbmaj7

\[ \text{How shall we be born again?} \]

Born from above?
Listen to the Wind's Song:

Sanc-

Optional 4-parts "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord!"

Psalm tone 4
Psalm 31:9-16

"God be in my feet, in my hands, in my mouth..."

"God be in my head" from Sarum Primer

Psalm tone 1
Psalm 32

"We are bound to our nakedness..."

but Christ has led us out of the wilderness of sin.
Antiphon from: Revelation 7:12 (CEV)

"A-men! Praise, glory, wisdom, thanks, honor, power, and strength belong to our God forever and ever! Amen!"

Psalm tone 8
Antiphon from:
Revelation 7:12 (CEV)

Psalm 34:1-10, 22
"Amen! Praise, glory, wisdom..."
(choral only version)

psalm tone 8
Psalm 42 & 43

"Our feet are bound; our throats are dry..."

2nd Sunday after Pentecost, Year C

Antiphon adapted from:
1 Kings 19:1-5
Galatians 3:23-29
and Luke 8:26-39

olds toll road

Our feet are bound; our throats are dry; our empty bellies ache. God's voice drives unclean spirits out-calms fires and winds and quakes!

Capo 2: C D B sus B m E A m 7 B m 7 B m 7 F m 7 E m 7 G m 7

D E C#sus C fm F# B majo C majo G majo F m 7 A majo
Psalm 46

"God bless the shepherds who care for God's sheep."
"You are our shepherd, we are your sheep."
"Jesus, remember us, though we have strayed."

Antiphon adapted from:
Jeremiah 23:1-6

Capo 3: E m9  F m7  G m9  A m7  E m9  F m7  C m9  G m9  A m7  D m7  E m9

Chords:
- E m9
- F m7
- G m9
- A m7
- E m9
- F m7
- C m9
- G m9
- A m7
- D m7
- E m9
Psalm 49:1-12
"Vanity of Vanities!"

All we do and all we have and all we make is nothing next to the love of the Lord!
Psalm 51:1-17
"Praise God in the light..."

Antiphon adapted from:
Joel 2:1-2, 12-17
Isaiah 58:1-12
2 Corinthians 5:20b-6:10
Matthew 6:1-6, 16-20

Praise

God in the light of the assembled, but

(give) pray (fast)
in the shadow of your hearts.

Psalm tone 1

C  D  B sus  Bm  E  A maj 7  Bm maj 7  F maj 7  E m 7  G maj 7
Psalm 65

"Follow your faith to the feast and fountain!"

Follow your faith to the feast and fountain! Sisters and brothers, you are made whole! Give thanks to the One whose love knows no boundaries, the One from whom all blessings flow.
Psalm 67
"As we prayed by the water..."

antiphon adapted from
Acts 16:9-15
Revelation 21:10, 22-22:5
John 14:23-29, 5:1-9

As we pray by the water, your glory shines brighter! Your

Spirit fills our hearts with perfect peace!

Psalm tone 8

G    D    Bm    C    Bm    Gsus    G    Em    D    Bm    C    Asus    A7    Dsus    D    Bb

Bb chord only before return to antiphon
Psalm 72:1-7, 10-14
"In a dream, God's light showed the way..."

In a dream, God's light showed the way.
"A - rise! Go forth in - to the my-sté-ry!"

Antiphon adapted from:
Isaiah 60:1-6
Ephesians 3:1-12
Matthew 2:1-12
Psalm 80

"When nations rise and fall..."  
"Though earth shall pass away..."

When nations rise and fall, and
Though earth shall pass away, the

rulers' reigns have ended, the prophecy remains:
winds announce your glory! So, we must stay awake: the

virgin shall bear "God with us." Potter will come for the clay!

Psalm tone 1
C  D  B sus  Bm  E  Amaj7  Bmaj7  Fmaj7  Em7  Gmaj7
Psalm 85:1-2, 8-13
"The patient flow of water...

The patient flow of water
marks the way of our salvation:
God's Word withstands the fire!
Psalm 89:1-4, 19-26
"Our Lord does not dwell in cedar mansions..."

Antiphon adapted from:
2 Samuel 7:1-11, 16
Romans 16:25-27
Luke 1:26-38

Our Lord does not dwell in cedar mansions but moves among the people on winds of ancient promises fulfilled.
Psalm 91
"Fight the good fight..."

Fight the good fight and follow Christ: walk in righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, and meekness.

psalm tone 5

Capo 3: Dadd Gmaj7 Fmaj7 Gmaj7 Dadd9 Cadd9 Bmaj7 Bmaj7 Fadd9 Eadd9 Dmaj7 Cm7 Bm7 Emaj7
Psalm 95
"Suffering from thirst..."

Antiphon adapted from:
Genesis 2:15-17; 3:1-7
Romans 5:12-19
Matthew 4:1-11
Psalm 96
"A new song of light!"

Antiphon adapted from:
Isaiah 9:2-7
Titus 2:11-14
Luke 2:1-14, (15-20)

Nativity of the Lord, Years A, B, C

psalm tone 4

Capo 3: G  B  C  G  Em  Bm  Cmaj7  Em  Dm  Dmaj7
Psalm 104:24-34, 35b

"The Spirit in the clouds..."

Antiphon adapted from:
Numbers 11:24-30
Acts 2:1-21
John 20:19-23
John 7:37-39

d = 64

The Spirit in the clouds puts these words into our mouths:

"Drink if you are thirsty; forgive and be forgiven;
peace and light shall flow from your heart."

psalm tone 4

Capo 3: G B C G Em Bm Cmaj7 Em Dm9
Antiphon adapted from:
Ezekiel 37:1-14
Acts 2:1-21
Romans 8:22-27
John 15:26-27; 16:4b-15

Psalm 104:24-34, 35b
"The Spirit found a home..."

The Spirit found a home in a valley filled with bones: "Your gifts will grow with patience; my hope will shatter weakness; open up your heart and be transformed."
Psalm 104:24-34, 35b
"The Spirit will invite..."

The Spirit will invite you to live in Christ's true light: "Your eyes and ears deceive you; I abide within you; the world betrays, but I give perfect peace!"
Psalm 105:1-11, 45b
"What shall we ask..."

What shall we ask of the Lord, who gives us all we need?

Stay with us, O Lord!

psalm tone 6

D C Gsus G Asus A Dm7 Em7 Fmaj7 B+ Gsus G
Psalm 107
"To the children of wrath..."

(God sent a child of peace. Those who look to the child will find light and life!)
Psalm 114
"Christ surprises us with water..."

Christ surprises us with water; now the drought of death is ended! Sing "Alleluia!"
Antiphon adapted from:
Acts 2:14a, 36-41

Psalm 116
"Walk with us, talk with us..."

Walk with us, talk with us,

general communion
open our eyes; now we see your face!
(be known to us when we break your bread.)

Psalm tone 8

Capo 2: G D Bm C Bm Gsus G Em D Bm C A sus A7 D sus D
Psalm 118:1-2, 19-29
"The prophets spoke..."

The prophets spoke of a feast and banquet to bring the nations all together.

Psalm tone 6
Capo 2: A G Dsus D Esus E F#sus F# Bm7 C#m7 Dmaj7 F G Esus E

Antiphon adapted from:
Isaiah 25:8-9
1 Corinthians 15:1-11
John 20:1-18
Mark 16:1-8,
Acts 10:34-43
Matthew 21:1-11
Psalm 121
"From the mountain..."

From the mountain, visible are the blessings of the Lord. Lift your eyes; call God's name;

Christ will make your spirits soar!

fine

psalm tone 5

Cape: Eadd9 Amaj7 Gmaj7 Amaj7 Eadd9 Dmaj7 Cmaj7 Dm7 C#m7 Emaj7
Psalm 122

"Flood the valley of darkness and death..."

Antiphon adapted from:
Isaiah 2:1-5
Romans 13:11-14
Matthew 24:36-44
Psalm 127
"God, Restorer of Life!"

God, Restorer of Life!
Turn our poverty into plenty!
May our children's children honor your name forever!

Antiphon adapted from:
Ruth 3:1-5, 4:13-17
Hebrews 9:24-28
Mark 12:38-44
5th Sunday in Lent, Year A

Psalm 130
"My voice is mute..."

My voice is mute, and yet my soul cries out to you:

"Lord, send your Spirit, and make these dry bones dance again!"

low C, last time only

psalm tone 6

Capo 3A

G Dsus D E sus E Am7 Bm7 Cm7 Dm7 Emaj7 A7 F Fsus F
Psalm 131
"When we trust your mystery..."

antiphon adapted from:
Isaiah 49:8-16a
1 Corinthians 4:1-5
Matthew 6:24-34

When we trust your mystery, our fears will fall away.
Psalm 136

God's love endures forever.

We are God's sons and daughters.

Easter Vigil, Years A, B, C

Psalm 136
Psalm 137
"Our cities are empty..."

Our cities are empty; we weep in silence. Our spirits long to dance again.
Antiphon adapted from:
Romans 13:8-14
Matthew 18:15-20

Psalm 149
"Praise be to Christ..."

Praise be to Christ; God's Love, our Light! Christ shines through the dark.

*F = melody

Capo 3: G
B\flat  D  C  G  Em  Bm  Cmaj7  Em  Dm 9  Bbmaj7

Psalm tone 4
Antiophon adapted from:
Acts 5:27-32
Revelation 1:4-8
John 20:19-31

2nd Sunday of Easter, Year C

Psalm 150
"When the world demands..."

When the world demands the stillness that you show, point them to the clouds and sing:

Alphaeus et O!
Praise ye the Lord!

psalm tone 4

Capo 3: G  B  C  G  Em  Bm  Cmaj7  Em  Dm 9  Bb  Gm  Dm  Ebmaj7  Gm  Fm 9  Dmmaj7  C 7  Cdim
Part Three: Pointed Psalter

Psalm 1 (NRSVUE)
1 Happy are those who do not follow the advice of the [wicked]
or take the path that sinners tread or sit in the (seat) [of] scoffers,
2 but their delight is in the law of the [LORD],
    and on his law they meditate (day) (and) night.

ANTIPHON

3 They are like trees planted by streams of [water],
    which yield their [fruit in its] season,
    and their leaves do not [wither].
    In all that they (do), (they) prosper.

ANTIPHON

4 The wicked are not [so]
    but are like chaff that the [wind drives a]-way.
5 Therefore the wicked will not stand in the [judgment]
    nor sinners in the congre-[gation of the] righteous,

6 for the LORD [watches]
    over the [way of the] righteous,
    but the [way]
    of the (wick)-[ed will] perish.

ANTIPHON
Psalm 1 (CEV)

1 God blesses those people who refuse evil advice
and won't follow sinners or join in sneering at God.

2 Instead, they find happiness in the Teaching of the LORD,
and they think about it (day) (and) night.

ANTIPHON

3 They are like trees growing beside a stream,
trees that produce fruit in season
and always have leaves.
Those people succeed in everything they do.

ANTIPHON

4 That isn't true of those who are evil—
they are like straw blown by the wind.

5 Sinners won't have an excuse on the day of judgment,
and they won't have a place with the people of God.

6 The LORD protects everyone who follows him,
but the wicked follow a road that leads to ruin.

ANTIPHON
Psalm 2 (NRSVUE)

1 Why do the nations con-[spire]
   and the peoples (plot) [in] vain?
2 The kings of the earth set themselves,
   and the rulers take counsel to-[geth-]er,
   against the LORD and [his anointed], saying,

3 “Let us burst their bonds a-[part]
   and cast their (cords) [from] us.”
4 He who sits in the heavens [laughs];
   the LORD has (them) [in de]-rision.

ANTIPHON

5 Then he will speak to them in his [wrath]
   and terrify them in his (fu)-[ry], saying,
6 “I have set my king on Zion, my holy [hill].”
7 I will tell of the de-(cree) [of the] LORD:

   He said to me, “You are my [son];
      today I have be-(got)-[ten] you.
8 Ask of me, and I will make the nations your [heri-tage]
      and the ends of the (earth) [your pos]-session.

9 You shall [break them]
   with a (rod) [of] iron
   and dash them in [pieces]
   like a (pot)-(ter’s) vessel.”

ANTIPHON

10 Now therefore, O kings, be [wise];
    be warned, O rulers (of) [the] earth.
11 Serve the LORD with [fear];
    with trembling 12 (kiss) (his) feet,
Psalm 2 (NRSVUE) continued

or he will be [angry],
    and you will per-[ish in the] way,
    for his wrath is quickly [kindled].
    Happy are all who take (re)-[fuge in] him.

ANTIPHON
Psalm 2 (CEV)
1 Why do the nations [plot],
   and why do their people make (use)-[less] plans?
2 The kings of this earth have all joined to-[gether]
   to turn against the LORD and his (cho)-(sen) king.

They say, “Let's cut the [ropes]
   and [set ourselves] free!”
4 In heaven the LORD laughs as he sits on his [throne],
   making (fun) [of the] nations.

ANTIPHON
5 The LORD becomes furious and [threatens them].
   His anger terrifies [them as he] says,
6 “I've put my king on Zion, my sacred [hill].”
7 I will tell the promise that the (LORD) [made to] me:

“You are my son, because to-[day]
   I have be-(come) [your] father.
8 Ask me for the [nations],
   and every nation on earth will be-(long) (to) you.

9 You will [smash them]
   with an (i)-[ron] rod
   and [shatter them]
   like (dish)-[es of] clay.”

ANTIPHON
10 Be smart, all you [rulers],
   and [pay close at]-tention.
11 Serve and honor the [LORD];
   be (glad) (and) tremble.
Psalm 2 (CEV) continued

12 Show respect to his son because if you [don't],
the LORD might become furious and suddenly de-(stroy) you.
But he blesses and pro-[tects]
every-[one who runs to] him.

ANTIPHON
Psalm 4 (NRSVUE)

1 Answer me when I call, O God of my [right]!
   You gave me room when I was in distress. Be gracious to me, and hear [my] prayer.

2 How long, you people, shall my honor suffer [shame]?
   How long will you love vain words and seek af-[ter] lies? Selah

ANTIPHON

3 But know that the LORD has set apart the faithful for him-[self];
   the LORD hears when I call [to] him.

4 When you are disturbed, do not [sin];
   ponder it on your beds, and [be] silent. Selah

ANTIPHON

5 Offer right sa-[crifices],
   and put your trust in [the] LORD.

6 There are many who say, “O that we might see some [good]!
   Let the light of your face shine on us, [O] LORD!”

ANTIPHON

7 You have put gladness in my [heart]
   more than when their grain and wine [a]-bound.

8 I will both lie down and sleep in [peace],
   for you alone, O LORD, make me lie down [in] safety.

ANTIPHON
Psalm 4 (CEV)

1 You are my God and protector. Please answer my [prayer].
   I was in terrible distress, but you set me free. Now have pity and listen as [I] pray.
2 How long will you people refuse to re-[spect me]?
   You love foolish things, and you run after what [is] worthless.

ANTIPHON

3 The L ORD has chosen everyone who is [faithful]
   to be his very own, and he answers [my] prayers.
4 But each of you had better tremble and turn from your [sins].
   Silently search your heart as you lie [in] bed.

ANTIPHON

5 Offer the proper sa-[crifices]
   and trust [the] L ORD.
6 There are some who ask, “Who will be [good to us]?”
   Let your kindness, L ORD, shine brightly [on] us.

ANTIPHON

7 You brought me more [happiness]
   than a rich harvest of grain [and] grapes.
8 I can lie down and sleep [soundly]
   because you, L ORD, will keep [me] safe.

ANTIPHON
Psalm 5:1–8 (NRSVUE)

1 Listen to my words, O [LORD];
   attend to [my] sighing.
2 Listen to the sound of my [cry],
   my King and my God, for to you [I] pray.

3 O LORD, in the [morning]
   you hear [my] voice;
   in the [morning]
   I plead my case to you [and] watch.

ANTIPHON

4 For you are not a God who delights in [wickedness];
   evil will not sojourn [with] you.
5 The boastful will not stand before your [eyes];
   you hate all e-[vil]-doers.

6 You destroy [those]
   who [speak] lies;
   the LORD abhors the blood-[thirsty]
   and [de]-ceitful.

ANTIPHON

7 But I, through the abundance of your steadfast [love],
   will enter your [house];
   I will bow down toward your holy [temple]
   in awe [of] you.

8 Lead me, O [LORD],
   in your right-[eous]-ness
   because of my [enemies];
   make your way straight [be]-fore me.

ANTIPHON

148
Psalm 5:1–8 (CEV)

1 Listen, LORD, as I [pray]!
   Pay attention when [I] groan.
2 You are my King and my [God].
   Answer my cry for help because I pray [to] you.

3 Each morning you [listen]
   to [my] prayer,
   as I bring my requests to [you]
   and wait for your [re]-ply.

ANTIPHON

4 You are not the kind of God who is pleased with [evil].
   Sinners can't stay [with] you.
5 No one who boasts can stand in your presence, [LORD],
   and you hate e-[vil] people.

6 You de-[stroy]
   eve-[ry] liar,
   and you despise [violence]
   and [de]-ceit.

ANTIPHON

7 Because of your great mercy, I come to your house, [LORD],
   and I am filled with wonder as I bow down to worship at your ho-[ly] temple.
8 You do what is right, and I ask you to [guide me].
   Make your teaching clear because of my e-[ne]-mies.

ANTIPHON
Psalm 8 (NRSVUE)

1 [O] LORD, our Sovereign, how majestic is your name in [all the] earth!
   You have set your glory above the heavens.

2 [...] Out of the mouths of babes and infants
   you have founded a bulwark because [of your] foes,
   to silence the enemy and [the a]-venger.

ANTIPHON

3 [When I] look at your heavens, the work [of your] fingers,
   the moon and the stars that you [have e]-stablished;

4 [...] what are humans that you are mind-[ful of] them,
   mortals that you [care for] them?

ANTIPHON

5 [Yet] you have made them a little lo-[wer than] God
   and crowned them with glo-[ry and] honor.

6 [...] You have given them dominion over the works [of your] hands;
   you have put all things un-[der their] feet,

7 [all] sheep and oxen, and also the beasts [of the] field,

8 the birds of the air, and the fish of the sea, whatever passes along the paths [of the] (seas).

9 [O] LORD, (our) Sovereign,
   how majestic is your name in [all the] earth!

ANTIPHON
Psalm 8 (CEV)

1 [Our] LORD and Ruler, your name is wonderful every-[where on] earth!
   You let your glory be seen in the hea-[vens a]-bove).
2 [With] praises from children and from tiny infants, you have [built a] fortress.
   It makes your enemies silent, and all who turn against you [are left] speechless.

ANTIPHON

3 [I] often think of the heavens your [hands have] made,
   and of the moon and stars you [put in] (place).
4 [...] Then I ask, “Why do you care a-[bout us] humans?
   Why are you concerned [for us] weaklings?”

ANTIPHON

5 [You] made us a little lower [than you] yourself,
   and you have crowned us with glo-[ry and] honor.
6 [You] let us rule everything your [hands have] made.
   And you put all of it un-[der our] power—

7 [the] sheep and the cattle, and ev-[ery wild] animal,
8 the birds in the sky, the fish in the sea, and all [ocean] creatures.
9 [Our] LORD (and) Ruler,
   your name is wonderful every-[where on] earth!

ANTIPHON
Psalm 9:9–20 (NRSVUE)

9 The LORD is a stronghold for the op-[pressed],
a stronghold in times [of] trouble.
10 And those who know your name put their trust in [you],
for you, O LORD, have not forsaken those [who] seek you.

ANTIPHON

11 Sing praises to the LORD, who dwells in [Zion].
Declare his deeds among [the] peoples.
12 For he who avenges blood is mindful of [them];
he does not forget the cry of the [af]-flicted.

13 Be gracious to me, O [LORD].
See what I suffer from those who hate me;
you are the one who lifts me up from the gates [of] death,
14 so that I may recount all your [praises]
and, in the gates of daughter Zion, rejoice in your deliv-[er]-ance.

ANTIPHON

15 The nations have sunk in the pit that they [made];
in the net that they hid has their own foot [been] caught.
16 The LORD has made himself known; he has executed [judgment];
the wicked are snared in the work of their [own] hands. Higgaion. Selah

ANTIPHON

17 The wicked shall depart to [Sheol],
all the nations that for-[get] God.
18 For the needy shall not always be for-[gotten],
nor the hope of the poor perish [for]-ever.

19 Rise up, O LORD! Do not let mortals pre-[vail];
let the nations be judged be-[fore] you.
20 Put them in fear, O [LORD];
let the nations know that they are on-[ly] human. Selah
Psalm 9:9–20 (CEV)

9 The poor can run to [you] because you are a fortress in times [of] trouble.
10 Everyone who honors your name can [trust you], because you are faithful to all who depend [on] you.

ANTIPHON

11 You rule from Zion, LORD, and we sing a-[bout you] to let the nations know everything you [have] done.
12 You did not forget to punish the [guilty] or listen to the cries of those [in] need.

13 Please have mercy, LORD! My enemies mis-[treat me]. Keep me from the gates that lead [to] death,
14 and I will sing about you at the gate to [Zion]. I will be happy there because you res-[cued] me.

ANTIPHON

15 Our LORD, the nations fell into their own [pits], and their feet were caught in their [own] traps.
16 You showed what you are like, and you made certain that justice is [done], but evil people are trapped by their own e-[vil] deeds.

ANTIPHON

17 The wicked will go down to the world of the [dead] to be with those nations that forgot [a]-bout you.
18 The poor and the [homeless] won't always be forgotten and with-[out] hope.

19 Do something, LORD! Don't let the nations [win]. Make them stand trial in your court [of] law.
20 Make the nations a-[fraid] and let them all discover just how weak [they] are.

ANTIPHON
Psalm 13 (NRSVUE)

1 How long, O LORD? Will you forget me for- [ever]?
   How long will you hide your face [from] me?
2 How long must I bear pain in my soul and have sorrow in my heart all day [long]?
   How long shall my enemy be exalted o-[ver] me?

ANTIPHON

3 Consider and answer me, O LORD my [God]!
   Give light to my eyes, or I will sleep the sleep [of] death,
4 and my enemy will say, “I have pre-[vailed]”;
   my foes will rejoice because I [am] shaken.

ANTIPHON

5 But I trusted in your steadfast [love];
   my heart shall rejoice in your [sal]-vation.
6 I will sing to the [LORD]
   because he has dealt bountifully [with] me.

ANTIPHON
Psalm 13 (CEV)

1 How much longer, LORD, will you forget about [me]?
   Will it be forever? How long will [you] hide?
2 How long must I be confused and miserable all [day]?
   How long will my enemies keep beating [me] down?

ANTIPHON

3 Please listen, LORD God, and answer my [prayers].
   Make my eyes sparkle again, or else I will fall into the sleep [of] death.
4 My enemies will say, “Now we've [won]!”
   They will be greatly pleased when I am [de]-feated.

ANTIPHON

5 I trust your [love],
   and I feel like celebrating because you res-[cued] me.
6 You have been good to me, [LORD],
   and I will sing a-[bout] you.

ANTIPHON
Psalm 14 (NRSVUE)

1 Fools say in their hearts, “There is no [God].”
   They are corrupt; they do abominable deeds; there is no one who [does] good.
2 The LORD looks down from heaven on human-[kind]
   to see if there are any who are wise, who seek af-[ter] God.

ANTIPHON

3 They have all gone astray; they are all alike per-[verse];
   there is no one who does good, no, [not] one.
4 Have they no knowledge, all the [evildoers]
   who eat up my people as they eat bread and do not call upon [the] LORD?

5 There they shall be in great [terror],
   for God is with the company of [the] righteous.
6 You would confound the plans of the [poor],
   but the LORD is [their] refuge.

ANTIPHON

7 O that deliverance for [Israel]
   would come [from] Zion!
   When the LORD restores the fortunes of his [people],
   Jacob will rejoice; Israel will [be] glad.

ANTIPHON
Psalm 14 (CEV)

1 Only a fool would say, “There is no [God]!”
   People like that are worthless; they are heartless and cruel and never [do] right.
2 From heaven the LORD looks down to [see]
   if anyone is wise enough to search [for] him.

ANTIPHON

3 But all of them are cor-[rupt];
   no one [does] right.
4 Won't you evil people [learn]?
   You refuse to pray, and you gobble up the [LORD's] people.

5 But you will be [frightened],
   because God is on the side of every [good] person.
6 You may spoil the plans of the [poor],
   but the LORD [pro]-tects them.

ANTIPHON

7 I long for someone [from] Zion
   to come and save Is-[ra]-el!
   Our LORD, when you bless your people a-[gain],
   Jacob's family will be glad, and Israel will ce-[le]-brate.

ANTIPHON
Psalm 15 (NRSVUE)

1 O LORD, who may abide in your [tent]?
   Who may dwell on your ho-[ly] hill?
2 Those who walk blamelessly and do what is [right]
   and speak the truth from [their] heart;

ANTIPHON

3 who do not slander with their [tongue]
   and do no evil to their friends nor heap shame upon [their] neighbors;
4 in whose eyes the wicked are de-[spised]
   but who honor those who fear the LORD; who stand by their oath even to [their] hurt;

ANTIPHON

5 who do not lend money at [interest]
   and do not take a bribe against [the] innocent.
   Those who do these [things]
   shall never [be] moved.

ANTIPHON
Psalm 15 (CEV)
1 Who may stay in God's [temple]
   or live on the holy mountain of [the] LORD?
2 Only those who obey [God]
   and do as [they] should.

They speak the [truth]
3 and don't [spread] gossip;
   they treat others [fairly]
   and don't say cru-[el] things.

ANTIPHON

4 They hate worthless [people],
   but show respect for all who worship [the] LORD.
   And they keep their [promises],
   no matter what [the] cost.

ANTIPHON

5 They lend their money without charging [interest],
   and they don't take bribes to hurt the in-[no]-cent.
   Those who do these [things]
   will always [stand] firm.

ANTIPHON
Psalm 16 (NRSVUE)

1 Protect me, O [God],
   for in you I [take] refuge.
2 I say to the LORD, “You are my [Lord];
   I have no good apart [from] you.”

3 As for the holy ones in the [land],
   they are the noble ones in whom is all my [de]-light.
4 Those who choose another god multiply their [sorrows];
   their drink offerings of blood I will not pour out or take their names upon [my] lips.

ANTIPHON

5 The LORD is my chosen portion and my [cup];
   you hold [my] lot.
6 The boundary lines have fallen for me in pleasant [places];
   I have a goodly her-[1]-tage.

7 I bless the LORD, who gives me [counsel];
   in the night also my heart [in]-structs me.
8 I keep the LORD always be-[fore] me;
   because he is at my right hand, I shall not [be] moved.

ANTIPHON

9 Therefore my heart is glad, and my soul re-[joices];
   my body also rests [se]-cure.
10 For you do not give me up to [Sheol]
    or let your faithful one see [the] Pit.

11 You show me the path of [life].
   In your presence there is fullness [of] joy;
   in your right [hand]
   are pleasures forev-[er]-more.

ANTIPHON
Psalm 16 (CEV)

1 Protect me, LORD [God]!
   I run to you [for] safety,
2 and I have said, “Only you are my [Lord]!
   Every good thing I have is a gift [from] you.”

3 Your people are [wonderful],
   and they make [me] happy,
4 but worshipers of other gods will have much [sorrow].
   I refuse to offer sacrifices of blood to those gods or worship in [their] name.

ANTIPHON

5 You, LORD, are all I [want]!
   You are my choice, and you keep [me] safe.
6 You make my life [pleasant],
   and my future [is] bright.

7 I praise you, LORD, for being my [guide].
   Even in the darkest night, your teachings fill [my] mind.
8 I will always look to [you],
   as you stand beside me and protect me [from] fear.

ANTIPHON

9 With all my heart, I will ce-[le]-brate,
   and I can safe-[ly] rest.
10 I am your chosen [one].
   You won't leave me in the grave or let my body [de]-cay.

11 You have shown me the path to [life],
   and you make me glad by being near [to] me.
   Sitting at your right [side],
   I will always [be] joyful.

ANTIPHON
Psalm 17 (NRSVUE)

1 Hear a just cause, O LORD; attend to my [cry];
   give ear to my prayer from lips free of [de]-ceit.

2 From you let my vindication [come];
   let your eyes see [the] right.

ANTIPHON

3 If you try my heart, if you visit me by night,
   if you test me, you will find no wickedness in [me];
   my mouth does not [trans]-gress.

4 As for what others do, by the word of your [lips]
   I have avoided the ways of [the] violent.

ANTIPHON

5 My steps have held fast to your [paths];
   my feet have [not] slipped.

6 I call upon you, for you will answer me, O [God];
   incline your ear to me; hear [my] words.

ANTIPHON

7 Wondrously show your steadfast [love],
   O savior of those who seek refuge from their adversaries at your [right] hand.

8 Guard me as the apple of the [eye];
   hide me in the shadow of [your] wings,

ANTIPHON

9 from the wicked who despoil [me],
   my deadly enemies who sur-[round] me.

10 They close their hearts to [pity];
   with their mouths they speak arro-[gant]-ly.

11 They flush me out; now they surround [me];
   they set their eyes to cast me to [the] ground.

12 They are like a lion eager to [tear],
   like a young lion lurking [in] ambush.
Psalm 17 (NRSVUE) continued

ANTIPHON

13 Rise up, O LORD, confront them, overthrow [them]!
By your sword deliver my life from [the] wicked,
14 from mortals—by your hand, O [LORD]—
from mortals whose portion in life is in [this] world.

May their bellies be filled with what you have stored up for [them];
may their children have more than enough;
may they leave something over to their lit-[tle] ones.
15 As for me, I shall behold your face in [righteousness];
when I awake I shall be satisfied, beholding [your] likeness.

ANTIPHON
Psalm 17 (CEV)

1 I am innocent, [LORD]!  
   Won't you listen as I pray and beg [for] help?  
   I am [honest]!  
   Please hear [my] prayer.

2 Only you can [say]  
   that I am in-[no]-cent,  
   because only your [eyes]  
   can see [the] truth.

ANTIPHON

3 You know my heart, and even during the [night]  
   you have tested me and found me in-[no]-cent.  
   I have made up my [mind]  
   never to tell [a] lie.

4 I don't do like [others].  
   I obey your teachings and am [not] cruel.

5 I have followed [you],  
   without ev-[er] stumbling.

ANTIPHON

6 I pray to you, [God],  
   because you [will] help me.  
   Lis-[ten]  
   and answer [my] prayer!

7 Show your wonderful [love].  
   Your mighty arm protects those who run to you for safety from their en-[e]-mies.

8 Protect me as you would your very own [eyes];  
   hide me in the shadow of [your] wings.

ANTIPHON
Psalm 17 (CEV) continued

9 Don't let my brutal [enemies] attack from all sides [and] kill me.
10 They refuse to show [mercy], and they [keep] bragging.

11 They have caught up with [me]!
   My enemies are everywhere, eagerly hoping to smear me in [the] dirt.
12 They are like hungry lions hunting for [food], or like young lions hiding [in] ambush.

ANTIPHON

13 Do something, LORD! Attack and defeat [them].
   Take your sword and save me from those ev-[il] people.
14 Use your powerful arm and rescue [me]
   from the hands of mere humans whose world [won't] last.

   You provide food for those you [love].
   Their children have plenty and their grandchildren will have more than [e]-nough.
15 I am innocent, LORD, and I will see your [face]!
   When I awake, all I want is to see you as [you] are.

ANTIPHON
Psalm 19 (NRSVUE)

1 (The) heavens are telling the glory [of] God, and the firmament proclaims his [handi]-work.
2 Day to day pours [forth] speech, and night to night de-(clares) knowledge.

3 [...] There is no speech, nor are [there] words; their voice [is not] heard;
4 yet their voice goes out through all [the] earth and their words to the end [of the] world.

ANTIPHON

[In the] heavens he has set a tent for [the] sun, which comes out like a bridegroom from his wedding canopy, and like a strong man runs its [course with] joy.
5 Its rising is from the end of [the] heavens and its circuit to the end of them, and nothing is hid [from its] heat.

ANTIPHON

7 (The) law of the LORD is perfect, reviving [the] soul; the decrees of the LORD are sure, making [wise the] simple;
8 the precepts of the LORD are right, rejoicing [the] heart; the commandment of the LORD is clear, enlighten-[ing the] eyes;

9 (the) fear of the LORD is pure, enduring [for]-ever; the ordinances of the LORD are true and righteous [alto]-gether.
10 More to be desired are they than gold, even much [fine] gold; sweeter also than honey and drippings of the [honey]-comb.

ANTIPHON

11 (More)-over, by them is your ser-[vant] warned; in keeping them there is [great re]-ward.
Psalm 19 (NRSVUE) continued

13 [...] Keep back your servant also from [the] insolent;
   do not let them have dominion [over] me.
   Then I shall [be] blameless
   and innocent of [great trans]-gression.

ANTIPHON

14 [Let the] words of [my mouth]
   and the meditation [of my] heart
   be acceptable (to) you,
   O LORD, my rock and [my re]-deemer.

ANTIPHON
Psalm 19 (CEV)

1 (The) heavens keep telling the wonders [of] God, and the skies declare what [he has] done.
2 Each day informs the follow-ing] day; each night announces [to the] next.

3 […] They don't speak [a word], and there is never the sound [of a] voice.
4 Yet their message reaches all [the] earth, and it travels a-round the world.

ANTIPHON

[In the] heavens a tent is set up for [the] sun.
5 It rises like a bridegroom and gets ready like a hero eager to [run a] race.
6 It travels all the way across [the] sky.
   Nothing hides [from its] heat.

7 (The) Law of the LORD is perfect; it gives us [new] life.
   His teachings last forever, and they give wisdom to ordi-nary people.
8 The LORD's instruction is right; it makes our [hearts] glad.
   His commands shine brightly, and they [give us] light.

9 […] Worshiping the LORD is sacred; he will always [be] worshiped.
   All his decisions are cor-rect and fair.
10 They are worth more than the fin-est gold and are sweeter than honey from a [honey]-comb.

ANTIPHON

11 [By your] teachings, Lord, [I am] warned; by obeying them, I am great-ly re-warded.
12 None of us know [our] faults.
   Forgive me when I sin without [knowing] it.
Psalm 19 (CEV) continued

13 […] Don't let me do wrong on pur-[pose], Lord, 
or let sin have control o-[ver my] life. 
Then I will be innocent, and [not] guilty 
of some ter-[rible] fault.

ANTIPHON

14 [Let my] words and [my] thoughts 
be pleasing [to you], LOR[RD], 
because you are my might-[y] rock 
and [my pro]-tector.

ANTIPHON
Psalm 22 (NRSVUE)

1 (My) (God), (my) (God),
why have you [forsaken] (me)?

[Why are] you so far [from helping] (me),
from the [words of my] [groaning]? 

2 [O my] God, I cry by day, but [you do not] [answer];
and by night [but find no] (rest).

ANTIPHON

3 (Yet) you [are] (ho)-[ly],
enthroned on the [praises of] [Israel].

4 (In) you our [ancestors] [trusted];
they trusted, and you [delivered] (them).

5 (To) you [they cried and] [were saved];
in you they trusted and were [not put to] (shame).

ANTIPHON

6 [But] I am a [worm and not] [human],
scorned by others and de-[spised by the] [people].

7 [All who] see [me] (mock) (me);
they sneer at me; [they shake their] (heads);

8 “(Com)-mit your cause to the LORD; [let him de]-[liver]—
let him rescue the one in [whom he de]-[lights]!”
Psalm 22 (NRSVUE) continued

ANTIPHON

9 (Yet) it was you who took [me from the] (womb);
you kept me safe on [my mother’s] (breast).

10 (On) you I was [cast from my] (birth),
and since my mother bore me you [have been my] (God).

11 (Do) not be far from me, for [trouble is] (near),
and there is [no one to] (help).

ANTIPHON

12 [Many] [bulls encircle] (me);
strong bulls of [Bashan sur]-[round me];

13 (they) open wide [their mouths at] (me),
like a ravening [and roaring] [lion].

ANTIPHON

14 [I am] poured out like water, and all my bones [are out of] (joint);
my heart is like wax; it is melted [within my] (breast);

15 (my) mouth is dried up like a potsherd, and my tongue [sticks to my] (jaws);
you lay me in [the dust of] (death).

ANTIPHON

16 (For) dogs are all around me; a company of evildoers [encircles] (me);
they bound [my hands and] (feet).
Psalm 22 (NRSVUE) continued

17 (I) can [count all my] (bones).
  They stare and [gloat over] (me);

18 [they di]-vide my clothes [among them]-(selves),
  and for my cloth-[ing they cast] (lots).

ANTIPHON

19 (But) you, O L ORD, do not [be far a]-way!
  O my help, come quick-[ly to my] (aid)!

20 (De)-liver my soul from the sword, my life from the po-[wer of the] (dog)!
21 Save me from the mouth of the lion!
   From the horns of the wild oxen you [have rescued] (me).

ANTIPHON

22 I will tell of your name to my [brothers and] [sisters];
   in the midst of the congrega-[tion I will] [praise you]

23 [You who] fear the L ORD, praise him! All you offspring of Ja-[cob, glori]-[fy him];
   stand in awe of him, all you [offspring of] [Israel]

24 [For he] did not despise or abhor the affliction [of the af]-[licted];
   he did not hide his face from me but heard when [I cried to] (him).

ANTIPHON

25 (From) you comes my praise in the [great conger]-[gation];
   my vows I will pay be-[fore those who] [fear him].

172
Psalm 22 (NRSVUE) continued

26 (The) poor shall eat and [be satis]-[fied];
those who seek him shall praise the LORD. May your [hearts live for]-[ever]!

ANTIPHON

27 [All the] ends of the earth shall remember and [turn to the] (LORD),
and all the families of the nations shall [worship be]-[fore him].

28 [For do]-minion be-[longs to the] (LORD),
and he rules [over the] [nations].

ANTIPHON

29 (To) him, indeed, shall all who sleep in [the earth bow] (down);
before him shall bow all who go down to the dust, and I [shall live for] (him).

30 (Po)-sterit-[y will serve] (him);
future generations will be told [about the] (LORD)

31 [and pro]-claim his deliverance to a peo-[ple yet un]-[born],
saying [that he has] [done it].

ANTIPHON
Psalm 22 (CEV)

1 (My) (God), (my) (God),
why have you [deserted] (me)?

   [Why are] you so far away?
   Won't you listen to my groans and [come to my] [rescue]?

2 [I cry] out day and night, [but you don't] [answer],
   and I [can never] (rest).
ANTIPHON
3 (Yet) you are [the holy] (God),
   ruling from your throne [and praised by] [Israel].

4 (Our) ances-[tors trusted] (you),
   and [you rescued] (them).

5 [When they] cried out for help, [you] (saved) (them),
   and you did not let them down when they [depended] [on you].
ANTIPHON
6 (But) I am merely a worm, [far less than] [human],
   and I am hated and rejected by peo-[ple every]-[where].

7 [Every]-one who sees me [makes fun and] (sneers).
   (They) shake [their heads], 8 and (say),

   “[Trust the] LORD! If [you are his] [favorite],
   let him protect you [and keep you] (safe).”

ANTIPHON

9 (You), LORD, brought me [safely through] (birth),
   and you protected me when I was a baby at [my mother's] (breast).
Psalm 22 (CEV) continued

10 [From the] day I was born, I [have been in] [your care],
and from the time of my birth, you [have been my] (God).

11 (Don't) stay far off when [I am in] [trouble]
with [no one to] [help me].

ANTIPHON

12 [Ene]-mies are all around like [a herd of] [wild bulls].

Powerful bulls from Bashan [are every]-[where].

13 (My) enemies are like lions roar-[ing and at]-[tacking]
with [jaws open] (wide).

ANTIPHON

14 [I have] no more strength than a [few drops of] [water].
All my bones are out of joint; my heart is [like melted] (wax).

15 (My) strength has dried up like a broken clay pot,
and my tongue sticks to [the roof of] [my mouth].
You, God, have left me to [die in the] (dirt).

ANTIPHON

16 [Brutal] enemies attack me like [a pack of] (dogs),
tearing at my [hands and my] (feet).

17 [I can] count all my bones, and my enemies just stare [and sneer at] (me).
18 They took my clothes and [gambled for] (them).

ANTIPHON

19 (Don't stay) far [a]-[way], (LORD)!
My strength comes from you, so [hurry and] (help).
Psalm 22 (CEV) continued

20 [Rescue] me from enemy swords and save [me from those] (dogs).
21 Don't [let lions] [eat me]

(You) rescued me from [the horns of] [wild bulls],
22 and when your people meet, I [will praise you], (LORD).

23 [All who] worship the [LORD], (now) [praise him]!
You belong to Jacob's family and to the people of Israel, so fear and [honor the] (LORD)!

24 (The) LORD doesn't hate or despise the helpless in [all of their] [troubles].
   When I cried out, he listened and did [not turn a]-way).
ANTIPHON
25 [When your] people meet, you will fill my heart with [your praises], (LORD),
   and everyone will see me keep my [promises to you].

26 (The) poor [will eat and [be full],
   and all who worship you will be thankful [and live in] (hope).
ANTIPHON

27 [Every]-one on this earth will [remember [you, LORD].
   People all over the world will turn [and worship (you),

28 [because you [are in con]-trol],
   the rul-[er of all] [nations].
ANTIPHON

29 {All who} [are] rich and have more than enough will [bow down to] [you, Lord].
   Even those who are dying and almost in the grave [will come and] [bow down].

30 [In the] future, everyone will worship and learn a-[bout you, our] (LORD).
31 People not yet born will be told, “[The Lord has] [saved us].
ANTIPHON
Psalm 23 (KJV)

1 *The [LORD] is [my] shepherd; (I) shall [not] want.

2 He maketh me to lie down in green [pastures]: he leadeth me beside the [still] waters.

3 He restoreth my [soul]: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his [name's] sake.

ANTIPHON

4 Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of [death], I will fear [no] evil: for thou art [with me]; thy rod and thy staff they com-[fort] me.

ANTIPHON

5 Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine [enemies]: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth [o]-ver.

6 Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my [life]: and I will dwell in the house of the LORD [for]-ever.

ANTIPHON

*verse 1 may be sung unaccompanied
Psalm 24 (NRSVUE)

1 The earth is the LORD’s and all that is [in it],
   the world, and those who live [in] it,
2 for he has founded it on the [seas]
   and established it on [the] rivers.

ANTIPHON

3 Who shall ascend the hill of the [LORD]?
   And who shall stand in his ho-ly place?
4 Those who have clean hands and pure [hearts],
   who do not lift up their souls to what is false and do not swear [de]-ceitfully.

5 They will receive blessing from the [LORD]
   and vindication from the God of their [sal]-vation.
6 Such is the company of those who [seek him],
   who seek the face of the God [of] Jacob. Selah

ANTIPHON

7 Lift up your heads, O [gates]!
   and be lifted up, O ancient doors, that the King of glory may [come] in!
8 Who is the King of [glory]?
   The LORD, strong and mighty, the LORD, mighty [in] battle.

9 Lift up your heads, O [gates]!
   and be lifted up, O ancient doors, that the King of glory may [come] in!
10 Who is this King of [glory]?
    The LORD of hosts, he is the King [of] glory. Selah

ANTIPHON
Psalm 24 (CEV)

1 The earth and everything [on it],
    including its people, belong to [the] LORD.
    The world and its people belong to [him].
2 The LORD placed it all on the oceans [and] rivers.

ANTIPHON

3 Who may climb the LORD's [hill]
    or stand in his ho-[ly] temple?
4 Only those who do right for the right [reasons],
    and don't worship idols or tell lies un-[der] oath.

5 The LORD God, who [saves them],
    will bless and [re]-ward them,
6 because they worship and [serve]
    the God [of] Jacob.

ANTIPHON

7 Open the ancient [gates],
    so that the glorious king may [come] in.
8 Who is this glorious [king]?
    He is our LORD, a strong and might-[y] warrior.

9 Open the ancient [gates],
    so that the glorious king may [come] in.
10 Who is this glorious [king]?
    He is our LORD, the [All]-Powerful.

ANTIPHON
Psalm 25 (NRSVUE)

1 To you, O [LORD],
   I lift up [my] soul.
2 O my [God],
   in you [I] trust;
   do not let me be put to [shame];
   do not let my enemies exult o-[ver] me.
3 Do not let those who wait for you be put to [shame];
   let them be ashamed who are wanton-[ly] treacherous.

ANTIPHON

4 Make me to know your ways, O [LORD];
   teach me [your] paths.
5 Lead me in your truth and teach me, for you are the God of my sal-[vation];
   for you I wait all [day] long.

6 Be mindful of your mercy, O LORD, and of your steadfast [love],
   for they have been from [of] old.
7 Do not remember the sins of my youth or my trans-[gressions];
   according to your steadfast love remember me, for the sake of your goodness, [O] LORD!

ANTIPHON

8 Good and upright is the [LORD];
   therefore he instructs sinners in [the] way.
9 He leads the humble in what is [right]
   and teaches the humble [his] way.

10 All the paths of the [LORD]
   are steadfast love and faith-[ful]-ness,
   for those who keep his [covenant] and his [de]-crees.
ANTIPHON
Psalm 25 (NRSVUE) continued

11 For your name’s sake, O [LORD],
    pardon my guilt, for it [is] great.
12 Who are they who fear the [LORD]?
    He will teach them the way that they [should] choose.

ANTIPHON

13 They will abide in pros-[perity],
    and their children shall possess [the] land.
14 The friendship of the LORD is for those who [fear him],
    and he makes his covenant known [to] them.

15 My eyes are ever toward the [LORD],
    for he will pluck my feet out of [the] net.
16 Turn to me and be gracious to [me],
    for I am lonely and [af]-flicted.

17 Relieve the troubles of my [heart],
    and bring me out of my [dis]-tress.
18 Consider my affliction and my [trouble],
    and forgive all [my] sins.

ANTIPHON

19 Consider how many are my [foes]
    and with what violent hatred [they] hate me.
20 O guard my life and deliver [me];
    do not let me be put to shame, for I take refuge [in] you.

21 May integrity and uprightness pre-[serve me],
    for I wait [for] you.
22 Redeem Israel, O [God],
    out of all [its] troubles.

ANTIPHON
Psalm 25 (CEV)

1 I offer you my heart, LORD [God],
   and [I] trust you.
   Don't make me ashamed or let enemies de-[feat me].
3 Don't disappoint any of your worshipers, but disappoint all deceit-[ful] liars.

ANTIPHON

4 Show me your [paths]
   and teach me [to] follow;
5 guide me by your truth and in-[struct me].
   You keep me safe, and I al-[ways] trust you.

6 Please, LORD, re-[member],
   you have always been patient [and] kind.
7 Forget each wrong I did when I was [young].
   Show how truly kind you are and remem-[ber] me.

ANTIPHON

8 You are honest and [merciful],
   and you teach sinners how to follow [your] path.
9 You lead humble people to do what is [right]
   and to stay on [your] path.

10 In everything you [do],
    you are kind [and] faithful
to everyone who [keeps]
    our agreement [with] you.

ANTIPHON

11 Be true to your name, [LORD],
    by forgiving each one of my terri-[ble] sins.
12 You will show the right [path]
    to all who wor-[ship] you.
Psalm 25 (CEV) continued

ANTIPHON

13 Then they will have [plenty],
and their children will receive [the] land.
14 Our LORD, you are the friend of your [worshipers],
and you make an agreement with all [of] us.

I always look to [you],
because you rescue me from ev-[ery] trap.
16 I am lonely and [troubled].
Show that you care and have pity [on] me.

My awful worries keep [growing].
Rescue me [from] sadness.
18 See my troubles and [misery]
and forgive [my] sins.

ANTIPHON

19 Look at all my [enemies]!
See how much [they] hate me.
20 I come to you for [shelter].
Protect me, keep me safe, and don't dis-[ap]-point me.

I obey you with all my [heart],
and I trust you, knowing that you [will] save me.
22 Our God, please save [Israel]
from all [its] troubles.

ANTIPHON
Psalm 29 (NRSVUE)

1 [As]-cribe to the LORD, O hea-[venly] beings,
ascribe to the LORD glo-[ry and] (strength).
2 [As]-cribe to the LORD the glory [of his] name;
worship the LORD in [holy] splendor.

ANTIPHON

3 [The] voice of the LORD is o-[ver the] waters;
   the God of glory thunders, the LORD, over [mighty] [waters].
4 [The] voice of the LORD is [full of] majesty;
   the voice of the LORD is [full of] majesty.

5 [The] voice of the LORD [breaks the] cedars;
   the LORD breaks the ce-[dars of] [Leba]-[non].
6 […] He makes Lebanon skip [like a] calf
   and Sirion like a [young wild] ox.

ANTIPHON

7 [The] voice of the LORD flashes forth [flames of] fire.
8 The voice of the LORD shakes the wilderness; the LORD shakes the wilderness [of Ka]-[desh].
9 [The] voice of the LORD causes the [oaks to] whirl
   and strips the forest bare, and in his temple [all say], “Glory!”

ANTIPHON

10 [The] LORD sits enthroned o-[ver the] flood;
    the LORD sits enthroned as [king for]-[ever].
11 […] May the LORD give strength [to his] people!
    May the LORD bless his peo-[ple with] peace!

ANTIPHON
Psalm 29 (CEV)

1 [...] All you angels in heaven,
    honor the glory and power [of the] (LORD)!
2 [...] Honor the wonderful name [of the] LORD,
    and worship the LORD most holy and glorious.

ANTIPHON

3 [The] voice [of the] LORD
    echoes over [oceans].
    [The] glorious LORD God thunders above the roar of the [raging] sea,
4 and his voice is mighty and marvelous.

5 [The] voice of the LORD destroys the [cedar] trees;
    the LORD shatters cedars on Mount [Lebanon].
6 [...] God makes Mount Lebanon skip [like a] calf
    and Mount Hermon jump like a (wild) ox.

ANTIPHON

7 [The] voice of the LORD makes [lightning] flash
8 and the [desert] [tremble].
    [And be]cause [of the] LORD,
    the desert near Kadesh shivers and shakes.

9 [The] voice of the LORD makes [deer give] birth
    be-fore [time].
    [...] Forests are stripped of leaves,
    and the temple is filled with shouts of praise.

ANTIPHON

10 [The] LORD rules [on his] throne,
    king of the [flood forever].
11 [...] Pray that our LORD will [make us] strong
    and [give us] peace.

ANTIPHON
Psalm 31:9–16 (NRSVUE)

9 Be gracious to me, O LORD, for I am in distress;
   my eye wastes away from grief, my soul and body also.

10 For my life is spent with sorrow and my years with [sighing];
   my strength fails because of my misery, and my bones waste [a]-way.

ANTIPHON

11 I am the scorn of all my adversaries,
   a horror to [my] neighbors,
   an object of dread to my acquaintances;
   those who see me in the street flee [from] me.

12 I have passed out of mind like one who is [dead];
   I have become like a broken [en] vessel.

13 For I hear the whispering of many—terror all around!—
   as they scheme together against me, as they plot to take [my] life.

ANTIPHON

14 But I trust in you, O [LORD];
   I say, “You are [my] God.”

15 My times are in your [hand];
   deliver me from the hand of my enemies and persecutors.

16 Let your face [shine]
   upon [your] servant;
   save [me]
   in your stead-[fast] love.

ANTIPHON
Psalm 31:9–16 (CEV)
9 Have pity, [LORD]!
   I am hurting and almost blind. My whole body aches.
10 I have known only sorrow all my life long, and I suffer year after [year].
   I am weak from sin, and my bones [are] limp.

ANTIPHON

11 My enemies insult me.
   Neighbors are even worse, and I disgust [my] friends.
   People meet me on the [street],
   and they turn [and] run.

12 I am completely forgotten like someone [dead].
   I am merely a broken dish.
13 I hear the crowds whisper, “Everyone is afraid!”
   They are plotting and scheming to murder me.

ANTIPHON

14 But I trust you, [LORD],
   and I claim you as [my] God.
15 My life is in your [hands].
   Save me from enemies who hunt [me] down.

16 Smile on [me],
   [your] servant.
   Have (pity)
   and rescue [me].

ANTIPHON
Psalm 32 (NRSVUE)

1 Happy are those whose transgression [is for]-given, whose [sin is] covered.
2 Happy are those to whom the L ORD imputes no in-[iqui]-ty and in whose spirit there is [no de]-ceit.

3 While I kept silent, my body was-[ted a]-way through my groaning [all day] long.
4 For day and night your hand was heavy up-(on) me; my strength was dried up as by the [heat of] summer. Selah

ANTIPHON

5 Then I acknowledged my [sin to] you, and I did not hide my in-[iqui]-ty; I said, “I will confess my transgressions [to the] L ORD,” and you forgave the guilt [of my] sin. Selah

ANTIPHON

6 Therefore let all who are faithful offer [prayer to] you; at a time of distress, the rush of mighty waters [shall not] reach them.
7 You are a hiding [place for] me; you preserve me from trouble; you surround me with glad cries of de-[liver]-ance. Selah

ANTIPHON

8 I will instruct you and teach you the way [you should] go; I will counsel you with my [eye up]-on you.
9 Do not be like a horse or a mule, without [under]-standing, whose temper must be curbed with bit and bridle, else it will not [stay near] you.

10 Many are the torments [of the] wicked, but steadfast love surrounds those who trust [in the] L ORD.
11 Be glad in the L ORD and re-[joice, O] righteous, and shout for joy, all you up-[right in] heart.

ANTIPHON
Psalm 32 (CEV)

1 Our LORD, you bless everyone whose sins [you for]-give and [wipe a]-way.
2 You bless them by saying, “You told [me your] sins, without trying to hide them, and now [I for]-give you.”
3 Before I con-[fessed my] sins, my bones felt limp, and I groaned [all day] long.
4 Night and day your hand weighed heavi-[ly on] me, and my strength was gone as in the [summer] heat.

ANTIPHON

5 So I con-[fessed my] sins and told them [all to] you.
   I said, “I'll tell the LORD each one [of my] sins.”
   Then you forgave me and took a-[way my] guilt.

ANTIPHON

6 We worship you, Lord, and we should always pray whenever we find out that [we have] sinned.
   Then we won't be swept away by a [raging] flood.
7 You are my [hiding] place!
   You protect me from trouble, and you put songs in my heart because [you have] saved me.

ANTIPHON

8 You said to me, “I will point out the road that [you should] follow.
   I will be your teacher and watch [over] you.
9 Don't be stupid like hor-[ses and] mules that must be led with ropes to make [them o]-bey.”

10 All kinds of troubles will [strike the] wicked, but your kindness shields those who [trust you], LORD.
11 And so [your good] people should cele-[brate and] shout.

ANTIPHON
Psalm 34:1–10, 22 (NRSVUE)

1 I will bless the LORD [at all] times;
   his praise shall continually be [in my] mouth.

2 My soul makes its boast [in the] LORD;
   let the humble hear [and be] glad.

ANTIPHON

3 O magnify the [LORD with] me,
   and let us exalt his [name to]-gether.

4 I sought the LORD, and he [answered] me
   and delivered me from [all my] fears.

5 Look to him, and be [radi]-ant,
   so your faces shall never [be a]-shamed.

6 This poor soul cried and was heard [by the] LORD
   and was saved from [every] trouble.

ANTIPHON

7 The angel of the [LORD en]-camps
   around those who fear him and de-[livers] them.

8 O taste and see that the [LORD is] good;
   happy are those who take refuge (in) him.

ANTIPHON

9 O fear the LORD, you his [holy] ones,
   for those who fear him [have no] want.

10 The young lions suffer [want and] hunger,
    but those who seek the LORD lack [no good] thing.

22 The [LORD re]-deems
    the life [of his] servants;
    none of those who take re-[fuge in] him
    will [be con]-demned.

ANTIPHON
Psalm 34:1–10, 22 (CEV)

1 I will always [praise the] LORD.
2 With all my heart, I will [praise the] LORD.
   Let all [who are] helpless,
   listen [and be] glad.

ANTIPHON

3 Honor the [LORD with] me!
   Celebrate [his great] name.
4 I asked the [LORD for] help,
   and he saved me from [all my] fears.

5 Keep your eyes [on the] LORD!
   You will shine like the sun and never [blush with] shame.
6 I was a nobody, [but I] prayed,
   and the LORD saved me from [all my] troubles.

ANTIPHON

7 If you hon-[or the] LORD,
   his angel [will pro]-tect you.
8 Discover for yourself that the [LORD is] kind.
   Come to him for protection, and you [will be] glad.

ANTIPHON

9 Honor the LORD! You are his [special] people.
   No one who honors the LORD will ever [be in] need.
10 Young lions may go hungry or [even] starve,
    but if you trust the LORD you will never miss out on a-[nything] good.

22 The LORD [saves the] lives
   of (his) servants.
   Run to him [for pro]-tection,
   and you [won't be] punished.

ANTIPHON
Psalm 42 & 43 (NRSVUE)

1 As a deer longs for flowing [streams],
   so my soul longs for you, [O] God.

2 My soul thirsts for [God],
   for the liv-[ing] God.

   When shall I come and behold the face of [God]?

3 My tears have been my food day [and] night,
   while people say to me con-[tinually],
   “Where is [your] God?”

ANTIPHON

4 These things I re-[member],
   as I pour out [my] soul:
   how I went with the throng and led them in procession to the house of [God],
   with glad shouts and songs of thanksgiving, a multitude keeping fest-[i]-val.

   Why are you cast down, O my [soul],
   and why are you disquieted with-[in] me?
   Hope in God, for I shall again [praise him],
   my help 6 and [my] God.

ANTIPHON

   My soul is cast down with-[in me];
   therefore I remem-[ber] you
   from the land of Jordan and of [Hermon],
   from [Mount] Mizar.

   Deep calls to deep at the thunder of your [torrents];
   all your waves and your billows have gone o-[ver] me.

   By day the LORD commands his steadfast [love],
   and at night his song is with me, a prayer to the God of [my] life.

ANTIPHON
Psalm 42 & 43 (NRSVUE) continued

9 I say to God, my [rock],
   “Why have you forgot-[ten] me?
Why must I walk about [mournfully]
   because the enemy oppress-[es] me?”

10 As with a deadly wound in my [body],
   my adversary-[ies] taunt me,
while they say to me con-[tinually],
   “Where is [your] God?”

11 Why are you cast down, O my [soul],
   and why are you disquieted with-[in] me?
Hope in God, for I shall again [praise him],
   my help and [my] God.

ANTIPHON
1 Vindicate me, O God, and defend my [cause]
   against an ungod-[ly] people;
from those who are deceitful and un-[just],
   deliv-[er] me!

2 For you are the God in whom I take [refuge];
   why have you cast [me] off?
Why must I walk about [mournfully]
   because of the oppression of the e-[ne]-my?

ANTIPHON
3 O send out your light and your [truth];
   let [them] lead me;
let them bring me to your holy [hill]
   and to [your] dwelling.
Psalm 42 & 43 (NRSVUE) continued

4 Then I will go to the altar of [God],
   to God my exceed-[ing] joy,
and I will praise you with the [harp],
   O God, [my] God.

5 Why are you cast down, O my [soul],
   and why are you disquieted with-[in] me?
Hope in God, for I shall again [praise him],
   my help and [my] God.

ANTIPHON
Psalm 42 & 43 (CEV)

1 As a deer gets [thirsty]
   for streams [of] water,
   I truly am [thirsty]
   for you, [my] God.

2 In my heart, I am thirsty for you, the living [God].
   When will I see [your] face?
3 Day and night my tears are my only [food],
   as everyone keeps asking, “Where is [your] God?”

ANTIPHON

4 Sorrow floods my [heart],
   when I [re]-member
   leading the worshipers to your [house].
   I can still hear them shout their joy-[ful] praises.

5 Why am I dis-[couraged]?
   Why am [I] restless?
   I should trust you, [LORD].
   I will praise you again because you help me, 6 and you are [my] God.

ANTIPHON

I am deeply dis-[couraged],
   and so I think a-[bout] you
   here where the Jordan begins at Mount [Hermon]
7 Your vicious [waves]
   have swept o-[ver] me
   like an angry [ocean]
   or a roaring wa-[ter]-fall.
Psalm 42 & 43 (CEV) continued

8 Every day, you are [kind],
    and [at] night
you give me a [song]
as my prayer to you, the God of [my] life.

ANTIPHON

9 You are my mighty [rock].
    Why have you forgot-[ten] me?
    Why must enemies mis-[treat me]
    and make [me] sad?

10 Even my bones are in [pain],
    while all [day] long
my enemies sneer and [ask],
“Where is [your] God?”

11 Why am I dis-[couraged]?
    Why am [I] restless?
I trust you, [LORD]!
And I will praise you again because you help me, and you are [my] God.

ANTIPHON

1 Show that I am right, [God]!
    Defend me against everyone who doesn't [know] you;
    rescue me from [each]
of those deceit-[ful] liars.

2 I run to you for pro-[tection].
    Why do you turn me [a]-way?
    Why must enemies mis-[treat me]
    and make [me] sad?

ANTIPHON
Psalm 42 & 43 (CEV) continued

3 Send your light and your [truth]  
   to (guide) me.  
   Let them lead me to your [house]  
   on your sa-[cred] mountain.

4 Then I will worship at your [altar]  
   because you make [me] joyful.  
   You are my God, and I will [praise you].  
   Yes, I will praise you as I play [my] harp.

5 Why am I dis-[couraged]?  
   Why am [I] restless?  
   I trust you, [LORD]!  
   And I will praise you again because you help me, and you are [my] God.

ANTIPHON
Psalm 46 (NRSVUE)

1 [...] God is our refuge [and] strength,
   a very present [help in] trouble.

2 Therefore we will not fear, though the earth [should] change,
   though the mountains shake in the heart [of the] sea,

3 [though its] waters roar [and] foam,
   though the mountains tremble [with its] tumult. Selah (insert verse 7)

7 The LORD of hosts [is] with us;
   the God of Jacob [is our] refuge. Selah

ANTIPHON

4 [...] There is a river whose streams make glad the city [of] God,
   the holy habitation of the (Most) High.

5 God is in the midst of the city; it shall not [be] moved;
   God will help it when the [morning] dawns.

6 (The) nations are in an uproar; the king-[doms] totter;
   he utters his voice; the (earth) melts.

7 The LORD of hosts [is] with us;
   the God of Jacob [is our] refuge. Selah

ANTIPHON

8 [Come, be]-hold the works of [the] LORD;
   see what desolations he has brought [on the] earth.

9 He makes wars cease to the end of [the] earth;
   he breaks the bow and shatters the spear; he burns the [shields with] fire.

10 “(Be) still, and know that I [am] God!
    I am exalted among the nations; I am exalted [in the] earth.”

11 The LORD of hosts [is] with us;
    the God of Jacob [is our] refuge. Selah

ANTIPHON
Psalm 46 (CEV)
1 [...] God is our might-[y] fortress,
   always ready to help in [times of] trouble.
2 And so, we won't be [a]-fraid!
   Let the earth tremble and the mountains tumble into the [deepest] sea.

3 [Let the] ocean roar [and] foam,
   and its raging waves [shake the] mountains. *(insert verse 7)*
7 The LORD All-Powerful [is] with us.
   The God of Jacob [is our] fortress.

ANTIPHON

4 (A) river and its streams bring joy to [the] city,
   which is the sacred home of [God Most] High.
5 God is in that city, and it won't [be] shaken.
   He will help [it at] dawn.

6 [...] Nations rage! King-[doms] fall!
   But at the voice of God the earth it-(self) melts.
7 The LORD All-Powerful [is] with us.
   The God of Jacob [is our] fortress.

ANTIPHON

8 (Come)! See the fearsome things the LORD has done [on] earth.
9 God brings wars to an end all o-[ver the] world.
   He breaks the arrows, shatters [the] spears,
   and [burns the] shields.

10 (Our) God says, “Calm down, and learn that I [am] God!
   All nations on earth will [honor] me.”
11 The LORD All-Powerful [is] with us.
   The God of Jacob is [our] fortress.

ANTIPHON
Psalm 49:1–12 (NRSVUE)
1 Hear this, all you peoples; give ear, all inhabitants of the world,
2 both low and high, rich and (poor) together.

3 My mouth shall speak wisdom; the meditation of my heart shall be understanding.
4 I will incline my ear to a proverb; I will solve my riddle to the music of the harp.

ANTIPHON

5 Why should I fear in times of trouble, when the iniquity of my persecutors surrounds me,
6 those who trust in their wealth and boast of the abundance of their riches?

7 Truly, no ransom avails for one’s life; there is no price one can give for it.
8 For the ransom of life is costly and can never suffice,
9 that one should live on forever and never see the Pit.

ANTIPHON

10 When we look at the wise, they die; fool and dolt perish together and leave their wealth to others.
11 Their graves are their homes for ever, their dwelling places to all generations, though they named lands their own.

12 Mortals cannot
a-bide in their pomp; they are like the animals that perish.

ANTIPHON
Psalm 49:1–12 (CEV)

1 Everyone on this [earth],
   now listen [to what I] say!
2 Listen, no matter who you [are],
   […] (rich) (or) poor.

3 I speak words of [wisdom],
   and [my thoughts make] sense.
4 I have in mind a [mystery]
   that I will explain while (play)-[ing my] harp.

ANTIPHON

5 Why should I be a-[fraid]
   in (times) [of] trouble,
when I am sur-[rounded]
   by [vicious ene]-mies?

6 They trust in their [riches]
   and brag a-[bout all their] wealth.
7 You cannot buy back your [life]
   or (pay) (off) God!

8 It costs far too [much]
   to [buy back your] life.
You can never pay God e-[nough]
9 to stay alive forever and (safe) (from) death.

ANTIPHON

10 We see that wise people [die],
   and so [do stupid] fools.
Then their money is [left]
   for (some)-(one) else.
Psalm 49:1–12 (CEV) continued

11 The grave will be their home forever and ever,
   although they once had [land of their] own.
12 Our human glory disappears,
   and, like [animals, we] die.

ANTIPHON
Psalm 51:1–17 (NRSVUE)

1 Have mercy on me, O God, according to your steadfast love;
   according to your abundant mercy, blot out my transgressions.

2 Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity,
   and cleanse me from my sin.

ANTIPHON

3 For I know my transgressions,
   and my sin is ever before me.

4 Against you, you alone, have I sinned
   and done what is evil in your sight,

   so that you are justified in your sentence
   and blameless when you pass judgment.

5 Indeed, I was born guilty,
   a sinner when my mother conceived me.

ANTIPHON

6 You desire truth in the inward being;
   therefore teach me wisdom in my secret heart.

7 Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean;
   wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.

8 Let me hear joy and gladness;
   let the bones that you have crushed rejoice.

9 Hide your face from my sins,
   and blot out all my iniquities.

ANTIPHON

10 Create in me a clean heart, O God,
   and put a new and right spirit in me.

11 Do not cast me away from your presence,
   and do not take your holy spirit from me.
Psalm 51:1–17 (NRSVUE) continued

12 Restore to me the joy of your sal-[vation],
   and sustain in me a will-[ing] spirit.
13 Then I will teach transgressors your [ways],
   and sinners will return [to] you.

14 Deliver me from bloodshed, O [God],
   O God of my [sal]-vation,
   and my tongue will sing a-[loud]
   of your deliv-[er]-ance.

ANTIPHON

15 O Lord, open my [lips],
   and my mouth will declare [your] praise.
16 For you have no delight in [sacrifice];
   if I were to give a burnt offering, you would not [be] pleased.

17 The sacrifice acceptable to [God]
   is a brok-[en] spirit;
   a broken and contrite heart, O [God],
   you will not [de]-spise.

ANTIPHON
Psalm 51:1–17 (CEV)

1 You are kind, God! Please have pity on [me].
   You are always merciful! Please wipe away [my] sins.

2 Wash me [clean]
   from all of my sin [and] guilt.

ANTIPHON

3 I know about my [sins],
   and I cannot forget the burden of [my] guilt.

4 You are really the [one]
   I have sinned [a]-gainst;

   I have disobeyed you and have done [wrong].
   So it is right and fair for you to correct and pun-[ish] me.

5 I have sinned and done [wrong]
   since the day I [was] born.

ANTIPHON

6 But you want complete [honesty],
   so teach me [true] wisdom.

7 Wash me with hyssop until I am [clean]
   and whiter [than] snow.

8 Let me be happy and [joyful]!
   You crushed my bones, now let [them] celebrate.

9 Turn your eyes from my [sin]
   and cover [my] guilt.

ANTIPHON

10 Create pure thoughts in [me]
   and make me faithful [a]-gain.

11 Don't chase me away from [you]
   or take your Holy Spirit away [from] me.
Psalm 51:1–17 (CEV) continued

12 Make me as happy as you did when you [saved me];
   make me want to [o]-bey!

13 I will teach sinners your [Law],
   and they will return [to] you.

14 Keep me from any deadly [sin].
   Only you [can] save me!
Then I will shout and [sing]  
   about your power [to] save.

ANTIPHON

15 Help me to [speak],
   and I will praise [you], Lord.

16 Offerings and [sacrifices]
   are not what [you] want.

17 The way to [please you]
   is to be truly sorry deep in [our] hearts.
   This is the kind of [sacrifice]
   you won't [re]-fuse.

ANTIPHON
Psalm 65 (NRSVUE)

1 Praise is due to you, O [God, in] Zion, and to you shall vows [be per]-formed,

2 O you who [answer] prayer! To you all [flesh shall] come.

3 When deeds of iniquity [over]-whelm us, you forgive [our trans]-gressions.

4 Happy are those whom you choose and bring near to live [in your] courts. We shall be satisfied with the goodness of your house, your [holy] temple.

ANTIPHON

5 By awesome deeds you answer us with deliverance, O God of [our sal]-vation; you are the hope of all the ends of the earth and of the [farthest] seas.

6 By your strength you estab-[lished the] mountains; you are gird-[ed with] might.

7 You silence the roaring [of the] seas, the roaring of their waves, the tumult [of the] peoples.

8 Those who live at earth’s farthest bounds are awed [by your] signs; you make the gateways of the morning and the evening [shout for] joy.

ANTIPHON

9 You visit the earth and [water] it; you great-[ly en]-rich it; the river of God is [full of] water; you provide the people with grain, for so you [have pre]-pared it.

10 You water its furrows abundantly, settl-[ing its] ridges, softening it with showers, and bles-[sing its] growth.

11 You crown the year [with your] bounty; your wagon tracks over-[flow with] richness.
Psalm 65 (NRSVUE) continued

12 The pastures of the wilderness [over]-flow;
the hills gird them-[selves with] joy;
13 the meadows clothe them-[selves with] flocks;
the valleys deck themselves with grain; they shout and sing toge-[ther for] joy.

ANTIPHON
Psalm 65 (CEV)

1 Our God, you deserve [praise in] Zion, where we keep our promis-[es to] you.
2 Everyone will [come to] you because you [answer] prayer.

3 When our sins [get us] down, you for-(-give) us.
4 You bless your chosen ones, and you invite them to live near you [in your] temple.
   We will enjoy your house, the [sacred] temple.

ANTIPHON

5 Our God, you save us, and your fearsome deeds answer our [prayers for] justice!
   You give hope to people everywhere on earth, even those a-[cross the] sea.
6 You (are) strong,
   and your mighty power put the moun-[tains in] place.

7 You silence the [roaring] waves
   and the noisy shouts [of the] nations.
8 People far away marvel at your [fearsome] deeds,
   and all who live under the sun celebrate and sing be-[cause of] you.

ANTIPHON

9 You take care [of the] earth
   and send rain to help the soil grow all [kinds of] crops.
   Your rivers ne-[ver run] dry,
   and you prepare the earth to produce a-[bundant] grain.

10 You water all its fields and level the [lumpy] ground.
   You send showers of rain to soften the soil and help the (plants) sprout.
11 Wherever your footsteps [touch the] earth,
   a rich harvest is (gath)-ered.
Psalm 65 (CEV) continued

12 Desert [pastures] blossom,
    and mountains [cele]-brate.

13 Meadows are filled with [sheep and] goats;
    valleys overflow with grain and echo with [joyful] songs.
ANTIPHON
Psalm 67 (NRSVUE)
1 May God be gracious to us and (bless) us
   and make his face to [shine up]-on us, Selah
2 that your way may be known up-(on) earth,
   your saving power a-[mong all] nations.

ANTIPHON

3 Let the peoples praise [you, O] God;
   let all the [peoples] praise you.
4 Let the nations be glad and [sing for] joy,
   for you judge the peoples with equity and guide the nations up-(on) earth. Selah

ANTIPHON

5 Let the peoples praise [you, O] God;
   let all the [peoples] praise you.
6 The earth has yielded [its in]-crease;
   God, our God, has (blessed) us.

7 May God contin-[ue to] bless us;
   let all the ends of the [earth re]-vere him.
5 Let the peoples praise [you, O] God;
   let all the [peoples] praise you.

ANTIPHON
Psalm 67 (CEV)

1 Our God, be [kind and] bless us!
   Be [pleased and] smile.
2 Then everyone on earth will learn to [follow] you,
   and all nations will see your {power} [to] save us.

ANTIPHON

3 Make eve-[ryone] praise you
   and [shout your] praises.
4 Let the nations celebrate with [joyful] songs,
   because you judge fairly and [guide all] nations.

ANTIPHON

5 Make everyone [praise you], God,
   and [shout your] praises.
6 Our God has [blessed the] earth
   with a won-[derful] harvest!

7 Pray for his blessings [to con]-tinue
   and for everyone on earth to wor-[ship our] God.
5 Make everyone [praise you], God,
   and [shout your] praises.

ANTIPHON
Psalm 72:1–7; 10–14 (NRSVUE)

1 Give the king your justice, O [God],
and your righteousness [to a king’s] son.
2 May he judge your people with [righteousness]
and your (poor) (with) justice.

3 May the mountains yield prosperity for the [people],
and the hills, in (right)-[eous]-ness.
4 May he defend the cause of the poor of the [people],
give deliverance to the needy, and (crush) [the op]-pressor.

ANTIPHON

5 May he live while the sun en-[dures]
and as long as the moon, throughout [all gene]-rations.
6 May he be like rain that falls on the mown [grass],
like showers that (wa)-[ter the] earth.

7 In his [days]
may [righteousness] flourish
and peace a-[bound],
until the (moon) [is no] more.

ANTIPHON

10 May the kings of [Tarshish]
and of the isles [render him] tribute;
may the kings of [Sheba]
and [Seba] (bring) gifts.

11 May all kings fall down be-[fore him],
all nations (give) [him] service.
12 For he delivers the needy when they [call],
the poor and [those who have no] helper.
Psalm 72:1–7; 10–14 (NRSVUE) continued

13 He has pity on the weak and the [needy]
    and saves the [lives of the] needy.

14 From oppression and violence he redeems their [life],
    and precious is their (blood) [in his] sight.

ANTIPHON
Psalm 72:1–7; 10–14 (CEV)

1 Please help the king to be honest and [fair]
   just like (you), [our] God.

2 Let him be honest and fair with all your [people],
   especially the poor.

3 Let peace and justice [rule]
   every [mountain and] hill.

4 Let the king defend the [poor],
   rescue the homeless, and crush [everyone who] hurts them.

ANTIPHON

5 Let the king live for-[ever]
   like the [sun and the] moon.

6 Let him be as helpful as [rain]
   that refreshes the [meadows and the] ground.

7 Let the king be [fair]
   with [every]-one,
   and let there be [peace]
   until the [moon falls from the] sky.

ANTIPHON

10 Force the rulers of Tarshish and of the [islands]
   to pay [taxes to] him.
   Make the kings of [Sheba]
   and of [Seba] (bring) gifts.

11 Make other rulers bow [down]
   and [all nations] serve him.

12 Do this because the king rescues the homeless when they cry [out],
   and he helps everyone who is (poor) [and in] need.
Psalm 72:1–7; 10–14 (CEV) continued

13 The king has pity on the weak and the [helpless]
    and pro-[tects those in] need.
14 He cares when they [hurt],
    and he saves them from [cruel and violent] deaths.

ANTIPHON
Psalm 77 (NRSVUE)

1 I cry aloud to [God],
   aloud to God, that he [may] hear me.
2 In the day of my trouble I seek the [Lord];
   in the night my hand is stretched out without wearying; my soul refuses to be com-[fort]-ed.

3 I think of [God],
   and [I] moan;
   I medi-[tate],
   and my [spirit] faints. Selah

ANTIPHON

4 You keep my eyelids from [closing];
   I am so troubled that I can-[not] speak.
5 I consider the days of [old]
   and remember the years of long [a]-go.

6 I commune with my heart in the [night];
   I meditate and search [my] spirit:
7 “Will the Lord spurn for-[ever]
   and never again be fa-[vora]-ble?

8 Has his steadfast love ceased for-[ever]?
   Are his promises at an end for [all] time?
9 Has God forgotten to be [gracious]?
   Has he in anger shut up his [com]-passion?” Selah

ANTIPHON

10 And I say, “It is my [grief]
   that the right hand of the Most High [has] changed.”
11 I will call to mind the deeds of the [LORD];
   I will remember your wonders [of] old.
Psalm 77 (NRSVUE) continued

12 I will meditate on all your [work]
   and muse on your might-[y] deeds.
13 Your way, O God, is [holy].
   What god is so great as [our] God?

14 You are the God who works [wonders]:
   you have displayed your might among [the] peoples.
15 With your strong arm you redeemed your [people],
   the descendants of Jacob [and] Joseph. Selah

ANTIPHON

16 When the waters saw you, O [God],
   when the waters saw you, they were afraid; the very [deep] trembled.
17 The clouds poured out [water];
   the skies thundered; your arrows flashed on ever-[y] side.

18 The crash of your [thunder]
   was in [the] whirlwind;
   your lightnings lit up the [world];
   the earth trembled [and] shook.

19 Your way was through the [sea],
   your path through the mighty waters, yet your footprints were [un]-seen.
20 You led your people like a [flock]
   by the hand of Moses [and] Aaron.

ANTIPHON
Psalm 77 (CEV)

1 I pray to you, Lord [God],
and I beg you [to] listen.
2 In days filled with [trouble],
   I search [for] you.

   And at night I tirelessly lift my hands in [prayer],
   refus-[ing] comfort.

3 When I think of [you],
   I feel restless [and] weak.

ANTIPHON

4 Because of you, Lord God, I can't [sleep].
   I am restless and can't e-[ven] talk.
5 I think of times gone [by],
   of those years long [a]-go.

6 Each night my [mind]
   is flooded [with] questions:
7 “Have you rejected me for-[ever]?
   Won't you be kind [a]-gain?

8 Is this the end of your [love]
   and [your] promises?
9 Have you forgotten how to have [pity]?
   Do you refuse to show mercy because of [your] anger?”

ANTIPHON

10 Then I said, “God Most [High],
   what hurts me most is that you no longer help us with your might-[y] arm.”
11 Our LORD, I will remember the things you have [done],
   your miracles of long [a]-go.
Psalm 77 (CEV) continued

12 I will think about each [one]
   of your might-[y] deeds.
13 Everything you do is [right],
   and no other god compares [with] you.

14 You alone work [miracles],
   and you have let nations see your might-[y] power.
15 With your own arm you rescued your [people],
   the descendants of Jacob [and] Joseph.

ANTIPHON

16 The ocean looked at you, [God],
   and it trembled deep down [with] fear.
17 Water flowed from the [clouds].
   Thunder was heard above as your arrows of lightning
   flashed [a]-bout.

18 Your thunder [roared]
   like chari-[ot] wheels.
   The world was made bright by [lightning],
   and all the [earth] trembled.

19 You walked through the water of the mighty [sea],
   but your footprints were nev-[er] seen.
20 You guided your people like a flock of [sheep],
   and you chose Moses and Aaron to be [their] leaders.

ANTIPHON
Psalm 80 (NRSVUE)

1 Give ear, O Shepherd of Isra-[el],
you who lead Joseph like [a] flock!
You who are enthroned upon the cheru-[bim],
shine forth before Ephraim and Benjamin and [Ma]-nasseh.

Stir up your [might],
and come [to] save us!

3 Restore us, O [God];
let your face shine, that we may [be] saved.

ANTIPHON

4 O LORD God of [hosts],
how long will you be angry with your peo-[ple’s] prayers?

5 You have fed them with the bread of [tears]
and given them tears to drink in [full] measure.

6 You make us the scorn of our [neighbors];
our enemies laugh among [them]-selves.

7 Restore us, O God of [hosts];
let your face shine, that we may [be] saved.

ANTIPHON

8 You brought a vine out of [Egypt];
you drove out the nations and plant-[ed] it.

9 You cleared the ground for [it];
it took deep root and filled [the] land.

10 The mountains were covered with its [shade],
the mighty cedars with [its] branches;
11 it sent out its branches to the [sea]
and its shoots to [the] River.
Psalm 80 (NRSVUE) continued

12 Why then have you broken down its [walls],
   so that all who pass along the way pluck [its] fruit?
13 The boar from the forest ravages [it],
   and all that move in the field feed [on] it.

ANTIPHON

14 Turn again, O God of [hosts];
   look down from heaven [and] see;
   have regard for this [vine],
15 the stock that your right [hand] planted.

16 It has been burned with fire; it has been [cut] down;
   may they perish at the rebuke of [your] countenance.
17 But let your hand be upon the one at your [right hand],
   the one whom you made strong for [your]-self.

18 Then we will never turn back from [you];
   give us life, and we will call on [your] name.
19 Restore us, O LORD God of [hosts];
   let your face shine, that we may [be] saved.

ANTIPHON
Psalm 80 (CEV)

1 Shepherd of [Israel],
   you lead the descendants [of] Joseph,
   and you sit on your throne above the winged [creatures].
   Listen to our prayer and let your light shine
   for the tribes of Ephraim, Benjamin, and [Ma]-nasseh.

   Save us by your [power].

3 Our God, make us strong [a]-gain!
   Smile on [us]
   (and) save us.

ANTIPHON

4 LORD God All-[Powerful],
   how much longer will the prayers of your people make [you] angry?
5 You gave us tears for [food],
   and you made us drink them by [the] bowlful.

6 Because of you, our enemies who live near-[by]
   laugh and joke a-[bout us].
7 Our God, make us strong a-[gain]!
   Smile on us [and] save us.

ANTIPHON

8 We were like a grapevine you brought out of [Egypt].
   You chased other nations away and planted [us] here.
9 Then you cleared the [ground],
   and we put our roots deep, spreading over [the] land.

10 Shade from this vine covered the [mountains].
   Its branches climbed the might-[y] cedars
11 and stretched to the [sea];
   its new growth reached to [the] river.
Psalm 80 (CEV) continued

12 Our Lord, why have you torn down the wall from around the [vineyard]? You let everyone who walks by pick [the] grapes.
13 Now the vine is gobbled [up] by pigs from the forest and other [wild] animals.

ANTIPHON

14 God All-Powerful, please do [something]! Look down from heaven and see what's happening to [this] vine.
15 With your own hands you planted its [roots], and you raised it as your ver-[y] own.

16 Enemies chopped the vine down and set it on [fire]. Now show your anger and [de]-stroy them.
17 But help the one who sits at your right [side], the one you raised to be your ver-[y] own.

18 Then we will never turn a-[way]. Put new life into us, and we will wor-[ship] you.
19 LORD God All-Powerful, make us strong a-[gain]! Smile on us [and] save us.

ANTIPHON
Psalm 85:1–2, 8–13 (NRSVUE)
1 LORD, you were favorable to your [land];
   you restored the fortunes [of] Jacob.
2 You forgave the iniquity of your [people];
   you pardoned all [their] sin. Selah

ANTIPHON

8 Let me hear what God the LORD will [speak],
   for he will speak peace to his people, to his faithful, to those who turn to him in [their] hearts.
9 Surely his salvation is at hand for those who [fear him],
   that his glory may dwell in [our] land.

10 Steadfast love and faithfulness will [meet];
   righteousness and peace will kiss [each] other.
11 Faithfulness will spring up from the [ground],
   and righteousness will look down from [the] sky.

ANTIPHON

12 The LORD will give what is [good],
   and our land will yield its [in]-crease.
13 Righteousness will go before [him]
   and will make a path for [his] steps.

ANTIPHON
Psalm 85:1–2, 8–13 (CEV)

1 Our L ORD, you have blessed your [land]
   and made all go well for Jacob's [de]-scendants.
2 You have forgiven the [sin]
   and taken away the guilt of [your] people.

ANTIPHON

8 I will listen to you, L ORD God, because you promise [peace]
   to those who are faithful and no long-[er] foolish.
9 You are ready to rescue everyone who worships [you],
   so that you will live with us in all [your] glory.

10 Love and loyalty will come to-[gether];
   goodness and peace will [u]-nite.
11 Loyalty will sprout from the [ground];
   justice will look down from the sky [a]-bove.

ANTIPHON

12 Our L ORD, you will [bless us];
   our land will produce wonder-[ful] crops.
13 Justice will march in [front],
   making a path for you [to] follow.

ANTIPHON
Psalm 89:1-4, 19-26 (NRSVUE)

1 I will sing of your steadfast love, O L ORD, for-[ever];
   with my mouth I will proclaim your faithfulness to [all gene]-rations.

2 I declare that your steadfast love is established for-[ever];
   your faithfulness is as (firm) [as the] heavens.

3 You said, “I have made a covenant with my chosen [one];
   I have sworn to my (ser)-[vant] David:

4 ‘I will establish your descendants for-[ever]
   and build your throne for (all) [gene]-rations.’ ” Selah

ANTIPHON

19 Then you spoke in a vision to your faithful one and [said],
   “I have set the crown on one who is mighty; I have exalted one chosen (from) [the] people.

20 I have found my servant [David];
   with my holy oil I [have anointed] him;

21 my hand shall always remain with [him];
   my arm also shall (strength)-[en] him.

22 The enemy shall not out-[wit him];
   the wicked [shall not humble] him.

ANTIPHON

23 I will crush his foes be-[fore him]
   and strike down [those who hate] him.

24 My faithfulness and steadfast love shall be with [him],
   and in my name his [horn shall be ex]-alted.

25 I will set his hand on the [sea]
   and his right [hand on the] rivers.

26 He shall cry to me, ‘You are my [Father],
   my God, and the [Rock of my sal]-vation!’

ANTIPHON
Psalm 89:1-4, 19-26 (CEV)

1 Our Lord, I will sing of your love for-[ever].
   Everyone yet to be born will hear me praise your (faith)-[ful]-ness.

2 I will tell them, “God's love can always be [trusted],
   and his faithfulness lasts as (long) [as the] heavens.”

3 You said, “David, my servant, is my chosen [one],
   and this is the agreement [I made with] him:

4 David, one of your de-[scendants]
   will (al)-[ways be] king.”

ANTIPHON

19 In a vision, you once said to your faithful [followers]:
   “I have helped a mighty hero. I chose him from my people and (made) [him] famous.

20 David, my servant, is the [one]
   I (chose) [to be] king,

21 and I will always be [there]
   to help and (strength)-[en] him.

22 “No enemy will outsmart [David],
   and he won't be defeated by [any hateful] people.

ANTIPHON

23 I will strike down and [crush]
   his troublesome (e)-[ne]-mies.

24 He will always be able to depend on my [love],
   and I will make him [strong with my own] power.

25 I will let him rule the [lands]
   across the [rivers and] seas.

26 He will say to me, ‘You are my Father and my [God],
   as well as the mighty [rock where I am] safe.’

ANTIPHON
Psalm 91 (NRSVUE)

1 You who live in the shelter of the Most [High],
   who abide in the shadow of the [Al]-mighty,
2 will say to the LORD, “My refuge and my [fortress];
   my God, in whom [I] trust.”

3 For he will deliver you from the snare of the [hunter]
   and from the deadly pest-[i]-lence;
4 he will cover you with his pinions, and under his wings you will find [refuge];
   his faithfulness is a shield and [de]-fense.

5 You will not fear the terror of the [night]
   or the arrow that flies [by] day
6 or the pestilence that stalks in [darkness]
   or the destruction that wastes [at] noonday.

ANTIPHON

7 A thousand may fall at your [side],
   ten thousand at your right hand, but it will not come [near] you.
8 You will only look with your [eyes]
   and see the punishment of [the] wicked.

9 Because you have made the LORD your [refuge],
   the Most High your dwel-[ling] place,
10 no evil shall be-[fall you],
   no scourge come near [your] tent.

11 For he will command his angels concerning [you]
   to guard you in all [your] ways.
12 On their hands they will bear you [up],
   so that you will not dash your foot against [a] stone.

13 You will tread on the [lion]
   and [the] adder;
   the young lion and the [serpent]
   you will trample un-[der] foot.
Psalm 91 (NRSVUE) continued

ANTIPHON

14 Those who love me, I will de-[liver];
   I will protect those who know [my] name.
15 When they call to me, I will answer [them];
   I will be with them in trouble; I will rescue them and hon-[or] them.

16 With long [life]
   I will satis-[fy] them
   and [show them]
   my [sal]-vation.

ANTIPHON
Psalm 91 (CEV)

1 Live under the protection of God Most [High]
   and stay in the shadow of God [All]-Powerful.

2 Then you will say to the [LORD],
   “You are my fortress, my place of safety; you are my God, and I [trust] you.”

3 The Lord will keep you safe from secret [traps]
   and deadly [dis]-eases.

4 He will spread his wings over you and keep you se-[cure].
   His faithfulness is like a shield or a ci-[ty] wall.

5 You won't need to worry about dangers at [night]
   or arrows during [the] day.

6 And you won't fear diseases that strike in the [dark]
   or sudden disaster [at] noon.

ANTIPHON

7 You will not be [harmed],
   though thousands fall all [a]-round you.

8 And with your own [eyes]
   you will see the punishment of [the] wicked.

9 The LORD Most High is your [fortress].
   Run to him [for] safety,

10 and no terrible disasters will [strike you]
    or [your] home.

ANTIPHON

11 God will command his [angels]
    to protect you wherever [you] go.

12 They will carry you in their [arms],
    and you won’t hurt your feet on [the] stones.
Psalm 91 (CEV)

13 You will over-[power]
the strong-[est] lions
and the [most]
dead-[ly] snakes.

ANTIPHON

14 The Lord says, “If you [love me]
and truly know who [I] am,
I will rescue [you]
and keep [you] safe.

15 When you are in trouble, call out to [me].
I will answer and be there to protect and hon-[or] you.
16 You will live a long [life]
and see my sav-[ing] power.”

ANTIPHON
Psalm 95 (NRSVUE)

1 O come, let us sing to the [LORD];
   let us make a joyful noise to the rock of our [sal]-vation!

2 Let us come into his presence with thanks-[giving];
   let us make a joyful noise to him with songs [of] praise!

3 For the [LORD]
   is a [great] God
   and a great [King]
   above [all] gods.

4 In his hand are the depths of the [earth];
   the heights of the mountains are his [al]-so.

5 The sea is his, for he [made it],
   and the dry land, which his hands [have] formed.

ANTIPHON

6 O come, let us worship and bow [down];
   let us kneel before the L ORD, [our] Maker!

7 For he is our [God],
   and we are the people of his pasture and the sheep of [his] hand.

ANTIPHON

O that today you would listen to his [voice]!

8 Do not harden your hearts, as at Meribah, as on the day at Massah in the wil-[der]-ness,

9 when your ancestors tested [me]
   and put me to the proof, though they had seen [my] work.

10 For forty years I loathed that gene-[ration]
   and said, “They are a people whose hearts go astray, and they do not regard [my] ways.”

11 Therefore in my anger I [swore],
   “They shall not enter [my] rest.”

ANTIPHON
Psalm 95 (CEV)

1 Sing joyful [songs] to [the] LORD!
Praise the mighty [rock] where we [are] safe.

2 Come to worship [him] with thankful hearts and songs [of] praise.

3 The LORD is the greatest [God],
   king over all o-[ther] gods.

4 He holds the deepest part of the earth in his [hands],
   and the mountain peaks also belong [to] him.
5 The ocean is the Lord's because he made [it],
   and with his own hands he formed the [dry] land.

ANTIPHON

6 Bow down and [worship]
   the LORD our [Cre]-ator!
7 The LORD is our God, and we are his [people],
   the sheep he takes care of in his [own] pasture.

ANTIPHON

Listen to God's voice to-[day]!

8 Don't be stubborn and rebel as your ancestors did at Meribah and Massah out in [the] desert.

9 For forty [years]
   they tested God and saw the things [he] did.

10 Then God got tired of them and [said],
    “You never show good sense, and you don't understand what I want you [to] do.”

11 In his anger, God [told them],
    “You people will never enter my place [of] rest.”

ANTIPHON
Psalm 96 (NRSVUE)

1 [O] sing to the LORD [a new] song;
   sing to the LORD, [all the] (earth).

2 […] Sing to the LORD; [bless his] name;
   tell of his salvation from [day to] day.

3 [De]-clare his glory a-[mong the] nations,
   his marvelous works among [all the] peoples.

4 [For] great is the LORD and greatly [to be] praised;
   he is to be revered a-[bove all] gods.

5 [For] all the gods of the peo-[ples are] idols,
   but the LORD [made the] heavens.

6 […] Honor and majesty are [before] him;
   strength and beauty are in his [sanctu]-ary.

ANTIPHON

7 [A]-scribe to the LORD, O families [of the] peoples,
   ascribe to the LORD glo-[ry and] (strength).

8 [A]-scribe to the LORD the glory [due his] name;
   bring an offering, and come in-[to his] courts.

9 […] Wor-[ship the] LORD
   in [holy] splendor;
   […] trem-[ble be]-fore him,
   all (the) earth.

ANTIPHON

10 […] Say among the nations, “The [LORD is] king!
   The world is firm-[ly es]-tablished;
   [it] shall ne-[ver be] moved.
   He will judge the peo-[ples with] equity.”
Psalm 96 (NRSVUE) continued

11 {Let the} heavens be glad,
and let the [earth re]-(joice);
{let the} sea roar and [all that] fills it;
12 let the field exult and {every}-[thing] in it.

[Then] shall all the trees of the forest sing for joy 13 before the LORD, for [he is] coming,
for he is coming to [judge the] (earth).
[…] He will judge the [world with] righteousness
and the peoples [with his] truth.

ANTIPHON
Psalm 96 (CEV)

1 [...] Sing a new song [to the] LORD! Everyone on this earth, sing praises [to the] (LORD),
2 [...] sing and [praise his] name. Day after day announce, “The [LORD has] saved us!”
3 [...] Tell every na-[tion on] earth, “The LORD is wonderful and does mar-[velous] (things)!
4 [The] LORD is great and deserves our [greatest] praise! He is the only God worthy [of our] worship.
5 [...] Other nations [worship] idols, but the LORD crea-[ted the] heavens.
6 [Give] honor and praise [to the] LORD, whose power and beauty fill his [holy] temple.”

ANTIPHON

7 [...] Tell everyone of every nation, “Praise the glorious power [of the] LORD. He is wonderful! Praise him and bring an offering in-[to his] temple.
9 [...] Everyone on [earth, now] tremble and worship the LORD, majest-[ic and] holy.”

ANTIPHON

10 [An]-nounce to the nations, “The [LORD is] King! The world stands firm, never to be shaken, and he will judge its peo-[ple with] fairness.”
11 [...] Tell the heavens and the earth to be glad and [cele]-brate! Command the ocean to roar with [all its] creatures
12 {and the} fields to rejoice with [all their] crops. Then every tree in the forest will sing joyful songs 13 [to the] (LORD). [...] He is coming to judge all peo-[ple on] earth with fair-[ness and] truth.

ANTIPHON
Psalm 104:24-34, 35b (NRSVUE)

24 [O] LORD, how manifold [are your] works!
   In wisdom you have [made them] (all);
   [the] earth is full [of your] creatures.
25 There is the sea, [great and] wide;
   […] creeping things innumerable are [there],
   living things both [small and] (great).
26 […] There [go the] ships
   and Leviathan that you formed to [sport in] it.

ANTIPHON

27 [These] all [look to] you
   to give them their food [in due] season;
28 [when] you give to them, they gather it up;
   when you open your hand, they are filled [with good] things.

29 [When] you hide your face, they [are dis]mayed;
   when you take away their breath, they die and return [to their] (dust).
30 [When] you send forth your spirit, they [are cre]ated,
   and you renew the face [of the] ground.

ANTIPHON

31 [May the] glory of the LORD endure for ever;
   may the LORD rejoice [in his] (works)—
32 [who] looks on the earth [and it] trembles,
   who touches the mountains [and they] smoke.

33 […] I will sing to the LORD as long [as I] live;
   I will sing praise to my God while [I have] being.
34 [May my] meditation be pleasing to him, for I rejoice [in the] LORD.
35b Bless the LORD, O my soul. [Praise the] LORD!

ANTIPHON
Psalm 104:24-34, 35b (CEV)

24 [Our] LORD, by your wisdom you made so [many] things; 
the whole earth is covered with your [living] creatures.

25 [But] what about the ocean so [big and] wide? 
It is alive with creatures, [large] and small.

26 [And] there [are the] ships, 
as well as Le-[via]-[than], 
[the] monster [you cre]-ated 
to splash [in the] sea.

ANTIPHON

27 […] All of these de-[pend on] you 
to provide [them with] (food),

28 [and] you feed each one with [your own] hand, 
until [they are] full.

29 [But] when you turn away, they are [terri]-fied; 
when you end their life, they [die and] (rot).

30 […] You created all of them [by your] Spirit, 
and you give new life [to the] earth.

ANTIPHON

31 [Our] LORD, we pray that your glory will [last for]-ever 
and that you will be pleased with what [you have] (done).

32 […] You look at the earth, [and it] trembles. 
You touch the mountains, and [smoke goes] up.

33 [As] long as I live, I will sing and praise you, the (LORD) God.

34 I hope my thoughts will please you, because you are the one who [makes me] (glad).

35b [With] all my heart I [praise you], LORD! 
I (praise) you!

ANTIPHON
Psalm 105:1-11, 45b (NRSVUE)

1 O give thanks to the LORD; call on his [name];
   make known his deeds a-(mong) [the] peoples.
2 Sing to him, sing praises to [him];
   tell of all his (won)-[derful] works.

3 Glory in his holy [name];
   let the hearts of those who seek the (LORD) [re]-joice.
4 Seek the LORD and his [strength];
   seek his presence con-(tin)-[ual]-ly.

5 Remember the wonderful works he has [done],
   his miracles and the judgments (he) [has] uttered,
6 O offspring of his servant [Abraham],
   children of Jacob, (his) [chosen] ones.

ANTIPHON

7 He is the LORD our [God];
   his judgments are [in all the] earth.
8 He is mindful of his covenant for-[ever],
   of the word that he commanded for a [thousand gene]-rations,

9 the covenant that he made with [Abraham],
   his sworn [promise to] Isaac,
10 which he confirmed to Jacob as a [statute],
   to Israel as an ever-[lasting cove]-nant,

11 saying, “To you I will give the land of [Canaan]
   as your portion for an in-(her)-[i]-tance.”
45b that they might keep his statutes and observe his [laws].
   […] (Praise) (the) LORD!

ANTIPHON
Psalm 105:1–11, 45b (CEV)

1 Praise the LORD and pray in his [name]!
   Tell everyone [what he has] done.
2 Sing praises to the [LORD]!
   Tell a-[bout his mira]-cles.

3 Celebrate and worship his holy [name]
   with (all) [your] heart.
4 Trust the [LORD] and (his) [mighty] power.

5 Remember his miracles and all his [wonders]
   and [his fair de]-cisions.
6 You belong to the family of Abraham, his [servant];
   you are his chosen ones, the de-(scen)-dants of Jacob.

ANTIPHON

7 The LORD is our [God], bringing justice
   every-(where) [on] earth.
8 He will never forget his agreement or his [promises],
   not in (thou)-[sands of] years.

9 God made an eternal promise 10 to Abraham, Isaac, and [Jacob],
11 when he said, “I'll give you the (land) [of] Canaan.”
45 He did this so that his people would obey all his [laws].
   Shout [praises to the] LORD!

ANTIPHON
Psalm 107 (NRSVUE)

1 O give thanks to the LORD, for [he is] good,  
   for his steadfast love endures for ever.
2 Let the redeemed of the LORD say so,  
   those he redeemed from trouble

3 and [gathered] in  
   from (the) lands,  
   from the east and [from the] west,  
   from the north and [from the] south.

ANTIPHON
4 Some wandered in [desert] wastes,  
   finding no way to an inhabited town;  
5 hungrily and thirsty,  
   their soul faint in them.

6 Then they cried to the LORD in their trouble,  
   and he delivered them from their distress;  
7 he led them by a straight way,  
   until they reached an inhabited town.

8 Let them thank the LORD for his steadfast love,  
   for his wonderful works to human-kind.  
9 For he satisfies the thirsty,  
   and the hungry he fills with good things.

ANTIPHON

10 Some sat in darkness [and in] gloom,  
   prisoners in misery [and in] irons,  
11 for they had rebelled against the [words of] God  
   and spurned the counsel of the (Most) High.
Psalm 107 (NRSVUE) continued

12 Their hearts were bowed down [with hard] labor; they fell down, with no-[one to] help.
13 Then they cried to the LORD [in their] trouble, and he saved them from [their dis]-tress;

14 he brought them out of dark-[ness and] gloom, and broke their [bonds a]-part.
15 Let them thank the LORD for his [steadfast] love, for his wonderful works to [human]-kind.
16 For (he) shatters the [doors of] bronze and [cuts in] two the [bars of] iron.

ANTIPHON

17 Some were sick through their [sinful] ways and because of their iniquities en-[dured af]-liction;
18 they loathed any [kind of] food, and they drew near to the [gates of] death.

19 Then they cried to the LORD [in their] trouble, and he saved them from [their dis]-tress;
20 he sent out his [word and] healed them and delivered them [from de]-struction.

21 Let them thank the LORD for his [steadfast] love, for his wonderful works to [human]-kind.
22 And let them offer thanksgiving [sacri]-fices and tell of his deeds with [songs of] joy.

ANTIPHON
Psalm 107 (NRSVUE) continued

23 Some went down to the [sea in] ships,
doing business on the [mighty] waters;
24 they saw the deeds [of the] LORD,
his wondrous works [in the] deep.

25 For he commanded and raised the [stormy] wind,
which lifted up the waves [of the] sea.
26 They mounted up to heaven; they went down [to the] depths;
their courage melted away in their ca-[lami]-ty;

27 they reeled and stag-[gered like] drunkards
and were at their (wits’) end.
28 Then they cried to the LORD [in their] trouble,
and he brought them out from [their dis]-tress;

29 he made the [storm be] still,
and the waves of the [sea were] hushed.
30 Then they were glad because [they had] quiet,
and he brought them to their de-[sired] haven.

31 Let them thank the LORD for his [steadfast] love,
for his wonderful works to [human]-kind.
32 Let them extol him in the congregation [of the] people
and praise him in the assembly [of the] elders.

ANTIPHON

33 He turns rivers in-[to a] desert,
springs of water into [thirsty] ground,
34 a fruitful land into a [salty] waste,
because of the wickedness of its in-[habi]-tants.

35 He turns a desert into [pools of] water,
a parched land into [springs of] water.
36 And there he lets the [hungry] live,
and they establish a [town to] live in;
they sow fields and (plant) vineyards
and get a [fruitful] yield.

By his blessing they mul-[tiply] greatly,
and he does not let their cat-[tle de]-crease.

ANTIPHON

When they are dimin[ished] [and brought] low
through oppression, trou-[ble, and] sorrow,

he pours con-[tempt on] princes
and makes them wander in [trackless] wastes,

but he raises up the needy out [of dis]-tress
and makes their fami-[lies like] flocks.

The upright see it [and are] glad,
and all wickedness [stops its] mouth.

Let those [who are] wise
pay attention [to these] things
and consider the [steadfast] love
of (the) LORD.
Psalm 107 (CEV)
1 Shout praises [to the] LORD!
   He is good to us, and his love [never] fails.
2 Everyone the LORD has rescued from trou-[ble should] praise him,
3 everyone he has brought from the east and the west, the north [and the] south.

ANTIPHON

4 Some of you were lost in the [scorching] desert,
   far [from a] town.
5 You were hun-[gry and] thirsty
   and about [to give] up.

6 You were in ser-[ious] trouble,
   but you prayed [to the] LORD,
   and he [rescued] you.
7 At once he brought you [to a] town.

8 You should praise the LORD [for his] love
   and for the wonderful things he does for [all of] us.
9 To everyone who is thirsty, he gives some-[thing to] drink;
   to everyone who is hungry, he gives good [things to] eat.

ANTIPHON

10 Some of you were prisoners suffering in [deepest] darkness
    and [bound by] chains,
11 because you had rebelled against [God Most] High
    and refused [his ad]-vice.

12 You were worn out from work-[ing like] slaves,
    and no one [came to] help.
13 You were in ser-[ious] trouble,
    but you prayed to the LORD, and he [rescued] you.
Psalm 107 (CEV) continued

14 He brought you out of the [deepest] darkness
   and [broke your] chains.
15 You should praise the LORD for his love and for the wonderful things he does for [all of] us.
16 He breaks down bronze gates and shatters [iron] locks.

ANTIPHON

17 Some of you had foolishly committed a [lot of] sins
   and were in ter-[rible] pain.
18 The very thought of food was disgust-[ing to] you,
   and you were [almost] dead.

19 You were in ser-[ious] trouble,
   but you prayed to the LORD, and he [rescued] you.
20 By the power of [his own] word,
   he healed you and saved you [from de]-struc-tion.

21 You should praise the LORD [for his] love
   and for the wonderful things he does for [all of] us.
22 You should celebrate by offering [sacri]-fices
   and singing joyful songs to tell what [he has] done.

ANTIPHON

23 Some of you [made a] living
   by sailing the [mighty] sea,
24 and you saw the [mira]-cles
   the LORD [performed] there.

25 At his command a [storm a]-rose,
   and waves co-[vered the] sea.
26 You were tossed to the sky and to the [ocean] depths,
   until things looked so bad that you [lost your] courage.
Psalm 107 (CEV) continued

27 You stag-gered like drunkards
    and gave [up all] hope.
28 You were in ser-i-ous trouble,
    but you prayed to the L ORD, and he [rescued] you.

29 He made the (storm) stop
    and the [sea be] quiet.
30 You were happy be-cause of this,
    and he brought you to the port where you want-[ed to] go.

31 You should praise the L ORD [for his] love
    and for the wonderful things he does for [all of] us.
32 Ho-[nor the] L ORD
    when you and your leaders [meet to] worship.

ANTIPHON

33 If you start [doing] wrong,
    the L ORD will turn rivers [into] deserts,
34 flow-[ing streams into] (scorched) land,
    and fruitful fields into [beds of] salt.

35 But the L ORD can also turn deserts [into] lakes
    and scorched land into [flowing] streams.
36 If [you are] hungry,
    you can settle there and [build a] town.

37 You can plant [fields and] vineyards
    that produce a (good) harvest.
38 The L ORD will bless you

ANTIPHON
Psalm 107 (CEV) continued

39 Sometimes you may be crushed by troubles and sorrows, until only a few of you are left to survive.

40 But the LORD will take revenge on those who conquer you, and he will make them wander across desert sands.

41 When you are suffering and in need, he will come to your rescue, and your families will grow as fast as a herd of sheep.

42 You will see this because you obey the LORD, but everyone who is wicked will be silenced.

43 Be wise! Remember this and think about the kindness of the LORD.

ANTIPHON
Psalm 114 (NRSVUE)

1 (When) Israel went out [from] Egypt,
the house of Jacob from a people of (strange) language,
2 Judah became God’s sanc-[tu]-ary,
   Israel [his do]-minion.

ANTIPHON

3 (The) sea looked [and] fled;
   Jordan (turned) back.
4 The mountains skipped [like] rams,
   the hills (like) lambs.

ANTIPHON

5 [Why is] it, O sea, that [you] flee?
   O Jordan, that [you turn] back?
6 O mountains, that you skip [like] rams?
   O hills, (like) lambs?

ANTIPHON

7 […] Tremble, O earth, at the presence of [the] LORD,
at the presence of the [God of] Jacob,
8 who turns the rock into a pool [of] water,
   the flint into a [spring of] water.

ANTIPHON
Psalm 114 (CEV)
1[...] God brought his people out [of] Egypt,
that land with a (strange) language.
2He made Judah his ho-[ly] place
and ruled over [Isra]-el.

ANTIPHON

3[When the] sea looked at God, it ran [a]-way,
and the Jordan River [flowed up]-stream.
4The mountains and [the] hills
skipped a-[round like] goats.

ANTIPHON

5[Ask the] sea why it ran [a]-way
or ask the Jordan why it [flowed up]-stream.
6Ask the mountains and [the] hills
why they [skipped like] goats!

ANTIPHON

7[...] Earth, you [will] tremble,
when the Lord God of Jacob (comes) near,
8because he turns solid rock
into flow-[ing] streams and [pools of] water.

ANTIPHON
Psalm 116 (NRSVUE)

1 I love the LORD because [he has] heard
   my voice and my [suppli]-cations.
2 Because he inclined his [ear to] me,
   therefore I will call on him as long [as I] live.

3 The snares of death en-[compasse]d me;
   the pangs of Sheol laid hold on me; I suffered dis-[tress and] anguish.
4 Then I called on the name [of the] LORD,
   “O LORD, I pray, [save my] life!”

ANTIPHON

5 Gracious is the [LORD and] righteous;
   our God is [merci]-ful.
6 The LORD pro-[tects the] simple;
   when I was brought [low, he] saved me.

7 Return, [O my] soul,
   to (your) rest,
   for (the) LORD
   has dealt bountiful-[ly with] you.

ANTIPHON

8 For you have delivered my [soul from] death,
   my eyes from tears, my [feet from] stumbling.
9 I walk be-[fore the] LORD
   in the land [of the] living.

10 I kept my faith, even [when I] said,
    “I am great-[ly af]-flicted”;
11 I said in my [conster]-nation,
    “Everyone [is a] liar.”

ANTIPHON
Psalm 116 (NRSVUE) continued

12 What shall I return [to the] LORD
   for all his bounty to me?

13 I will lift up the cup [of salvation]
   and call on the name [of the] LORD;

14 I will pay my vows [to the] LORD
   in the presence of [all his] people.
15 Precious in the sight [of the] LORD
   is the death of his [faithful] ones.

ANTIPHON

16 O LORD, I [am your] servant;
   I am your servant, the child of your [serving] girl.
   You have [loosed my] bonds.
17 I will offer to you a thanksgiving sacrifice and call on the name [of the] LORD.

18 I will pay my vows [to the] LORD
   in the presence of [all his] people,
19 in the courts of the house [of the] LORD,
   in your midst, O Jerusalem. [Praise the] LORD!

ANTIPHON
Psalm 116 (CEV)

1 I [love you], LORD!
   You answered (my) prayers.

2 You paid attention to me,
   and so I will pray to you as long [as I] live.

3 Death attacked [from all] sides,
   and I was captured by its [painful] chains.
   But when I was [really] hurting,

4 I prayed and said, “LORD, please don't [let me] die!”

ANTIPHON

5 You are kind, LORD, so good and [merci]-ful.

6 You protect ordinary people,
   and when I was helpless, you saved me
   and treated [me so] kindly
   that I don't need to worry [any]-more.

ANTIPHON

8 You, LORD, have saved my [life from] death,
   my eyes from tears, my [feet from] stumbling.

9 Now I will walk [at your] side
   in this land [of the] living.

10 I was faithful to you
    when I was suffering,

11 though in my confusion I said,
   “I can't trust [any]-one!”

ANTIPHON

12 What must I [give you], LORD,
   for being so [good to] me?

13 I will pour out an offering of [wine to] you,
   and I will pray in your name because [you have] saved me.
Psalm 116 (CEV) continued

14 I will keep my promise to you when your people meet.

15 You are deeply concerned when one of your loyal people faces death.

ANTIPHON

16 I worship you, LORD, just as my mother did, and you have rescued me from the chains of death.

17 I will offer you a sacrifice to show how grateful I am, and I will pray.

18 I will keep my promise to you when (your) people

19 gather at your temple in Je-ru-sa-lem. Shout praises [to the] LORD!

ANTIPHON
Psalm 118:1–2, 19–29 (NRSVUE)

1 O give thanks to the LORD, for he is [good];
   his steadfast love endures [for]-ever!
2 Let Israel [say],
   “His steadfast [love endures for]-ever.”

ANTIPHON

19 Open to me the gates of [righteousness],
   that I may enter through them and give [thanks to the] LORD.
20 This is the gate of the [LORD];
   the righteous [shall enter through] it.

ANTIPHON

21 I thank you that you have [answered me]
   and have become my salvation.
22 The stone that the builders re-[jected]
   has become the (chief) [corner]-stone.

23 This is the LORD’s [doing];
   it is marvelous (in) [our] eyes.
24 This is the day that the LORD has [made];
   let us rejoice and be (glad) (in) it.

25 Save [us],
   we be-[seech you, O] LORD!
   O LORD, we be-[seech you],
   […] (give) [us suc]-cess!

ANTIPHON
Psalm 118:1–2, 19–29 (NRSVUE) continued

26 Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the [LORD].
   We bless you from the [house of the] LORD.
27 The LORD is God, and he has given us [light].
   Bind the festal procession with branches, up to the (horns) [of the] altar.

28 You are my God, and I will give thanks to [you];
   you are my God; [I will ex]-tol you.
29 O give thanks to the LORD, for he is [good],
   for his steadfast [love endures for]-ever.

ANTIPHON
Psalm 118:1–2, 19–29 (CEV)

1 Tell the LORD how thankful you are, because he is kind and always merciful.

2 Let Israel shout, “God is always merciful!”

ANTIPHON

19 Open the gates of justice!
     I will enter and tell the LORD how thankful I am.

20 Here is the gate of the LORD!
     Everyone who does right may enter this gate.

ANTIPHON

21 I praise the LORD for answering my prayers and saving me.

22 The stone that the builders tossed aside has now become the most important stone.

23 The LORD has done this, and it is amazing to us.

24 This day belongs to the LORD!
     Let’s celebrate and be glad today.

25 We’ll ask the LORD to save us!
    We’ll sincerely ask the LORD […] to make us win.

ANTIPHON
Psalm 118:1–2, 19–29 (CEV) continued

26 God bless the one who comes in the name of the [LORD]!
   We praise you from here in the [house of the] LORD.
27 The LORD is our God, and he has given us [light]!
   Start the celebration! March with palm branches all the (way) [to the] altar.

28 The LORD is my [God]!
   I will praise him and tell him how [thankful I] am.
29 Tell the LORD how thankful you [are],
   because he is kind and [always merci]-ful.

ANTIPHON
Psalm 121 (NRSVUE)

1 I lift up my eyes to the [hills]—
   from where will my [help] come?
2 My help comes from the [LORD],
   who made heaven [and] earth.

ANTIPHON

3 He will not let your foot be [moved];
   he who keeps you will [not] slumber.
4 He who keeps [Israel]
   will neither slumber [nor] sleep.

ANTIPHON

5 The LORD is your [keeper];
   the LORD is your shade at your [right] hand.
6 The sun shall not strike you by [day]
   nor the moon [by] night.

ANTIPHON

7 The LORD will keep you from all [evil];
   he will keep [your] life.
8 The LORD will keep your going out and your coming [in]
   from this time on and forever—more.

ANTIPHON
Psalm 121 (CEV)

1 I look to the [hills]!
   Where will I [find] help?

2 It will come from the [LORD],
   who created heaven [and] earth.

ANTIPHON

3 The LORD is your pro-[tector],
   and he won't go to sleep or let [you] stumble.

4 The protector of Israel doesn't [doze]
   or ever [get] drowsy.

ANTIPHON

5 The LORD is your pro-[tector],
   there at your right side to shade you from [the] sun.

6 You won't be harmed by the sun during the [day]
   or by the moon [at] night.

ANTIPHON

7 The LORD will pro-[tect you]
   and keep you safe from [all] dangers.

8 The LORD will protect you now and [always]
   wherever [you] go.

ANTIPHON
Psalm 122 (NRSVUE)
1 [I was] glad when they said [to] me,
   "Let us go to the house [of the] LORD!"
2 Our feet are standing within [your] gates,
   O Je-[rusa]-lem.

ANTIPHON

3 (Je)-rusalem—built as [a] city
   that is bound firm-[ly to]-gether.
4 To it the tribes [go] up,
   the tribes [of the] LORD,

[...] as was decreed [for] Israel,
   to give thanks to the name [of the] LORD.
5 For there the thrones for judgment were [set] up,
   the thrones of the [house of] David.

ANTIPHON

6 [...] Pray for the peace of [Je]-rusalem:
   "May they prosper who (love) you.
7 Peace be within [your] walls
   and security with-[in your] towers."

8 [...] For the sake of my relatives [and] friends
   I will say, "Peace [be with]-in you."
9 For the sake of the house of the LORD [our] God,
   I will [seek your] good.

ANTIPHON
Psalm 122 (CEV)

1 [...] It made me glad when [they] said,  
   “Let's go to the house [of the] LORD!”

2 Jerusalem, we are [standing]  
   in-[side your] gates.

ANTIPHON

3 (Je)-rusalem, what a strong and beautiful city [you] are!

4 Every tribe of the LORD obeys him and comes to you to [praise his] name.

5 David's royal throne [is] here  
   where [justice] rules.

ANTIPHON

6 (Je)-rusalem, we pray that you will [have] peace,  
   and that all will go well for [those who] love you.

7 May there be peace inside your ci-[ty] walls  
   and [in your] palaces.

8 [...] Because of my friends and my re-[la]-tives,  
   I will [pray for] peace.

9 And because of the house of the LORD [our] God,  
   I will work [for your] good.

ANTIPHON

263
Psalm 126 (NRSVUE)
1 When the LORD restored the fortunes of [Zion],
   we were like those [who] dream.
2 Then our mouth was filled with [laughter]
   and our tongue with shouts [of] joy;

then it was said among the [nations],
   “The LORD has done great things [for] them.”
3 The LORD has done great things for [us],
   and we [re]-joiced.

ANTIPHON

4 Restore our fortunes, O [LORD],
   like the watercourses in [the] Negeb.
5 May those who sow in [tears]
   reap with shouts [of] joy.

6 Those who go out [weeping],
   bearing the seed [for] sowing,
shall come home with shouts of [joy],
   carrying [their] sheaves.

ANTIPHON

264
Psalm 126 (CEV)

1 It seemed like a [dream]
   when the LORD brought us back to the city [of] Zion.

2 We celebrated with [laughter]
   and joy-[ful] songs.

   In foreign nations it was [said],
   “The LORD has worked miracles for [his] people.”

3 And so we cele-[brated]
   because the LORD had indeed worked miracles [for] us.

ANTIPHON

4 Our [LORD],
   we ask you to bless our people [a]-gain,
   and let us be like [streams]
   in the South-[ern] Desert.

5 We cried as we went out to plant our [seeds].
   Now let us celebrate as we bring in [the] crops.

6 We cried on the way to plant our [seeds],
   but we will celebrate and shout as we bring in [the] crops.

ANTIPHON
Psalm 127 (NRSVUE)

1 Unless the LORD builds the [house],
   those who build it [labor in] vain.
Unless the LORD guards the [city],
   the [guard keeps watch in] vain.

2 It is in vain that you rise up [early]
   and [go late to] rest,
eating the bread of anxious [toil],
   for he gives [sleep to his be]-loved.

ANTIPHON

3 Sons are indeed a heritage from the [LORD],
   the fruit of the [womb a re]-ward.
4 Like arrows in the hand of a [warrior]
   are the [sons of] (one’s) youth.

5 Happy is the man who [has]
   his quiver (full) [of] them.
He shall not be put to [shame]
   when he speaks with his {ene}-[mies in the] gate.

ANTIPHON
Psalm 127 (CEV)

1 Without the help of the [LORD] it is useless to build a home or to (guard) [a] city.
2 It is useless to get up early and stay up late in order to earn a [living].
   God takes care of his own, [even while they] sleep.

ANTIPHON

3 Children are a [blessing] and a [gift from the] LORD.
4 Having a lot of children to take care of you in your old [age] is like a warrior [with a lot of] arrows.

5 The more you [have], the better [off you will] be, because they will pro-[tect] you when your enemies at-(tack) [you in] court.

ANTIPHON
Psalm 130 (NRSVUE)
1 Out of the depths I cry to you, O [LORD].
2 Lord, (hear) [my] voice!
   Let your ears be at-[tentive]
   to the voice of my (sup)-(pli)-cations!

ANTIPHON

3 If you, O LORD, should mark in-[iquities],
   Lord, (who) [could] stand?
4 But there is forgiveness with [you],
   so that you (may) [be re]-vered.

ANTIPHON

5 I wait for the LORD; my soul [waits],
   and in his (word) [I] hope;
6 my soul waits for the Lord more than those who watch for the [morning],
   more than those who (watch) [for the] morning.

ANTIPHON

7 O Israel, hope in the [LORD]!
   For with the LORD there is steadfast love, and with him is great {power} [to re]-deem.
8 It is he who will redeem Isra-[el]
   from all [its iniqui]-ties.

ANTIPHON
Psalm 130 (CEV)
1 From a sea of [troubles]
   I cry [out to you], LORD.
2 Won't you please [listen]
   as (I) [beg for] mercy?

ANTIPHON

3 If you kept record of our [sins],
   no [one could last] long.
4 But you for-[give us],
   and so [we will worship] you.

ANTIPHON

5 With all my heart, I am waiting, LORD, for [you]!
   I trust [your promises].
6 I wait for you more eagerly than a soldier on guard duty waits for the [dawn].
   Yes, I wait more eagerly than a soldier on guard duty (waits) [for the] dawn.

ANTIPHON

7 Israel, trust the [LORD]!
   God is always merciful and has the [power to] save you.
8 Israel, the LORD will [save you]
   […] (from) [all your] sins.

ANTIPHON
Psalm 131 (NRSVUE)
1 O Lord, my heart is not lifted [up];
   my eyes are not raised [too] high;
   I do not occupy myself with [things]
   too great and too marvelous [for] me.

ANTIPHON

2 But I have calmed and quieted my [soul],
   like a weaned child with [its] mother;
   my soul is like the weaned [child]
   that is [with] me.
3 O Isra-[el],
   hope in [the] Lord
   from this time [on]
   and forev-[er]-more.

ANTIPHON
Psalm 131 (CEV)

1 I am [not]
conceit-[ed], Lord,
and I don't waste my [time]
on impossi-[ble] schemes.

ANTIPHON

2 But I have learned to feel safe and [satisfied]
like a young child in its moth-[er's] arms.
3 People of Isra-[el],
you must trust the Lord now and [for]-ever.

ANTIPHON
Psalm 136 (NRSVUE)

1 O give thanks to the LORD, for [he is] good,
   God’s love endures forever; (God’s love was sent to save us; | We are God’s sons and daughters.)

2 O give thanks to the [God of] gods,
   God’s love endures forever; (God’s love will never fail us! | God’s love, it never falters!)

3 O give thanks to the [Lord of] lords,
   God’s love endures forever;

4 who alone [does great] wonders,
   God’s love endures forever;

5 who by understanding [made the] heavens,
   God’s love endures forever;

6 who spread out the earth [on the] waters,
   God’s love endures forever;

7 who made the (great) lights,
   God’s love endures forever;

8 the sun to rule {over} [the] day,
   God’s love endures forever;

9 the moon and stars to rule {over} [the] night,
   God’s love endures forever;

10 who struck Egypt [through their] firstborn,
    God’s love endures forever;

11 and brought Israel out [from a]-mong them,
    God’s love endures forever;

12 with a strong hand and an [outstretched] arm,
    God’s love endures forever;

13 who divided the Red [Sea in] two,
    God’s love endures forever;

14 and made Israel pass through the [midst of] it,
    God’s love endures forever;
Psalm 136 (NRSVUE) continued

15 but overthrew Pharaoh and his army in the (Red) Sea,
   God’s love endures forever; (God’s love was sent to save us; We are God’s sons and daughters.)
16 who led his people through the [wilder]-ness,
   God’s love endures forever; (God’s love will never fail us! God’s love, it never falters!)

who made water flow [from the] rock,
   God’s love endures forever;
17 who struck down (great) kings,
   God’s love endures forever;

18 and killed [famous] kings,
   God’s love endures forever;
19 Sihon, [king] {of the} Amorites,
   God’s love endures forever;

20 and Og, [king of] Bashan,
   God’s love endures forever;
21 and gave their [land] {as a} heritage,
   God’s love endures forever;

22 a heritage to his servant [Isra]-el,
   God’s love endures forever;
23 It is he who remembered us in our [low e]-state,
   God’s love endures forever;

24 and rescued us [from our] foes,
   God’s love endures forever;
25 who gives food to (all) flesh,
   God’s love endures forever;

26 O give thanks to the [God of] heaven,
   God’s love endures forever.
O give thanks to the [God of] heaven,
   God’s love endures forever.
Psalm 137 (NRSVUE)

1 [By the] rivers [of Baby]-lon—

there we sat down, and there we wept when we [remembered] [Zion].

2 [On the] willows there we [hung up our] (harps).

3 For there our captors [asked us for] (songs),

[and our] tormentors asked [for] (mirth), [saying],

“Sing us one of [the songs of] [Zion]!”

ANTIPHON

4 [How could] we sing [the] (LORD’s) (song)

in [a foreign] (land)?

5 (If) I forget you, O [Jerusa]-lem,

let [my right hand] [wither]!

6 [Let my] tongue cling to the [roof of my] (mouth),

if I do not [remember] [you],

(if) I do not set [Jerusa]-lem

above [my highest] (joy).

ANTIPHON

7 (Re)-member, O LORD, against [the Edom]-ites

the day of Je-[rusalem’s] (fall),

[how they] said, “Tear it [down! Tear it] (down)!

Down [to its foun]-dations]!”

8 (O) daughter Babylon, [you deva]-stator!

Happy shall they be who pay you back what you [have done to] (us)!
Psalm 137 (NRSVUE) continued

9 [Happy] shall they be who take [your little] (ones)
and dash them [against the] (rock)!

ANTIPHON
Psalm 137 (CEV)

1 (Be)side the rivers [of Baby]lon
   we thought about Jerusalem, and we [sat down and] (cried).

2 [We] hung our small harps on [the] [willow] (trees).
3 Our enemies had brought us [here as their] {prison}-ers;
   [now they] wanted us to sing [and enter]-[tain them].
   They insulted us and shouted, “[Sing about] [Zion]!”

ANTIPHON

4 (Here) in [a foreign] (land),
   how can we sing [about the] (LORD)?

5 (Je)-rusalem, [if I for]-[get you],
   let my [right hand go] (limp).

6 [Let my] tongue stick to the [roof of my] (mouth),
   if I don't think about you [above all] (else).

ANTIPHON

7 (Our) LORD, punish [the Edom]-[ites]!
   On the day Jerusa-[lem fell, they] [shouted],
   “(Com)-pletely [destroy the] [city]!
   Tear [down every] [building]!”

8 [Baby]-lon, you are doomed! I [pray the Lord's] [blessings]
   on anyone who punishes you for what [you did to] (us).

9 [May the] Lord [bless every]-[one]
   who beats your children [against the] (rocks)!

ANTIPHON
Psalm 149 (NRSVUE)

1 […] Praise the LORD! Sing to the LORD a (new) song,
   his praise in the assembly [of the] [faithful].
2 [Let] Israel be glad [in its] Maker;
   let the children of Zion rejoice [in their] King.

ANTIPHON

3 [Let them] praise his [name with] dancing,
   making melody to him with tambourine and [lyre].
4 [For the] LORD takes pleasure [in his] people;
   he adorns the humble with [victory].

ANTIPHON

5 [Let the] faithful exult in glory;
   let them sing for joy [on their] couches.
6 [Let the] high praises of God be [in their] throats
   and two-edged swords [in their] hands,

7 [to] execute vengeance [on the] nations
   and punishment [on the] peoples,
8 [to] bind their [kings with] fetters
   and their nobles with [chains of] iron,

9 [to] execute on them
   the judgment [of the] [creed].
   […] This is glory for all his [faithful] ones.
   Praise (the) LORD!

ANTIPHON
Psalm 149 (CEV)

1 [...] Shout praises [to the] LORD!
    Sing [him a] [new song]
    [of] praise
    [when his] loyal | peo-(ple) meet.

2 [...] People of Israel, (re)-joice
    because of [your Cre]-[ator].
People of Zion, [cele]-brate
    because [of your] King.

ANTIPHON

3 [...] Praise his [name by] dancing
    and playing music on harps and [tambou]-rines).
4 [The] LORD is pleased [with his] people,
    and he gives victory to those [who are] humble.

ANTIPHON

5 [...] All of you faithful people, praise our {glori}-[ous] Lord!
    Cele-[brate and] [worship].
6 [...] Praise God with songs [on your] lips
    and a sword [in your] hand.

7 [...] Take revenge and pun-[ish the] nations.
8 Put chains of iron on their [kings and] [rulers].
9 [...] Punish them as [they de]-serve;
    this is the privilege of God's faithful people. Shout praises [to the] Lord!

ANTIPHON
Psalm 150 (NRSVUE)

1 […] Praise the LORD! Praise God in his [sanctu]-ary;
   praise him in his mighty [firma]-ment!
2 […] Praise him for his [mighty] deeds;
   praise him according to his sur-[passing] greatness!

ANTIPHON

3 […] Praise him with [trumpet] sound;
   praise him with [lute and] (harp)!
4 […] Praise him with tambou-[rine and] dance;
   praise him with [strings and] pipe!

ANTIPHON

5 […] Praise him with [clanging] cymbals;
   praise him with loud [clashing] [cymbals]!
6 [Let] everything that breathes [praise the] LORD!
   Praise (the) LORD!

ANTIPHON
Psalm 150 (CEV)

2 […] Praise our God! His deeds are [wonder]-ful, too marvelous [to de]-scribe.

ANTIPHON

4 Praise him with tambou-[rines and] dancing, with stringed instru-[ments and] woodwinds.

ANTIPHON

5 […] Praise [God with] cymbals, with [clashing] [cymbals].
6 [Let] every living creature [praise the] LORD. Shout praises [to the] LORD!

ANTIPHON
Antiphons in Various Contexts

These responsive psalms are intended for presentation in the classic fashion: antiphon first – alternation between psalm text and antiphon until the psalm is completed – final antiphon. However, this does not preclude their usage in other contexts. Below are three times where an antiphon was used in a context outside of responsive psalmody.

In the summer of 2023, our pastor, Rev. Betsy Swetenburg, presented a sermon series, “Psummer of Psalms,” focusing on a different type of Psalm each week. On Sunday, July 23, 2023, the focus was on psalms as hymns. During the Prayers of the People, she stood behind the baptismal font, and after each petition, the congregation was invited to sing the Psalm 67 antiphon, “As we prayed by the water...” Psalm 67 was not used during the service.

Christ the King Sunday, November 26, 2023, was celebrated on Thanksgiving weekend. As a sung affirmation response to follow the affirmation of faith, our congregation sang the antiphon for Psalm 65, “Follow your faith to the feast and fountain!” Psalm 65 is found in the RCL on Thanksgiving Day, Year A and at Northridge it is not our tradition to hold a worship service on Thanksgiving Day. ¹ Therefore, this seems an appropriate use of this antiphon. Psalm 65 was not used in worship that day.

During Northridge’s 2023 Lessons and Carols service, the choir sang the Psalm 96 antiphon, “A new song of light...” in response to the ninth lesson, John 1:1–14. Following the lesson, the antiphon was a sung congregational response during the bidding prayer. Psalm 96 was not used during the service.

I am reminded a 1960 recording of Stravinsky’s Mass. In the score, discanti and alti parts have an asterisked notation, “Children’s voices should be employed.” In this 1960 recording, with Stravinsky conducting, children’s voices are not employed; rather, he worked with The Gregg Smith Singers, a professional choir based in Los Angeles, California. In Leonard Bernstein’s 1988 recording of Stravinsky’s Mass, Bernstein uses both the English Bach Festival Chorus and the Trinity Boys Choir. While this recording honors the score directions, Stravinsky’s recording is literally by his own hand. The question: which recording is definitive? Admittedly, I prefer Stravinsky’s recording for two reasons: I believe it to be an exact realization of his compositional intention, regardless of the score discrepancy, and the adult professional singers handle the material with mature acumen.

These responsive psalms are not given in order that they have a definitive performance: they are functional as prophetic bridges between the Old Testament and New Testament readings. And, admittedly, the antiphons can be parsed out and used in other ways to serves the liturgy—the work of the people—to draw the congregation into liminality and communitas.

---

CHAPTER FOUR

O LORD, you have searched me and known me.
You know when I sit down and when I rise up;
you discern my thoughts from far away.
You search out my path and my lying down
and are acquainted with all my ways.
Even before a word is on my tongue,
O LORD, you know it completely.
You hem me in, behind and before,
and lay your hand upon me.
Such knowledge is too wonderful for me;
it is so high that I cannot attain it.

Psalm 139:1–6

Introduction

When creating a large document, one must constantly ask: “Does this all fit together?” For this thesis, I created poetry, music, and prose. It is crucial that each element offers support, lest any material be deemed “dead weight,” only making the document longer rather than better. This chapter is divided into two parts: part one, a project analysis, and part two, psalm reflections. The analysis considers the antiphons as dual musical-theological creations, analyzing both micro and macro elements. Reflections are offered for all fifty psalms in the thesis.

As discussed in chapter two, the intent of the psalm antiphons is two-fold: draw prophetic connections between Old Testament and Gospel lessons and enable communitas and a liminal experience for the gathered congregation. The prophetic work is accomplished via the antiphon text, enabling communitas through the participatory antiphon music. And while these two elements work in tandem, each element can be analyzed separately. In most every case, the theological work is the driving creative force, the text having been created first. Each poem is a brief statement, often one sentence. Depending on the psalm length, the congregation can respond with the antiphon at least two times, as many as seven. Therefore, these poems, even the
longer ones, must be structurally balanced and memorable. The music, as well, must be accessible to the congregation. Rhythmic or melodic intricacies are well supported by the accompaniment to ensure successful realization by the congregation. Ultimately, the text and music repetition facilitate the potential success of the responsive antiphon, allowing practice and presentation to be one and the same.

The theology of the antiphon texts centers around one theme—prophetic connection. The intent of the curators of the RCL was to draw prophetic connections between the Old Testament and the Gospel lesson of the day, providing preachers an exegetical structure for every Lord’s Day and Feast Day worship. As mentioned in chapter one, Psalms of the Day found their way into the second version of the RCL in 1992 and were intended to be sung as a response to the Old Testament lesson. Therefore, in the planning process, the work of pastoral musicians is to find a way to exegete with the Psalm of the Day, supporting the work of the preacher as they maneuver around the three lessons. These responsive antiphons accomplish that work. The Psalm of the Day is sung, the congregation participates in a response that enables them to sing these prophetic connections, binding everyone together into the priesthood of all believers.

Poems vary in length. The shortest poem in one sentence of eight words is attached to Psalm 14: “Heaven rejoices when sinners return to the Lord.” Found in the lectionary for the fourteenth Sunday after Pentecost, Year C, this statement reinforces Luke 15:1–10.1 The longest poem in six sentences of thirty-three words is the response to Psalm 24: “Will you eat at the feast of the Lamb? Will you rule the city on the hill? Will flowing wine replace all your tears? Yes, Lord! We believe! You make all things new!” Appropriate for All Saints’ Day, Year B, this poem is made of three questions and three exclamatory responses, reinforcing the prophecies of

---


**Theological Analyses**

Arguably both the most famous psalm and possibly biblical passage, Psalm 23 is in three sections: the psalmist alone in a pasture with God, the psalmist alone in the valley of the shadow of death with God, the psalmist at table in community with enemies and God. Following Walter Brueggemann’s paradigm, this psalm is the ideal synthesis of orientation (v. 1–3), disorientation (v. 4), new orientation (v. 5–6). I contend that the popularity of Psalm 23 is partially due to this structure, as it is applicable to any situation that might present itself: a time of peace followed by a time of stress then a time of celebration. Inspiration for the anthem “We, your sheep who have gone astray, have now come home.” is the bucolic setting of verses 1–3. Table 4.1 shows the how the antiphon conforms to the fullness of Brueggemann’s paradigm.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ORIENTATION</th>
<th>DISORIENTATION</th>
<th>NEW ORIENTATION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>We, your sheep</td>
<td>who have gone astray,</td>
<td>have now come home.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.1

---


3 Brueggemann, 7.
When a congregation sings these words, they sing a microcosm of the theology of the psalm, while also responding to the lessons for Good Shepherd Sunday, Year A.⁴ One of the quintessential lament psalms, Psalm 51:1–17 is read on Ash Wednesday, Years A, B, and C.⁵ Having just celebrated Transfiguration Sunday, a congregation would gather again three days later to physically mark themselves to begin the Lenten journey on Ash Wednesday. Lent, having originally been a season of purification for catechumens, has become a season of personal reflection and inward journey for Christians, both Catholic and Protestant. The light of Christ is left behind, snuffed out during Holy Week on Good Friday, only to be rekindled on either Holy Saturday or Easter Sunday. Preparation for this season is crucial to elicit transformation. Therefore, the antiphonal response to Psalm 51 reflects metanoia (turning around) from Transfiguration toward an inward journey: “Praise God in the light of the assembled but pray in the shadow of your hearts.” Table 4.2 shows antithetical parallelism.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STATEMENT</th>
<th>ANTHETICAL PARALLELISM</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Praise God</td>
<td>pray</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>in the light</td>
<td>in the shadow</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>of the assembled</td>
<td>of your hearts</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.2

In some cases, the liturgical day offers structure and guidance for the theology of the antiphon. Epiphany of the Lord through Transfiguration Sunday marks a brief stretch of Ordinary time

between Christmas and Lent. Psalm 72:1–7, 10–14, is read on Epiphany of the Lord, Years A, B, and C.⁶ The antiphon is a reflection on both the daily lessons and the liturgical day, emphasizing metanoia that God enacted on the Magi: “In a dream, God’s light showed the way. ‘Arise! Go forth into the mystery!’” In this text, the Magi are not mentioned, and while the connection to their story is clear, the message is also for God’s people—God’s light will show the way, albeit a way of mystery. This message can be a guiding principle as the people hear God’s Word exegeted.

Designated for the Third Sunday in Lent, Year A, Psalm 95 is initially a joyful psalm with two calls to worship and two hymns; however, the text takes a dark turn in verse 8 as the psalmist remembers the days in the wilderness at Meribah and Massah when Moses struck the rock, producing water, a direct reference to the day’s Old Testament lesson, Exodus 17:1–7.⁷ The psalm ends abruptly in verse 11. In the Old Testament lesson, the Israelites are wandering in the desert, no water to be found. God commands Moses to strike the stone in front of the elders and water flowed out. In the Gospel lesson (John 4:5–42), Jesus meets the woman at the well and gives her the water of life to drink—God’s Word. In both passages the people need water: in Exodus, they are desperate for water to survive; in John, the woman is simply going about her daily routine of gathering water. However, the woman at the well suffers existentially, avoiding others by going to gather water at the hottest time of the day.

Images from both lessons are found in the antiphon text: “Suffering from thirst and wand’ring in the wilderness, your spring-fed pastures offer hope and truth and life.” In Exodus,

---

the Israelites were wandering in the wilderness, suffering from thirst; in John, the woman was wandering from society, suffering the heat of midday, thirsting after community. In both cases, God offers relief, either through real water or “a spring of water gushing up to eternal life” (John 4:14b). The image of the spring-fed pasture is in stark contrast to both scenes: the wilderness and the well at midday. Shown in Table 4.3, the text is a *tricola* using both symmetrical and antithetical parallelism.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STATEMENT</th>
<th>SYMMETRICAL PARALLELISM</th>
<th>ANTITHETICAL PARALLELISM</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Suffering from thirst</td>
<td>wand’ring in the wilderness</td>
<td>your spring-fed pastures offer hope and truth and life</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.3

Designated for the Third Sunday of Easter, Year A, Psalm 116 is situated in Eastertide. As such, the Old Testament lesson is replaced with one from Acts 2:14a, 36–41, the story of Peter speaking to the multitude where more than three thousand were baptized. The Gospel lesson is Luke 24:13–35, the story of Jesus on the road to Emmaus. The theme for this day, befitting Eastertide, is *metanoia*. And while the antiphon text is a direct reference to the Gospel lesson—“Walk with us, talk with us, open our eyes; now we see your face!”—the transformation message is told through the short poem and five harmonic modulations over four measures.

---

A well-known Songs of Ascent, Psalm 121 is found in the RCL on the 2nd Sunday in Lent, Year A. The text poses a rallying cry for the ascent, envisaging the arrival at the temple: “From the mountain, visible are the blessings of the Lord.” Upon arrival, they survey God’s blessings from on high; however, the text continues: “Lift your eyes; call God’s name; Christ will make your spirits soar!” The words “Lift your eyes” are a direct reference to the beginning of the psalm—“I lift my eyes to the hills” (Ps 121:1). Therefore, once the highest place is achieved, and all can survey God’s earthly blessings, God’s people are called to lift their eyes and call on God. The Christological reference makes the prophetic leap from Old Testament to New Testament. This is one of only eleven of the fifty antiphons that mentions Christ directly, either by name or in the progressive tense, not prophetically.

The individual psalm analyses completed, what follows is a comparative analysis of Psalm 24, Psalm 25, Psalm 29, Psalm 105. Of the fifty antiphons in this thesis, only four pose questions, shown in Table 4.4:

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Psalm 24—“Will you eat at the feast of the Lamb?”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Psalm 25—“Will you sit and watch and wait?”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Psalm 29—“How shall we be born again?”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Psalm 105—“What shall we ask of the Lord who gives us all we need?”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.4

---


10 In the peer review sessions, Darnell St. Romain commented specifically on this antiphon, saying that I had “successfully inserted Christ into the Psalms!”
Of the four, three have answers: Psalm 24, Psalm 29, and Psalm 105. Table 4.5 shows the anatomy of Psalm 24, found in the RCL on All Saints’ Day, Year B.\(^{11}\)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>QUESTION</th>
<th>ANSWER</th>
<th>DECLAMATORY STATEMENT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Will you eat at the feast of the Lamb?</td>
<td>Yes, Lord!</td>
<td>We believe!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Will you rule the city on the hill?</td>
<td></td>
<td>You make all things new!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Will flowing wine replace all your tears?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.5

Each question directly relates to the Old Testament lesson, Isaiah 25:6–9. The answer and declamatory statements are both relative to the Epistle and Gospel lessons, Revelation 21:1–6a and John 11:32–44. On All Saints’ Day, a day of remembrance, the questions are confessional, the responses an assurance. As with any personal journey of grief, holy doubts arise; therefore, naming doubts by voicing questions can be a source of both acknowledgement and healing for a congregation remembering the communion of saints.

The antiphon for Psalm 25:1–10, found in the RCL on the 1\(^{st}\) Sunday of Advent, Year C, poses an unanswered question: “Will you sit and watch and wait? Will the Promise Keeper come? Will the earth turn again for us?”\(^{12}\) Table 4.6 shows how each question relates to different lectionary lessons.

---


Table 4.6

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>QUESTION</th>
<th>DAILY LESSON</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Will you sit and watch and wait?</td>
<td>“Night and day we pray most earnestly . . .” (1 Thess 3:10)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Will the Promise Keeper come?</td>
<td>“The days are surely coming . . . when I will fulfill the promise I made . . .” (Jer 33:14)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Will the earth turn again for us?</td>
<td>“‘There will be signs in the sun, the moon, and the stars . . .’ ‘Look at the fig and all the trees . . .’” (Luke 21:25, 29)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Given the preparatory nature of the season of Advent, and the theme of “hope” on the First Sunday of Advent, it seemed appropriate to leave these questions unanswered, promoting further contemplation—one practice of living into the mystery of Christmas.

Psalm 29 is found in the RCL on Trinity Sunday, Year B, beginning the lengthiest period of Ordinary Time. And while the questions don’t seem to be answered directly as seen in Table 4.7 below, they refer to and link the Old Testament lesson, Isaiah 6:1–8, with the Gospel lesson, John 3:1–17.

Table 4.7

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>QUESTION</th>
<th>RESPONSE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>How shall we be born again? (John 3:4)</td>
<td>Listen to the Wind’s Song: (John 3:8)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Born from above? (John 3:9)</td>
<td>“Holy, holy, holy is the Lord!” (Isa 6:3)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These prophetic links leave room for mystery, in both question and answer. And the inclusion of the *Sanctus* draws connections to historical-liturgical practice, both Catholic and Protestant.

The final inquisitive antiphon is Psalm 105, found on the 9th Sunday after Pentecost, Year A.\(^{14}\) The references are loosely tied to multiple lessons: Genesis 29:15–29, 1 Kings 3:5–12, Romans 8:26–39, and Matthew 13:13–33, 44–52.\(^{15}\) Table 4.8 shows question and answer:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>QUESTION</th>
<th>ANSWER</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What shall we ask of the Lord who gives us all we need?</td>
<td>Stay with us, O Lord!</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.8

This question and answer relate generally to all the lessons; however, the specific reference is more personal. In July 2020 when Rev. Betsy Swetenburg began her pastorate at Northridge, it was a long-awaited arrival that saw transition through a Senior Pastor, Acting Pastor, two Interim Pastors, multiple staff changes, and the COVID-19 pandemic that began in March 2020. Our church family was ready for normalcy, consistency, and stability, even during an ongoing pandemic. And while this antiphon functions properly on the 8th Sunday after Pentecost, Year A, its contextual application is significant.

Each of these four antiphons voices a question or multiple questions, a necessary part of a faith journey. Allowing room for questions in a liminal space gives room for God’s response. It dispels the myth that churchgoers have all the answers and that skepticism and confusion do not belong in worship. Questions to God, about God, about humanity, and about religion and faith

---


\(^{15}\) This antiphon was written in honor of Rev. Betsy Swetenburg’s first sermon at Northridge Presbyterian Church, Dallas, Texas, Sunday, July 26, 2020. She preached on the 1 Kings passage, not found in the RCL for that day.
are the essence of psalmody, particularly the lament psalms. Therefore, these four antiphons continue the work of the psalmists by naming their questions with the communal voice.

Throughout *The Northridge Psalter*, the antiphon poems are meant to make an immediate impression on participants by way of brevity, colorful language, and specific daily lesson references. The poems are intended to linger in the congregation’s collective mind during the exegesis; the melodies meant to carry the words beyond the gathering; the gestalt antiphons an aide-mémoire of the prophetic connections found in God’s Word by way of the RCL. When connections are made between Word and music, liminality and *communitas* may be achieved, the potential for retention increases, and God is served more fervently.

We now turn to musical analyses and discussions of ten antiphons. In each case, and throughout *The Northridge Psalter*, the music supports the poetry, thereby strengthening the prophetic connections between Old Testament and Gospel lessons. Given the brevity of the antiphons, these connections are musically reinforced through the vocal parts, the accompaniment, or both. What follows are analyses of antiphons from Psalms 13 (and 85), 19, 24 (and 77), 29, 42 & 43 (and 126), 49 (and 104), 80, 95, 116, and 150.16

**Musical Analyses**

Antiphons from both Psalm 13 (“The waters of grace...”) and Psalm 85 (“The patient flow of water...”) use the accompaniment to text paint images of water. In Psalm 13, the accompaniment is inspired by Franz Schubert’s (1797–1828) song *Wohin?* from the cycle *Die Schöne Müllerin* (1823), juxtaposing the right-hand triplets with the duplets in the vocal line.17 The left-hand

---

16 When a parenthetical psalm is listed, there is a comparative analysis between the two psalms.
17 “YouTube Schubert Wohin,” [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ih3Q-wmsWys](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ih3Q-wmsWys) (accessed February 27, 2024).
material in measures 1–4 evokes images of an undertow, gently controlling the surface water. Figure 14 shows the accompaniment figure in Psalm 13. In measure 5, the right- and left-hand material join in duplets with the vocal line, and in measure 6, the triplets move to the left-hand, closing out the antiphon. Except for five F♯s and one C, the entire piece is pentatonic.

In Psalm 85, the water moves differently. Firmly set in 3/4, the right-hand material moves in rhythmic ratios from 3:1 to 1:1 to 1:3, mirroring the vocal line rhythms and varying the intervallic direction. The left-hand material moves as if in 6/8, with repeated rhythmic ratios of 2:1, also varying its intervallic direction. Both accompaniment figures are shown in Figure 15:

From measure 6 to 7, a transition to F♯ Major marks the end of the antiphon, and the final accompaniment chord is an inversion of set {0, 2, 5, 8}—B♭, C, E♭, and F♯, shown in Figure 16.
This is in stark contrast to the minor modality established in the first five measures. Of the set pitches in the final left-hand sixteenth-note flourish, only the F♯ is shared from the first five measures, correlating it with “God’s Word,” as it “withstands the fire” of the other three pitches: B♭, C, and E♭. Together, these pitches enharmonically form a polychord of C Major and F♯ Major.

In the antiphon for Psalm 19, “The heart and mind of God...”, the left-hand material doubles the vocal lines, a variation of mirror writing: the melody, beginning on F, ascends, then descends a perfect fifth in a minor tonality; the harmony, also beginning on F, descends and then ascends a major third, each note repeating itself. This mirror writing is shown in Figure 4.17.

The vocal harmonies thus provide: a unison, a major second, a perfect fourth, a perfect fifth, a major seventh a major sixth, and a major third. While these intervals are the building blocks of a

---

major scale, the music is set in F minor. The series breaks on the final measure, the interval now a minor third (E and G), supported at first by pitches outlining an Em\(^7\), then adding an open-fifth F chord in the left-hand. Though creating substantial dissonance, the result is a cluster of E, F, and G, the right-hand material providing clusters in long tones that resonate and dissipate. The melody is simple—(ascending) do, re, me, fa, sol, (descending) fa, me, re, do—the vocal harmony and accompaniment adding harmonic complexity as well as text painting and context painting the liturgical season of Lent.

Antiphons for Psalm 24— “Will you eat at the feast...”—and Psalm 77— “Flaming wind sent down from heaven...”—share a compositional technique: staggered three-part voice stacking atop the melody. In each example, tenors and basses maintain the melody; the second voice added is alto; the third is soprano. In Psalm 24, there are four full phrases: the first three phrases employ the staggered three-part voice stacking; the final phrase introduces new material, maintaining a three-part texture. Figure 18 shows the three-part voice stacking in Psalm 24:

![Figure 18: Three-part voice stacking in Psalm 24, “Will you eat at the feast...”](image-url)
In Psalm 77, there are only three phrases employing the staggered three-part voice stacking. In both antiphons, the mode is Aeolian. The Psalm 77 antiphon ends with a Picardy third in the accompaniment following a vocal cut off. In the Psalm 24 antiphon set in F minor, voices hold a unison F until the antiphon concludes, the accompaniment cycling through Fm, G\(^7\), and a polychord of D\(^{b9}\) and B\(^{b\text{sus4}}\). While this construction is relatively simple, these antiphons are the only two in the Psalter employing this compositional technique.\(^{19}\)

“How shall we be born again?” is the antiphon for Psalm 29, Trinity Sunday, Year B.\(^{20}\) For the music, my Sanctus was adapted, apropos the Isaiah 6:1–8 text included at the end of the antiphon.\(^{21}\) In the first four measures, the two-part vocal lines use intervals of unisons, seconds, thirds, fourths, fifths, and sixths. The final two measures are radically different than other antiphons, with an optional four-part divisi section that can be sung SATB, SSAA, TTBB, or any combination available, using the full four-part divisi or any variation thereof. The text, “the Wind’s Song,” though appropriate for Trinity Sunday, calls to mind an All Saints’ Day celebration (per the Romans 8:12–17 passage), and therefore the Sanctus could elicit both joining the heavenly host as well as the great cloud of witnesses. The final choral chord is F\(^{\text{sus4}}\) with a polychord in the accompaniment: F\(^7\) and B\(^{b\text{maj7}}\). Figure 19 show the final Sanctus section:

---

21 Psalm 29 and Psalm 150 are the two macaronic antiphon texts.
Given the brevity of the antiphons, tempo alterations are rare. Psalm 29 is one of the few with two written tempi and a ritard, though only the second tempo is shown in Figure 19. This expands the musical affect of the antiphon, creating two distinct sections in six measures.

The antiphons for Psalm 42 & 43—“Our feet are bound; our throats are dry...”—and Psalm 126—“In a cold and barren land...”—share the distinction of being optionally canonical in three parts. The music for Psalm 42 & 43’s antiphon is an adaptation of my hymn tune OLD TOLL ROAD (8.6.8.6). The melody has an intervallic range of a major tenth, encompassing C4 to E5. The melodic rhythm is reminiscent of the tune ST. ANNE: strict quarter notes with a half-note at the end of the antecedent and consequent phrases. The left-hand material doubles the vocal melody and supports the canon, adding layers that mimic the canonical singing. The right-hand material is an obbligato, in stark contrast to the vocal line, employing 3:1 rhythmic-ratio patterns at both the half-measure and the quarter-measure, as well as syncopations and triplets. The juxtaposition of these two distinct rhythmic elements in the vocal and accompaniment parts, shown in Figure 20, create dense and rich textures:
Psalm 126 has two antiphon texts: the one mentioned above used on the 3rd Sunday of Advent, Year B, and “In the chasm, dark and drear…” used on the 5th Sunday in Lent, Year C. Like Psalm 42 & 43, the accompaniment doubles the canonical vocal parts, mimicking their entrances. The primary difference between the two is the absence of an *obbligato* in Psalm 42 & 43. Rather, the accompaniment is constructed as a palindrome: measures 2 and 6 the same, measures 3 and 5 the same, measure 4 standing alone. The density of the accompaniment increases from measure 2 to 4, decreasing from measure 5 to 6. Between the two texts for this antiphon, measure four varies: when sung in Advent, an A is used; when sung in Lent, an A♭ is used. See the vocal portion of this antiphon in Figure 21.

Figure 20: Three textures in Psalm 42 & 43, “Our feet are bound, our throats are dry…”

---


Set in C minor, the mode changes from Dorian in Advent to Aeolian in Lent. The canon in Psalm 42 & 43 contains one distinct dissonance: E – F♯ – B, quickly resolving to E – A. The canon in Psalm 126 is replete with dissonances, both major and minor seconds left unresolved in a classic manner.

Antiphons for Psalms 49 and 104 feature an antiphonal cantorial role. In Psalm 49, “Vanity of vanities!”, found in the RCL on the 8th Sunday after Pentecost, Year C, the cantor begins the antiphon by singing, “Vanity of vanities!”, a direct quote from the Old Testament lesson, Ecclesiastes 1:2, 12–14. The accompaniment and cantorial music are declamatory, followed by a ritard and tempo change. The vocal part features a descending and ascending Lydian sequence.

Similarly, in Psalm 104, the cantor plays an introductory role in the antiphon. In this case, the cantorial music is presented in a slower tempo, followed by a fermata, and a subito quicker tempo. Unique to this antiphon are the three sets of text. Psalm 104 is found in the RCL on the

---

Day of Pentecost, Years A, B, and C. For each year, the text varies, and the music varies slightly to fit the text underlay. The antiphonal vocal parts are sequential, their temporary tonic roots outlining a D diminished triad: first phrase in D Major, second phrase in F Major, third phrase in A♭ Major, with a cadence on F Major. The psalm tone is set in B♭ Major. These chord tonic pitches outline a B♭ Major seventh chord, harmonically propelling the text into a new church year. The final accompaniment chords are FM7, Gm7, Am7. The accompaniment is florid and rhythmically ecstatic, evoking the Holy Spirit’s presence.

Antiphons for Psalm 80 are “When nations rise and fall...” found in the RCL on the 4th Sunday of Advent Years A & C, and “Though earth shall pass away...” appropriate for the 1st Sunday of Advent, Year B. In both cases, the music is the same. This is one of two fully unison antiphons. There are two distinct sections demarcated by style. Section one is jazz inspired, using altered notes and syncopated rhythms in the vocal part and substitute chords in the accompaniment (See Figure 22). At the end of the first section, a ritard establishes a new tempo and transitions to a starkly different second section in a modern chant style (See Figure 23), inspired by the accompanied chant of composer and organist David Hurd. The vocal line is simple: a rising fourth, a rising minor third, a rising major second, and a descending minor third. The chant accompaniment uses extended tertian harmonies, the only connection to the previous section. This congregational chant section makes a natural segue into the psalm tone for the

---

28 Psalm 130, “My voice is mute...”, found in the RCL on the 5th Sunday in Lent, Year A, is also a unison antiphon.
cantor. This antiphon has clearly marked piano rolls, the final one marked specifically with “slow piano roll.”

“Suffering from thirst...” is the antiphon for Psalm 95. Beginning firmly in 4/4 and E minor, and rooted in simple rhythm on the words “Suffering from thirst, and wand’ring in the wilderness,” the music takes a dramatic turn toward F Major and tresillo rhythms on the text “your spring-fed pastures offer hope and truth and life” (shown in Figure 24). The antiphon ends with octave A’s in the vocal part, A/E open fifths and a final polychord of B Major and F Major in the accompaniment.
The vocal melodic material is tertian, the vocal harmonic material tertian and quadral. In the F Major section, the vocal parts are intentionally built on arpeggiated chord structures, drawing attention to the tresillo rhythms in both the vocal and accompaniment parts, text painting the sudden poetic shift. Heavy chromaticism and dissonance dominate almost every measure except for the measure 5—on the text “spring-fed pastures”—furthering the Neapolitan relationship of F Major to E minor. In this measure, the accompaniment is harp-like, perpetuating the arpeggiated chord figures.

The antiphon for Psalm 116, set in the RCL on the 3rd Sunday of Easter, Year A, is “Walk with us, talk with us...” Situated in Eastertide, the Old Testament lesson is replaced with one from the Book of Acts. The Gospel lesson for the day tells of Jesus appearing to the disciples on the Road to Emmaus (Luke 24:13–35). In this way, the antiphon text deals directly with the Gospel story, with two text options for general use or communion. The introduction in D Major offers an immediate secondary dominant with a G♯, moving to A Major. Set in 3/4 time, when the voices

---

enter, the harmonic rhythm shifts every measure from D Major to E Major (these progressions are shown in Figure 25) to F♯ Major to C Major, and then to A Major: essentially ascending the D Major scale from D – E – F♯ – G (the fifth scale degree of the C Major chord) – A.

![Figure 25: Opening measures of Psalm 116, “Walk with us, talk with us...”](image)

This chromatically supported diatonic sequence text paints the conversation between Jesus and the disciples, arriving at the dominant chord on the word “face!”, a half cadence, meant to propel the congregation into further contemplation and/or action.

The final psalm in the Biblical Psalter, Psalm 150 is found in the RCL on the 2nd Sunday of Easter, Year C.30 The antiphon, “When the world demands...” is one of two macaronic texts.31 The poem directly quotes the Latin text from Epistle lesson, “Alpha es et O!”, or “I am the Alpha and the Omega” (Rev 1:8). Considering this text, and its association with the German chorale IN DULCI JUBILO, it seemed appropriate to quote this chorale tune, both in the introduction, and toward the end when the text “Alpha es et O!” appears. The final statement in the antiphon is a direct quote from Psalm 150 (KJV), “Praise ye the Lord!” While the chorale is set in compound

30 “Revised Common Lectionary Second Sunday of Easter Year C,”
31 Psalm 29 is also macaronic, with the inclusion of the word “Sanctus.” See above for more details.
meter (enabled here with triplets), the bulk of the antiphon is composed in simple meter, facilitated by a one beat transition in the introduction, and tenuto moving toward the end of the antiphon. Figure 26 shows the IN DULCI JUBILO quote in compound meter (triplets) in the introduction, followed by the transition to simple meter:

![Figure 26: IN DULCI JUBILO quote, Psalm 150, “When the world demands ...”]

**Psalm Reflections**

Having completed the theological and musical analyses, we move to the psalm reflections. Reflections are written for all fifty psalms in the thesis and consider only verses selected in the lectionary. For example, when discussing Psalm 5, only verses 1–8 will be subject of the reflection. Each reflection includes the antiphonal text. If there are multiple antiphon texts, the most prominent one will be featured. Structural analysis comes from Erhard S. Gerstenberger’s seminal two-part work, *Psalms: Part I: With an Introduction to Cultic Poetry*[^32] and *Psalms, Part 2, and Lamentations*.[^33] While Gerstenberger includes superscriptions in his analysis, they have been generally excluded here. Each reflection ends with a word about the antiphonal music. The

reflections will be divided into Book One, Book Two, Book Three, Book Four, and Book Five. RCL citations will not be provided; rather, readers are encouraged to explore the RCL website.\footnote{“Revised Common Lectionary,” https://lectionary.library.vanderbilt.edu (accessed February 26, 2024).}

Psalms themselves, little ancient faith essays, are rooted in a time and culture far removed from ours; their words and sentiments, even in new translations, a challenge to comprehend. In his book \textit{Interpreting the Psalms}, the late theologian Patrick Miller said, “One of the continuing problems that the interpreter of Scripture encounters is the sense of distance between our world and the world of Scripture, the degree to which the text from Scripture comes from an ancient world that seems very removed from us and in many respects quite different.”\footnote{Patrick D. Miller, \textit{Interpreting the Psalms} (Philadelphia, Pennsylvania: Fortress Press, 1986), 21–22.} Psalms were used in ancient cultic rituals to communicate directly with God and community, expressing a wide gamut of emotions.\footnote{Erhard S. Gerstenberger, 5.} They belong to a pre-Messianic world, one that can only prophesy and anticipate the coming of Christ. In worship, we empathize with the joyful songs of thanksgiving, ascribing all of life’s gifts to God. However, complaint psalms and laments contain language and evoke sentiments potentially taboo in modern religious ceremonies: imprecations and curses for the destruction of enemies, visions of dogs and other wild animals encircling us, and either figuratively or literally being in the Pit. Yet this visceral honesty makes the Old Testament Psalms so poignant. They are synthesized prayers for ceremonial use; cathartic expressions for communities experiencing the joys and frustrations of their living conditions. The rain not only helped the psalmist’s crops grow, but the community’s crops as well. Enemies were not encircling one person, they threatened everyone. When surveying psalm genres, community songs of thanksgiving and lament reveal communal ceremonies of celebration and mourning. And as societies grew larger, establishing governing institutions,
small cultic groups were bound together by their rituals. The psalms represent shortcuts to a shared culture, where God was the recipient of both praise and complaint. In this context, we can empathize.

It is unlikely the psalmists anticipated the impact their poems would have on a future world. And while they may have recognized the beauty in their words and their effect on their contemporary rituals, to think that thousands of years later the mention of Psalm 23 might cause an emotional reaction is implausible. As stated earlier, psalms were written in a context far removed from our own. And yet, at sporting events and on bumper stickers we see the moniker “Ps 23,” our minds intone those first words: “The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want.”

Renowned English novelist and poet D. H. Lawrence wrote in the forward to his book of poetry *Pansies*, “So I should wish these “Pansies” to be taken as thoughts rather than anything else; casual thoughts that are true while they are true and irrelevant when the mood and circumstance changes. I should like them to be as fleeting as pansies, which wilt so soon, and are so fascinating with their varied faces, while they last.” Given Lawrence’s literary stature, to recognize—even pronounce—his poems as ephemeral only furthers the Psalms’ improbable journey. They exist well beyond their permanent residence, the Bible, and outside religious ceremonies. Miller said that “The psalms are by their history not time-bound,” and “by their content not time-bound,” and even when they seem so, “if one listens a little longer, one can find openings for hearing the psalms as songs and prayers that do not sound foreign to us even when placed on our very contemporary lips.” They reside in our hearts long after a melody is lost, a sermon forgotten. They speak to and for us through familiar emotions. They are words of a

---

37 Gerstenberger, 31.
shared culture; words of God’s people searching for God’s humanity. And that search continues, the Psalms’ honesty releasing them from the grip of their original context via the liminal experience of worship.

**Book One: Psalm 1–34**

**Psalm 1** – “The heart of the world rejected you, but your heart welcomes all.”

7th Sunday after Easter, Year B. Wisdom (*torah*) psalm in three parts: 1) exhortation of a just person, 2) condemnation of the wicked, and 3) recognition of the Lord’s judgment.\(^{40}\) Verse 1 is reminiscent of the beatitude form, (Happy is..., and therefore...) but more expansive. The message is clear: those who follow the Lord “are like trees planted by streams of water,” (an image of life and strength) but the wicked “are like chaff that the wind drives away” (contrarily, an image of death). Language regarding love of the law is reminiscent of Psalm 19: “but their delight is in the law of the Lord” (Ps 1:2a), “The law of the Lord is perfect . . . More to be desired are they than gold,” (Ps 19:7a, 10a). The musical crux of the antiphon is in the final phrase where suspensions (harmonic rejections) converge on a unison G in the voice, and a G Major chord in second inversion with an added E in the accompaniment, a colorful and unstable chord that could be heard as an Em\(^7\) in third inversion.

**Psalm 2** – “God’s light from the mountain shatters our darkness: We are God’s beloved!”

Transfiguration Sunday, Year A. Royal psalm in three parts: 1) warning to nations, 2) promise of a king, and 3) ultimatum.\(^{41}\) God is initially portrayed as laughing at those who believe they are in power, eventually unleashing God’s voice of fury on them. This dichotomy divides the just (the

\(^{40}\) Gerstenberger, 40.

\(^{41}\) Gerstenberger, 44–45.
psalmist and their community) from the wicked (the conspiring nations). This psalm has prophetic—possibly Messianic—qualities, specifically in verses 7–9 with the promise of the king. The image of the iron rod breaking the potter’s vessel further shows where true strength lies, where the psalmist puts their trust. The final verse contains the words “fear,” “trembling,” “angry,” “perish,” and “wrath,” before concluding with beatific “Happy are all who take refuge in him,” a bountiful example of antithetical parallelism. Antiphonal text painting on the words “shatters our darkness” is accomplished with suspensions on an E minor chord in second inversion on “shatters” and an open fifth D chord with an added E on “darkness.”

Psalm 4 – “Our souls have been transformed by God’s presence in the world.”

3rd Sunday of Easter, Year B. Individual lament in five parts: 1) superscription, 2) invocation and plea, 3) challenge to opponents, 4) complaint, and 5) petition. In verse 2, the psalmist directly addresses their opponents: “How long, you people, shall my honor suffer shame? How long will you love vain words and seek after lies?” Is this complaint directed at opponents within the community? Does the psalmist have unresolved issues with those with whom they live, work, and worship? In verse 8, when the psalmist says that they will sleep well because “you alone, O Lord, make me lie down in safety,” does the psalmist fear for their life within the confines of the tribe? The antiphon uses parallel fourths in the harmony voice on “by Christ’s presence in the world,” showing the comfort of being in relationship with Christ by way of text painting with perfect intervals that can acoustically mask themselves as single pitches.

42 Gerstenberger, 54.
Psalm 5:1–8 – “Drowning in our sins, Christ’s buoyant grace makes us cry aloud: ‘Alleluia! Amen!’”

Season after Pentecost, Year C. Individual lament in four parts: 1) initial plea and invocation, 2) description of worship, 3) hymnic praise, 4) petition. The full psalm is divided into six parts. The psalmist is immediately direct: “Listen to my words . . . Listen to the sound of my cry” (Ps 5:1). Verse 3 offers insight into the psalmist’s expectations—“in the morning I plead my case to you and watch.” Do they expect their prayers to be answered the same day? Some language here is striking: “you hate all evildoers. / You destroy those who speak lies; the Lord abhors the bloodthirsty and evil.” (Ps 5:5b–6) The psalmist contrasts those whom the Lord hates with the psalmist themselves: “but I, through the abundance of your steadfast love, will enter your house.” This lectionary passage concludes with verse 8, used by Samuel S. Wesley (1810–1876) in his hymn Lead Me, Lord, Lead Me in Thy Righteousness. The parallel relationship of the beginning of the antiphon (D minor) to the end (D Major) accentuates the sudden shift in the text: drowning to proclaiming “Alleluia!” The baroque weeping (B♭ to A) text paints the word “Drowning” in the opening measure of the accompaniment and the voice.

Psalm 8 – “The Holy Kiss of the Trinity breathed life into the world!”

Trinity Sunday, Year A. Creation hymn in three parts: 1) communal praise, 2) individual hymn, and 3) communal praise. Walter Brueggemann would call this a psalm of orientation as it contains no sign of distress, the only mention of foes in verse 2 being God’s foes. The text clearly delineates a universal order: God resides in the heavens; humans are lower than God, yet

---

43 Gerstenberger, 58.
45 Gerstenberger, 67.
still crowned “with glory and honor” (Ps 8:5b); everything else is under our feet (or under our control), such as “the beasts of the field, the birds of the air, and the fish of the sea” (Ps 8:7–8a). In verse 8b, however, the psalmist mentions “whatever passes along the paths of the sea,” a recognition of the mystery of creation. Does the psalmist also recognize that God the Creator is still creating? The antiphon is melodically straightforward with a slight harmonic twist at the end (E♭ / D♭ / G♭ / B♭) and a sextuplet in the accompaniment text painting “breathed life.”

Psalms 9:9–20 — “Loud! Brash! The storms come crashing in! But our faith in God delivers us and leads us home.”

4th Sunday after Pentecost, Year B. A thanksgiving psalm in one part, divided into seven parts: 1) account of salvation, 2) affirmation of confidence, 3) call to worship, 4) petition, 5) account of salvation, 6) imprecation, 7) petition. Scholars believe Psalms 9 and 10 to be one unified work. Psalm 10 is a psalm of complaint. Psalm 9:1–8 lean into thanksgiving, but in verses 9–20, the lectionary portion, Psalm 9 becomes an individual lament. Verse 9 (“The Lord is a stronghold for the oppressed, a stronghold in times of trouble”) has language reminiscent of Psalm 46:1 (“God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble”). This psalm is an acrostic, and while creating an often-sporadic narrative, the psalmist recounts a general story of nations who opposed the psalmist and God which, as a result, have “sunk in the pit that they made,” bringing about their own demise. It is the only psalm to use both Selah and Higgaion, a call for both a general musical interlude (Selah) and one that is specifically somber (Higgaion).

46 Gerstenberger, 73.
47 Gerstenberger, 72–73.
48 Gerstenberger, 72.
The antiphon reflects the story of deliverance, never departing from the key of E minor, and using the accompaniment to echo the opening words, “Loud! Brash!” with marcato chords.

Psalm 13 – “The waters of grace will carry us all into the welcoming arms of our God.”
5th Sunday after Pentecost, Year A. Individual lament in three parts: 1) invocation and complaint, 2) petition, 3) praise.50 The psalmist begins with a classic anaphoric lament invocation, “How long, O Lord,” repeated four times in two verses, evoking the urgency of a person exhausted of patience. Next, the petition turns inward, as the psalmist, possibly on their deathbed (“Give light to my eyes, or I will sleep the sleep of death”) (Ps 13:3b), displays extreme vulnerability. The psalmist then turns to praise, remembering that God has been with them their whole life, with no reason to believe otherwise. Musically, the antiphon picks up on the final part of the psalm and considers that the psalmist may be objectively at the end of their life. As discussed in the earlier, the triplets in the accompaniment are reminiscent of Franz Schubert’s song Wohin? from the cycle Die Schöne Müllerin, the duplet melody resting atop the accompaniment figures.51 The antiphonal water analogy reflects a completed baptismal journey.

Psalm 14 – “Heaven rejoices when sinners return to the Lord.”
17th Sunday after Pentecost, Year C. Community lament in three parts: 1) description of the godless, 2) exhortation, 3) intercession.52 This psalm is identical to Psalm 53.53 Though a community lament, it contains instructions on identifying the godless: “they are corrupt, . . . they are all alike perverse, . . . they have no knowledge” (Ps 14:1, 3, 4). Nowhere in the text is God

50 Gerstenberger, 83.
52 Gerstenberger, 219.
53 Anderson, 17.
addressed, and therefore this psalm could have been a sermon, possibly identifying those outside or within the community. The Christian interpretation says that we are all “fools,” always straying, perpetually being called back into God’s embrace. At the end of the psalm, deliverance brings rejoicing. The antiphon reflects this sentiment with its text. This was the first antiphon I composed, and has been heavily edited, but musically is straightforward.

Psalm 15 - "The world glows with the glint of diamonds, but God's light (the light of love and life) never burns out!"

4th Sunday after Epiphany, Year A. Liturgy in two parts: 1) invocation and question, 2) answer. This liturgy is like a catechism, a lesson in what not to do. In a modern context, the questions could be asked by a lay reader, the entire congregation responding in kind. All advice is general, some negative and some positive, until verse 5: “who do not lend money at interest and do not take a bribe against the innocent.” It must be assumed that people engaged in such behavior, lest the sin not be mentioned with such specificity. In response to this psalm and this statement, along with the lectionary lessons, the antiphon references material possessions, specifically jewelry (diamonds), reminding that “God’s light—the light of love and life—never burns out!” The 8/8-time signature allows for both simple common rhythm and tresillo rhythms (3+3+2). Oscillating between the two correlates the pull of the world and the pull toward the Kingdom of God. Homophonic rhythms between the voices and accompaniment, as well as mostly tertian harmonies, help keep participants in sync.

54 Gerstenberger, 220.
55 Gerstenberger, 86.
Psalm 16 - "God of words, test our faith; God of flesh, doubts dispelled; God of breath, all our sins forgiven."

2nd Sunday after Easter, Year A. Song of trust in three parts: 1) petition, invocation, confidence, 2) confession, 3) thanksgiving.\(^{56}\) Immediately, the psalmist makes this personal: “I say to the Lord, ‘You are my Lord’” (Ps 16:2a). The saints are mentioned as models for the psalmist’s life, contrasted with “those who choose another god.” (Ps 16:4a). Several places are mentioned: “in the land,” “boundary lines . . . pleasant places,” “Sheol,” and “the Pit.” “Right hand” is mentioned twice: once in verse 8b—“because he (God) is at my right hand, I shall not be moved”—and 11c—“in your (God’s) right hand are pleasures forevermore.” God being at the psalmist’s right hand and being at God’s right hand are places where goodness abides. In the antiphon, God’s name is mentioned three times: in word, in flesh, in breath. The key is B\(^{♭}\) minor, and the melody rises just above the octave from B\(^{♭}\) to C in a Dorian mode, with a half cadence in F Major. The vocal harmonies are almost exclusively tertian.

Psalm 17:1–7, 15 – “God blesses us with blessings to give them away, that the whole world should be blessed.”

10th Sunday after Pentecost, Year A. Individual lament in three parts: 1) invocation, initial plea, protestation of innocence, 2) petition, 3) affirmation of confidence.\(^{57}\) The full psalm is divided into five parts. Here, the psalmist insists upon their innocence in matters unknown. So confident are they in their innocence that God is invited to “visit me by night . . . test me, you will find no wickedness in me” (Ps 17:3). The psalmist trusts that God will answer as well, contrasting other

\(^{56}\) Gerstenberger, 89–90.
\(^{57}\) Gerstenberger, 92.
psalms where the psalmist lacks patience. At the end, the psalmist revels in God’s assurance that their righteousness will be rewarded. In the antiphon, the accompaniment consists of primarily eighth notes and homophonic vocal lines; but in the final statement, “that the whole world should be blessed,” the urgency increases with sixteenth notes in the accompaniment and suspensions in the vocal harmony.

**Psalm 19** – “The heart and mind of God are tuned to justice, honor, love, respect, and peace.”

3rd Sunday in Lent, Year B. Wisdom (*torah*) hymn in three parts: 1) hymn to creation, 2) hymn to the Torah, 3) petition. A beautiful pairing—creation and *torah*. While the creation portion is more well-known—one shining example is “The Heavens Are Telling” from Franz Joseph Haydn’s (1732–1809) oratorio *The Creation* (1797–1798)—it is the juxtaposition of celebrating creation and wisdom that is most striking: one not existing without the other. Even in verse 10, the law of the Lord is compared to “honey and drippings of the honeycomb,” a clear indication that creation and law are intertwined. The final petition, save the last verse, is a thematic departure—“... is your servant warned ... clear me from hidden faults ... do not let [the insolent] have dominion over me ... then I shall be blameless and innocent.” The final verse, “Let the words of my mouth ...” (Ps 19:14) is popular as a prayer for illumination between reading God’s Word and exegesis. While this psalm is usually set to music with a celebratory character, in the lectionary it is situated during Lent. Considering the lectionary lessons and the season, the musical character is contemplative. The melody and harmony voices are an augmented mirror of one another.

---

58 Gerstenberger, 100.
Psalm 22 – “Jesus drank the sour wine of sin on the cross, and the Spirit left, and the blood ran clean, and the world went dark.”

Good Friday, Years A, B, C. Individual lament in eight sections: 1) invocation and complaint, 2) affirmation of confidence, 3) complaint, 4) affirmation of confidence, 5) complaint, 6) petition, 7) hymn of thanksgiving, 8) hymn of praise.\(^59\) Psalm 22 has the distinction of being the psalm Christ quoted during crucifixion (Matt 27:46). And while scripture only records the first part of the psalm, Christ undoubtedly knew this entire psalm by heart, and knew that invoking the first words would call to mind the full text to who gathered the ending, particularly verse 29: “To him, indeed, shall all who sleep in the earth bow down; before him shall all who go down to the dust, and I shall live for him.” This hopeful ending is appropriate given the apposition of complaint and affirmation of the first twenty-one verses. Quoted at the beginning of the antiphon is a corrupted version of *O Haupt voll Blut und Wunden* (O sacred head, now wounded), and uses both unison and *divisi* in the antiphon vocal line. Both the vocal line and accompaniment employ excessive chromaticism. The psalm text is sung to Psalm Tone 7, *tonus peregrinus*, or “the wandering tone”.

Psalm 23 - "We, your sheep who have gone astray, have now come home."

Good Shepherd Sunday, Year A. Song of trust in three parts: 1) confession, 2) affirmation of confidence, 3) expression of hope.\(^60\) Psalm 23 is the most well-known psalm, possibly the most beloved passage in all Scripture. And while I affirm Gerstenberger’s formal description of this psalm, I identify this as a microcosm of Brueggemann’s psalmic models: verses 1–3, orientation / verse 4, disorientation / verses 5–6, new orientation. The emotional journey of this psalm

\(^{59}\) Gerstenberger, 108.

\(^{60}\) Gerstenberger, 113.
begins with innocence (wanting for nothing, lying in pastures of beauty and abundance), moving into trials (walking through the valley of the shadow of death with the confidence of God’s abiding presence), arriving at maturity (celebrating alongside enemies, receiving blessings).

Particularly verse 5a—“You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies,”—has prophetic implications, reminiscent of Isaiah 11:6–9: “The wolf shall live with the lamb . . . the calf and the lion will feed together . . . The nursing child shall play over the hole of the asp . . . They will not hurt or destroy on all my holy mountain.” The beginning and ending are orientation bookends—dwelling in God’s pasture, dwelling in God’s house. The journey is from private devotion to communal celebration. The imagery is vivid: green pastures, dark valleys, lively banquet. The antiphon melody is simple and pastoral. Set in the key of G♭ Major, the first pitch is B♭, harmonized with a G♭. The lowest note is an octave-lower B♭ sung in unison, symbolizing the valley. The final note is the same B♭ as the first note, this time harmonized with a G, the accompaniment a polychord: E♭ Major against an open F Major. The pitch B♭ persists in three distinct harmonic contexts.

Psalm 24—“Will you eat at the feast of the Lamb? Will you rule the city on the hill? Will flowing wine replace all your tears? Yes, Lord! We believe! You make all things new!”

All Saints’ Day, Year B. Temple entrance liturgy in three parts: 1) statement of ownership, 2) Torah instructions, 3) dialogue at the gates.⁶¹ The opening of Psalm identifies God as cosmic Creator with water-related imagery adding an element of mystery. The second section begins with anaphoric questions: “Who shall ascend the hill of the Lord? And who shall stand in his holy place?” (Ps 24:3). The answers come in the form of liturgical response, followed by Selah.

---

⁶¹ Gerstenberger, 117.
Finally, the dialogue is almost two repeated phrases with a command, followed by a reason for the command: “Lift up your heads . . . that the King of glory may come in!” (Ps 24:7). Then the question and answer: “Who is the King of glory? The Lord, strong and mighty . . . ” (Ps 24:8).

This entire dialogue is repeated with a different concluding answer, followed by Selah. Psalm 24 exudes loud proclamation, and a layering of dialogical voices. The antiphon, mirroring this form, includes three anaphoric questions, followed by three answers. The final answer, “We believe you make all things new,” is commentary on the cosmic Creator, still creating. The melody is found in tenor and bass voices. It is then layered with alto, then soprano voices, creating a three-part response converging on a unison F, a pivot note punctuated in the accompaniment by F minor, G Major, and finally D♭ Major chords with an added open E♭ chord. The low D♭ establishes a fundamental tonic against the poly chord.

Psalm 25:1–10 – “Will you sit and watch and wait? Will the Promise Keeper come? Will the earth turn again for us?”

1st Sunday of Advent, Year C; 1st Sunday in Lent, Year B. Individual lament in three parts: 1) affirmation of confidence, 2) petition, 3) hymnic praise.62 The full psalm is divided into five parts. While this psalm begins as an individual lament, the focus oscillates between individual (I, me, my) and community (those, them, sinners, the humble). Section one ends with hymnic praise by “those who keep his covenant and his decrees,” likely the gathered worshiping community. Still a lament, the psalmist prays to be instructed and lead. A prayer for wisdom, Psalm 25 is found in both Advent and Lent (seasons of waiting), and the antiphon text is three successive questions. Set in C minor, on the word “turn,” the vocal harmony abruptly shifts to a

---

62 Gerstenberger, 120.
predominant Neapolitan chord ($D^\flat$ major) in first inversion, moving immediately to a dominant
chord (G Major), cadencing in tonic (C minor).

Psalm 29 – “How shall we be born again? Born from above? Listen to the Wind’s Song:

“How, holy, holy is the Lord!”

Trinity Sunday, Year B. Hymn in three parts: 1) call to worship, 2) description of God’s power,
3) praise.$^{63}$ This hymn is modeled after cultic hymns celebrating changes in weather patterns and
growing seasons.$^{64}$ In the call to worship, “heavenly beings” are addressed. God’s voice is
attributed to all weather acts: thunder, storms over the water, storms breaking cedars and scaring
animals, lightning strikes causing fires in the wilderness, windstorms destroying forests. The
final chorus offers praise while being a prayer for endurance during acts of nature’s rage. The
accompanying lessons deal with baptism, and therefore the question of being “born again.” The
penultimate line “Listen to the Wind’s Song” references the voice of the Lord in the psalm text.
“The Wind’s Song” reveals itself as the intonation of the Sanctus, a macaronic text of Latin and
English, with an optional expansion to a four-part choral texture. The music is an adaptation of
my Sanctus.

Psalm 31:9–16 – “God be in my feet, in my hands, in my mouth; that where I go and what I
do and what I saw would spread your love across the world.” $^{65}$

Palm Sunday, Liturgy of the Passion, Years A, B, C. Individual lament in two parts: 1)
complaint, 2) petition.$^{66}$ The full psalm is divided into eight parts. This portion of the psalm is

$^{63}$ Gerstenberger, 130.
$^{64}$ Gerstenberger, 130–132.
$^{65}$ In this presentation, the antiphon and psalm tone are both accompanied by piano.
$^{66}$ Gerstenberger, 136–137.
self-deprecating. We find the psalmist in emotional and physical distress as well as in danger (real or perceived). They believe members of their own community are plotting against them, that they evoke fear in the hearts of others who are scheming “together against me as they plot to take my life” (Ps 31:13b). Their plea, however—beginning in 9a with “Be gracious to me, O Lord . . .” and ending in 14–16 with “But I trust in you, O Lord; . . . My times are in your hand; . . . save me in your steadfast love”—is faithful and trusting. Were this psalm prayed communally, the congregation would likely be jarred by the oscillating wildness of the psalmist: guttural laments to fervent, faithful prayers. The antiphon is based on the prayer “God be in my head” from the eleventh century Sarum Primer. The use of the melodic minor scale in the melody, both ascending and descending, is supported by substitute chords in the accompaniment. Also in the accompaniment, sixteenth notes and triplets in the right hand evoke urgency to “spread your love across the world.”

Psalm 32 - "We are bound to our nakedness, but Christ has led us out of the wilderness of sin."

1st Sunday of Lent, Year A. Individual song of thanksgiving in five parts: 1) felicitation, 2) account of trouble and salvation, 3) exhortation and confession, 4) instruction, 5) call to worship. Psalm 32 begins with the same type of beatific statement as Psalm 1: two anaphoric uses of the word “happy.” Told from a personal point of view, the context is communal, the psalmist sharing good news with the community, particularly verse 6: “Therefore let all who are faithful offer prayer to you.” This exhortation is meant to stir the hearts of those listening, having just heard the psalmist’s account of trouble and salvation. Verse 7, “You are a hiding place for

---

67 Gerstenberger, 140.
me,” is used as well in Psalm 119:114, an image of complete safety and care. The psalmist delivers a message: when we hide from God, we suffer; when we acknowledge our sin to God, God offers solace and protection. Lectionary lessons emphasize wilderness themes, relating to the psalm by highlighting the psalmist’s exasperated strength (“bound to our nakedness”) which turns to a hiding place from sin (“out of the wilderness of sin.”) The final chord in the accompaniment is a CM7 in first inversion, voiced E – B – C – G evoking strength (two perfect fifths) and dissonance (offset by a half step).

Psalm 34:1–10, 22 – “Amen! Praise, glory, wisdom, power, and strength belong to our God forever and ever! Amen!”

All Saints’ Day, Year A. Individual song of thanksgiving in three parts: 1) invitation to thank and praise, 2) account of salvation and admonition, 3) closing line.68 The full psalm is divided into four parts. This is an acrostic psalm, traditionally used for laments, hymns, or thanksgivings.69 In verse 3 the psalmist invites all to join in praise: “O magnify the Lord with me, and let us exalt his name together.” Three verses have made their way into the liturgical language of the church: 1) the invitatory verse 1— “I will bless the Lord at all times; his praise shall be continually in my mouth”—2) verse 3— “O magnify the Lord with me, and let us exalt his name together”—3) and the ubiquitous communion text in verse 8— “O taste and see that the Lord is good; happy are those who take refuge in him.” These three parallelisms are some of the most striking in the whole text. Given the final verse— “The Lord redeems the life of his servants; none of those who take refuge in him will be condemned”—Psalm 34:1–10, 22 is appropriate for All Saints’

68 Gerstenberger, 146.
Day. The antiphonal text comes directly from Revelation 7:12 (CEV), the song of the heavenly creatures. There are two versions—one for congregational use and one for choral use. The former is set in 4/4 with one measure of syncopation and two measures of tresillo rhythm; the latter oscillates between 3/4 and 6/8, fostering a dance-like character. The vocal pitch contents of both setting are nearly identical, with slight variations in the accompaniment harmony.

Book Two: Psalms 42 & 43–72

Psalms 42 & 43 – “Our feet are bound; our throats are dry; our empty bellies ache. God’s voice drives unclean spirits out—calms fires and winds and quakes!”

2nd Sunday after Pentecost, Year C. Individual lament in seven parts: 1) complaint, 2) refrain, 3) complaint, 4) refrain, 5) petition, 6) vow, 7) refrain.70 Divided into two psalms, these sixteen verses were likely one work, evidenced by thematic material and a shared refrain.71 There are hints of both Psalm 22 and 23 in this work—the pastoral longing in verse 1 and the questions in verse 3—“Where is your God?”—and in verse 9—“Why have you forgotten me?” The psalmist perceives God’s absence, and therefore is both distraught and physically ill—“as with a deadly wound in my body.” However, when the psalmist remembers God’s past blessings, they have hope of God’s protection returning, as they fervently pray—“O send out your light and truth . . . let them bring me to . . . your dwelling . . . and I will praise you with the harp, O God, my God.” The antiphon reflects themes in the lectionary lessons, mainly exile, driving out unclean spirits, and calming nature. The vocal music is my hymn tune OLD TOLL ROAD and can be sung as a three-part canon. The steady quarter note melody (supporting the canon) is found in the accompaniment left hand, juxtaposed with an obligato in the right hand. This

70 Gerstenberger, 178.
71 Seerveld, 73.
accompaniment evokes images of a harp, referencing Psalm 43:4b—“and I will praise you with the harp, O God, my God.”

Psalm 46 – “God bless the shepherds who care for God’s Sheep.”

Christ the King Sunday, Year C; Easter Vigil, Years A, B, C. Hymn (song to Zion) in eight parts: 1) affirmation of confidence, 2) account of battle, 3) affirmation of confidence, 4) account of revolt, 5) refrain, 6) victory hymn, 7) divine oracle, 8) refrain.72 This psalm is irrevocably linked to Martin Luther’s Ein’ Feste Burg. Gerstenberger describes this as a song of confidence.73 Fred Anderson says it is, “a source of comfort and solace as well as an affirmation of confidence.”74 Though images of strength and power dominate this psalm, there are moments of comfort and serenity: the river in verse 4, the dawning of the morning in verse 5, ceasing of wars in verse 9, and the often quoted verse 10—“Be still, and know that I am God!” This psalm emboldens people to call on God for strength, even as they live among the nations. Given multiple appearances in the lectionary, there are three sets of antiphon texts to choose from: “God bless the shepherds who care for God’s sheep,” “You are our shepherd, we are your sheep,” and (most appropriately for the Vigil) “Jesus, remember us, though we have strayed.” And while the antiphonal music is rousing and triumphant, filled with triplets in the accompaniment, the cantor sings Psalm Tone 2, the contemplative hymn tone.

72 Gerstenberger, 190–191.
73 Gerstenberger, 190.
74 Anderson, 73.
Psalm 49:1–12 – “‘Vanity of vanities!’ All we do and all we have and all we make is nothing next to the love of the Lord!”

8th Sunday after Pentecost, Year C. Wisdom (torah) psalm in three parts: 1) song presentation, 2) plaintive meditation, 3) refrain.75 The full psalm is divided into five parts. This psalm presents clear instruction on dealing with and valuing money. In the narrative, the wealthy—“those who trust in their wealth and boast of the abundance of their riches” (Ps 49:6)—have lost their lives to material possessions. A variation of this proverb is found in the Gospel of Matthew 10:39. The refrain, only presented once in this lectionary portion, is reminiscent of Job 14, used in the funeral rites of the Church of England. Psalm 49 is a treatise on the futility of wealth and poverty in an objective assessment of communal life—“When we look at the wise, they die; fool and dolt perish together and leave their wealth to others.”76 One might recall Mary’s song, the Magnificat, specifically “He has brought down the powerful from their thrones and lifted up the lowly; he has filled the hungry with good things and send the rich away empty” (Luke 1:52–53). Together with the lectionary lessons, Psalm 49 admonishes those who value work, possessions, and accomplishments over the love of the Lord. The cantor plays a role in the antiphon, intoning a quote from Ecclesiastes 1:2, “Vanity of vanities!” The vocal melody in Lydian starts in F Major and is presented as a whole-step-descending sequence, rising at the end to rest on the flat 7th chord, E♭ Major.

---

75 Gerstenberger, 203.
76 Gerstenberger, 206.
Psalm 51:1–17 – “Praise God in the light of the assembled but pray in the shadow of your hearts.”

Ash Wednesday, Years A, B, C. Individual lament in five parts: 1) initial plea, 2) confession, 3) petition, 4) vow, 5) abrogation of sacrifice. The full psalm is divided into six parts. While I have not discussed them thus far, it is apropos to note that this psalm carries the superscription, “To the leader. A Psalm of David, when the prophet Nathan came to him, after he had gone in to Bathsheba.” Whether or not Psalm 51 was written immediately following David’s sin, as the lectionary-omitted verses 18–19 seem to suggest, is irrelevant, as this is a visceral admission of sin, possibly sung for readmission into the community. The raw emotion is palpable, the psalmist fully recognizing their sin—“For I know my transgressions, and my sin is ever before me. Against you, you alone, have I sinned and done what is evil in your sight . . .” There is great desire to be cleaned, cleansed, or washed, mentioned six times in the first ten verses. Psalm 51 has been set to music, either in part or in whole, by countless composers, as it is the quintessential penitential psalm, wrought with pathos and poetic language: “Have mercy on me, O God,” “Hide your face from my sins,” “Create in me a clean heart, O God, and put a new and right spirit within me,” “O Lord, open my lips, and my mouth will declare your praise.” In response to the accompanying lectionary lessons, the text encourages public praise and private contrition, both in prayer, giving, and fasting. Slight dissonances between the vocal melody and harmony evoke the sting of sin.

77 Gerstenberger, 211.
78 Anderson, 82; Gerstenberger, 212; Seerveld, 56.
Psalm 65 – “Follow your faith to the feast and fountain! Sisters and brothers, you are made whole! Give thanks to the One whose love knows no boundaries, the One from whom all blessings flow.”

Thanksgiving Day, Year A. Community song of thanksgiving in four parts: 1) praise, 2) communal petition, 3) hymn, 4) communal thanksgiving. This psalm exclusively uses plural pronouns, fully identifying as a communal song. The beatific “Happy are those” appears before the petition. God is again identified as Cosmic Creator, the psalmist extolling God’s reach to “the ends of the earth and . . . the farthest seas” (Ps 65:5). The imagery in verse 8 is particularly striking—“you make the gateways of the morning and evening shout for joy.” This psalm likely would have marked the beginning or end of a growing season, as the psalmist spends five verses addressing rain and waters, “crown[ing] the year with your bounty” (Ps 65:11), and the pastures, wilderness, meadows, and valleys producing abundance.

Verses 9 and 11 are used in Maurice Greene’s (1696–1755) harvest anthem Thou Visitest the Earth. The antiphon is composed in a hymnic style, the melody covering a full octave in D Major.

---

79 This recording is from Sunday, November 26, 2023, at Northridge Presbyterian Church, Dallas, Texas. The antiphon was used as an affirmation response.
81 Gerstenberger (2), 24.
Psalm 67 - "As we prayed by the water, your glory shines brighter! Your Spirit fills our hearts with perfect peace!"  

6th Sunday of Easter, Year C. Community song of Thanksgiving in three parts: 1) imploration, 2) call to worship, 3) longing for well-being and acknowledgment. The imploration is immediately reminiscent of the Aaronite benediction in Numbers 6:23b–26. The refrain in verse 3 returns in verse 5, curiously absent after verse 7. God is referenced but never directly addressed, and therefore this was likely a priestly proclamation to the assembled. The most specific reference comes in verse 6—“The earth has yielded its increase; God, our God, has blessed us”—indicating this could have been a response to a bountiful growing season. Consequently, the subjunctive imploration in verse 1—“May God be gracious”—and this expression of gratitude—“The Lord has yielded its increase”—imply that verses 1–5 were a general blessing and verses 6–7, while captured here, were an optional thanksgiving proclamation. The antiphon is composed in a gospel blues style, with flat major VII chords and parallel minor tonalities, cadencing on a major VI chord. The melody and harmony should be sung with gusto, particularly the Lombard rhythm on the word “glory.”

Psalm 72:1–7, 10–14 – “In a dream, God’s light showed the way. ‘Arise! Go forth into the mystery!’”

Epiphany of the Lord, Years A, B, C. Royal psalm in three parts: 1) intercession for a king, 2) wishes, 3) positive record. The full psalm is divided into seven parts. This and Psalm 127 are

---

83 This recording is from the Sunday, July 23, 2023, at Northridge Presbyterian Church, Dallas, Texas. The antiphon is used as a prayer response during the Prayers of the People.
84 Gerstenberger (2), 31.
85 Anderson, 96.
86 Gerstenberger (2), 31–34.
87 Gerstenberger (2), 31–32.
88 Gerstenberger (2), 64.
the only psalms to be attributed to Solomon. When read in full, Psalm 72 paints a full picture of a merciful yet politically astute king. Mentioned are the expansion of territorial lines, political councils, taxation, overseeing of agricultural production, and civic growth and development. However, the lectionary has selected verses 1–7, 10–14 to show the merciful aspects, particularly due to its liturgical placement. While this psalm may have been written for use during King Solomon’s annual enthronement ceremony (per the superscription), the contextual intent is drawing attention to the type of ruler Jesus would be, and therefore earthly pursuits have been omitted. The antiphonal harmonies, notated in C minor, are based in a harmonic G minor scale, with an augmented second between E♭ and F#. This envelops the congregation into Middle Eastern folk song sounds before closing with parallel augmented fourths on the word “mystery.” This is one of the more harmonically adventurous antiphons, painting a picture of the Magi following God’s call both to Jerusalem to visit Jesus as well as their return home via a different pathway.

**Book Three: Psalms 77–89**

**Psalm 77** – “Flaming wind sent down from heaven, blaze the path that’s straight and narrow; guide me to the curtained river!”

3rd Sunday after Pentecost, Year C. Individual lament in three parts: 1) description of praying, 2) remembrance, plaintive and praising, 3) hymn. We see the psalmist in a desolate place; even their prayers are disturbed: “my soul refuses to be comforted. I think of God, and I moan; I meditate, and my spirit faints” (Ps 77:2c–3). Extreme hyperbole contradicts itself: “I cry aloud to

---

89 Gerstenberger (2), 65.  
90 Gerstenberger (2), 67.  
91 Gerstenberger (2), 88.
God, aloud to God, that he may hear me” (Ps 77:1) and “I am so troubled that I cannot speak” (Ps 77:4b). Verses 7–9 find the psalmist at their lowest place, before metanoia in verse 10. The focus shifts from the psalmist to God. The pronoun “I” is used three more times, moving to “You,” addressing God. The psalmist remembers God’s past deeds as well as God’s continued providence. The final hymn recounts Israel’s deliverance from captivity and the parting of the Red Sea, mentioning Jacob, Joseph, Moses, and Aaron. Imagery of sea and storms—rain, lightening, thunder—dominate the hymn as the psalmist lauds both the creative and destructive power of God. The antiphon construction is like Psalm 24, the men singing the melody, the altos adding a high harmony, the sopranos adding a higher harmony. The tune is based on the first phrase of Louis Bourgeois’ GENEVAN 77. Also available is a version with a cantor and choral ostinato in a Taizé style.

Psalm 80 – “When nations rise and fall, and rulers’ reigns have ended, the prophecy remains: a virgin shall bear ‘God with us.’”

4th Sunday of Advent, Years A, C; 1st Sunday of Advent, Year B. Community lament in four parts: 1) invocation, initial plea, 2) complaint, 3) entreaty, 4) petition. God is initially addressed as “Shepherd of Israel,” evoked as a protector against an outside enemy, one who destroyed the tribes of Ephraim, Benjamin, and Manasseh, possibly when Assyria destroyed the northern tribes in 722 BCE. The enemy has made ruin of God’s sacred lineage—“a vine out of Egypt” (Ps 80:8a)—and the psalmist implores God to repair the damage and return the tribes to their previous strength via the refrain, “Restore us, O God/O God of hosts/O Lord God of hosts; let your face shine, that we may be saved” (Ps 80:3, 7, 19). An intriguing statement comes in verses

---

92 Gerstenberger (2), 103.
93 Anderson, 114.
17–18: “But let your hand be upon the one at your right hand, the one whom you made strong for yourself. Then we will never turn back from you; give us life, and we will call on your name.”

The naïveté of verse 18 aside, the wish for “the one at your right hand” could be prophetic, possibly Messianic. Regardless, this phrase alone establishes its lectionary placement. The antiphon text is the same for Years A and C, different for Year B. The antiphon music is a stark mix of gospel blues and accompanied chant and is one of two unison melodies. The 7/8 section is optionally sung by cantor or choir only.

Psalm 85:1–2, 8–13 – “The patient flow of water makes the way of our salvation: God’s Word withstands the fire!”

2nd Sunday of Advent, Year B. Community lament in three parts: 1) retrospect, 2) petition, 3) wishes. Considering the entire psalm, this lament is quite general. There are no specific trials mentioned, rather than in verse 1b—“you restored the fortunes of Jacob.” No enemies mentioned, no natural disasters; just a recognition of past iniquity that God forgave. God was/is angry, but there is assurance that “steadfast love and faithfulness will meet. . . Faithfulness will spring up from the ground. . . The Lord will give what is good” (Ps 85:10–12). The most distinctive section is verses 10–13, with lovely parallelism and general poetic language. Used on the Second Sunday of Advent, Year B, if the lectionary is read on the First Sunday of Advent, Year B, Psalm 80 could be read as a commentary on God’s providence. Playing on the water imagery in the accompanying lectionary lessons, the antiphon text emphasizes baptism. Through the music, beginning in E minor, slight dissonances in the vocal parts and rhythmic diversity in the accompaniment further the water imagery. As mentioned in the analysis, a transition to F♯

94 Gerstenberger (2), 105.
95 Gerstenberger (2), 127.
Major marks the end of the antiphon, and the final accompaniment chord is an inversion of set
\{0, 2, 5, 8\}—B♭, C, E♭, and F♯.

Psalm 89:1–4, 19–26 – “Our Lord does not dwell in cedar mansions but moves among the
people on winds of ancient promises fulfilled.”

4th Sunday of Advent, Year B. Royal psalm in three parts: 1) initial praise, 2) David oracle, 3)
Yahweh hymn/description of superiority.96 The full psalm is divided into seven parts. The
opening bicola of Psalm 89 establishes the gravitas of what follows—an epic communal
complaint. However, the complaint comes toward the end, and the lectionary selection reads as a
royal psalm. Together with the language of the verses 3–4, verses 19–26 outline the prophetic
promise of a future king. Though this may have been written around 578 BCE at the fall of
Jerusalem, the liturgical context of the lectionary lessons points toward Jesus.97 Most
specifically, verses 19–26 are reminiscent of Mary’s song, Magnificat. Parallelisms are similar,
particularly in verses 21–23. While in aggregate Psalm 89 might not be Messianic, it does sing
promises for God’s provision, and in an Advent context, slouches toward prophecy. The
antiphon text qualifies the notion of a mighty and earthly king, placing him amid the people
outside of a palatial dwelling. The vocal music is straightforward with suspended dissonances on
the phrases “but moves” and “on winds.” Perfect fourths and fifths in the vocal writing imply the
strength and stability of verse 21.

---

96 Gerstenberger (2), 147.
97 Anderson, 129.
Book Four: Psalms 91–105

Psalm 91 – “Fight the good fight and follow Christ: walk in righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, and meekness.”

16th Sunday after Pentecost, Year C. Song of trust in three parts: 1) felicitation, 2) personal blessings, 3) divine reflection and promise. The psalmist begins, speaking directly to those who trust God: “You who live . . . who abide . . . [you] will say to the Lord” (Ps 19:1–2). From there, verses 2–13 are confirming or reaffirming what those who trust God know: “he will deliver you . . . cover you . . . you will not fear . . . it [death] will not come near you . . . no evil shall befall you . . . his angels [will] guard you” (Ps 19:3–11). This is remarkable protection offered to those who trust God: disease, enemies, unseen dangers of the night, death, natural disasters, and wild animals—God will protect against all these. Verses 14–16 are unique as the psalmist offers a blessing in God’s voice— “Those who love me, I will deliver; I will protect those who know my name” (Ps 91:14). In these sixteen verses are found some of the most loving of God’s promises in Scripture: answer prayers, stay close in times of trouble, offer protection, deal with honor, bless with longevity, grant salvation. Psalm 91 has been popularized by Michael Joncas’ musical setting, On Eagle’s Wings (1979). The antiphon text is a response to the accompanying lectionary lessons, emphasizing God’s promises. The opening accompaniment motif of rising perfect fourths evokes the expansiveness of God’s love.

98 Gerstenberger (2), 163.
Psalm 95 – “Suffering from thirst and wand’ring in the wilderness, your spring-fed pastures offer hope and truth and life.”

3rd Sunday in Lent, Year A. Hymn (royal) in five parts: 1) call to worship, 2) hymn, 3) call to worship, 4) hymn, 5) sermon.100 This clearly delineated yet abruptly ending psalm would have been used in communal worship.101 Two calls to worship and two hymns establish a joyful tone for worshiping a benevolent God, a shepherd caring for their sheep. The congregation is called to “make a joyful noise” (Ps 95:2) and to “worship and bow down . . . (and) kneel before the Lord” (Ps 95:6). The sermon, however, takes an abrupt turn, recalling a time at Meribah and Massah in the wilderness when “your ancestors tested me . . . though they had seen my work” (Ps 95:9). This could indicate a lectionary resource: liturgical elements in general use and stories told at certain times. The sermon concludes, offering little to no hope found in the earlier sections: “For forty years I loathed that generation . . . Therefore in my anger I swore, ‘They shall not enter my rest’” (Ps 95:10–11). The antiphonal text refers to wandering in the wilderness and thirst [in response to the Gospel lesson of the day when Jesus meets the woman at the well (John 4:5–42)]. In contrast to the shift in mood of the psalm, the music moves from plaintive (“Suffering from thirst”) to joyous (“your spring-fed pastures”).

100 Gerstenberger (2), 182.
101 Gerstenberger (2), 182.

Nativity of the Lord, Years A, B, C. Hymn (royal) in five parts: 1) summons to praise, 2) hymn, 3) summons to praise, 4) proclamation of enthronement, 5) beckoning of jubilation. One distinguishable characteristic of Psalm 96 is how it maintains focus and energy over thirteen verses. Both calls to worship consist of an anaphoric *tricola* followed by a single call-to-action *cola*: “sing” and “ascribe.” The hymn and beckoning of jubilation are similar as the former declares God to be above all the people and nations and the latter declares God to be Creator and Ruler of the natural world. The personifications in verses 11–12 are notable and have been used in hymn texts by Mary Louise Bringle and Steffi Geiser Rubin: “Let the heavens be glad . . . earth rejoice . . . field exult . . . trees of the forest sing for joy.” Of all the superb language in this psalm, none can surpass the opening *cola*: “O sing to the Lord a new song” (Ps 96:1). This call-to-action has inspired countless composers (myself, included) to create new forms of musical expression praising God, and to participate in God’s continuing act of creation. The antiphon text, therefore, is an anaphora using the phrase, “A new song of . . .” three times before the final statement, “Behold! A Child!” Three distinct musical materials are used in the anaphoric section: 1) a right-hand accompaniment figure of sixteenth notes outlining an $A_\flat$ Major major-seventh chord, 2) a left-hand accompaniment figure comprised of quarter note, dotted eighth-sixteenth, dotted quarter-eighth, and 3) a syncopated pattern in the voice parts.

---

102 This recording is from the Third Sunday in Advent, December 17, 2023, a Service of Lessons and Carols at Northridge Presbyterian Church, Dallas, Texas. The antiphon is used as a response to the ninth lesson, John 1:1–14, and during the bidding prayer.
103 Gerstenberger (2), 187.
voices present an F Major chord, while the final accompaniment chord is arpeggiated and built on each member of the F Major triad (F Major, C Major, A Major), mimicking a sesquialtera organ stop.

Psalm 104:24–34, 35b – “The Spirit in the clouds put these words into our mouths: ‘Drink if you are thirst; forgive and be forgiven; peace and light shall flow from your heart.’”

Day of Pentecost, Years A, B, C. Hymn (individual and community) in four parts: 1) adoration, 2) wishes, 3) vow, 4) summons to praise. The full psalm is divided into eight parts. Like the opening of Psalm 8, this text resembles a creation hymn. Unlike Psalm 74:13–14 which tells of its destruction, Psalm 104:26 mentions Leviathan—“There go the ships and Leviathan that you formed to sport in it”—establishing a sense of mystery, mentioning a creature living and flourishing mostly unseen. The following are filled with Pentecostal images—breath, spirit, renew, smoke—resonating with congregations hearing this psalm on Pentecost. Throughout the psalm we hear of God’s creative and salvific power. The Lord is perceived as present in times of celebration and absent in times of distress, a common psalmic theme. The psalmist vows to remember the Lord’s good works, evoking hope. The antiphon texts are different per each liturgical year, responding directly to the accompanying lessons. The music, like Psalm 49, uses the cantor as an active participant in the antiphon. The choral/congregational music begins in D Major, rising to F Major, and then A♭ Major—outlining a diminished chord—while the psalm tone is set in B♭ Major, creating an overall harmonic structure of B♭ M7, a dominant seventh chord, anticipating a new church year.

105 Gerstenberger (2), 221.
106 Anderson, 154.
107 Gerstenberger (2), 227.
Psalm 105:1–11, 45b – “What shall we ask of the Lord, who gives us all we need? Stay with us, O Lord!”

8th Sunday after Pentecost, Year A. Storytelling psalm in three parts: 1) summons to worship, 2) praise of Yahweh acting in history, 3) summons to praise. While the full psalm is also in three parts, the second part, praise of Yahweh acting in history, is divided into six parts, with only one part represented in the lectionary. After an extended summons, the bulk of the psalm, thirty-eight full verses, is dedicated to the salvific history of Israel. Like Psalm 136, another storytelling psalm, could this have been responsive liturgy? In the lectionary it is paired with Genesis 29:15–28, the story of Jacob, Laban, Rachel, and Leah; and Matthew 13:31–33, 44–52, the parable of the mustard seed. Both stories deal with patience and delayed gratification. Verse 11 is apropos to the Genesis passage. This antiphon was written to celebrate the calling of Rev. Betsy Swetenburg to Northridge Presbyterian Church in the summer of 2020, with language focusing on God’s provision and God’s presence. Beginning in C minor, the music shifts to the parallel major before cadencing on DM.

Book Five: Psalms 107–150

Psalm 107 – “To the children of wrath God sent a child of peace. Those who look to the child will find light and life!”

4th Sunday in Lent, Year B. Community song of thanksgiving in four parts: 1) introduction and purpose, 2) examples of thanksgiving, 3) meditation, counsel, 4) challenge. Verse 1 begins like Psalm 136— “Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good; his love endures forever.” Four

---

108 Gerstenberger (2), 230.
110 Gerstenberger (2), 246.
following sections—verses 4, 10, 17, 23—anaphorically use the word “Some” followed by a predicament, which is fleshed out in the text, followed by, “Then they cried out the Lord in their trouble, and he delivered/saved/brought them from/out of their distress” (Ps 107:6, 13, 19, 28). The sections close with an appellation to “Let them give thanks to the Lord for his unfailing love and his wonderful deeds for mankind,” followed by a summary of how the Lord blessed the people in these situations. There is mediation on these stories and a challenge to “Let the one who is wise heed these things and ponder the loving deeds of the Lord” (Ps 107:43). Situated in Lent on Lætare Sunday, this text focuses directly on suffering and deliverance. The antiphonal text uses the parallelism “children of wrath” and “Child of Peace.” The music is set in C minor and uses a descending chromatic passage in the harmony voice. The antiphon ends on a half cadence in G Major.

Psalm 114 – “Christ surprises us with water; now the drought of death is ended! Sing ‘Alleluia!’”

The Great Vigil of Easter, Years A, B, C. Hymn in two parts: 1) account of exodus, claim, 2) dramatization.111 This hymn is a poetic retelling of God’s people delivered from Egypt into the promised land, focusing on God’s sovereignty in the natural world: “The sea looked and fled” (Ps 114:3a); “the mountains leaped like rams” (Ps 114:4a); “Tremble, earth, at the presence of the Lord” (Ps 114:7a); “who turned . . . the hard rock into springs of water” (Ps 114:8).112 Verses 3–4 and 5–6 are unique in their statement/answer construction—“The sea looked and fled” (Ps 114:3a) and “Why was it, sea, that you fled?” (Ps 114:5a)—a pattern that continues for the remainder of verse 3 and 5 as well as verses 4 and 6. The text is filled with personification and

111 Gerstenberger (2), 281.
simile: “sea looked and fled” (Ps 114:3a), “the mountains leaped like rams, the hills like lambs” (Ps 114:4), “Tremble, earth, at the presence of the Lord” (Ps 114:7a). Verses 5–6 employ anaphora with the word “Why” asking three successive questions. While this psalm features a few key elements of the deliverance story, it does so with poetic deftness. The antiphon text focuses the role water played in the deliverance of God’s people. The use of the augmented second in the voice text paints the word “surprise” and calls to mind the parting of the Red Sea. The marcato eighth notes in the left-hand accompaniment in measures 3 and 7 represent Moses striking the stone to release water.

Psalm 116—“Walk with us, talk with us, open our eyes; now we see your face!”

3rd Sunday of Easter, Year A. Individual song of thanksgiving in eight parts: 1) declaration of being heard, 2) account of trouble and salvation, 3) responses of community, 4) thanks and vow of the saved one, 5) account of trouble and salvation, 6) vow and fulfillment, 7) account of salvation, 8) vow and fulfillment. While only nineteen verses, Psalm 116 is relatively short to have eight distinct parts, each averaging only two verses. Though it contains exquisite poetic language, the entire psalm seems to be a patchwork effort. The individual perspective is apparent by use of the first-person pronoun “I” thirteen times in nineteen verses, along with the use of “me” and “my.” The anaphoric refrains of verses 13–14 and 17–18 each begin with “I will . . .” followed by an action—“lift up the cup of salvation” (Ps 116:13a) and “sacrifice a thank offering to you” (Ps 116:17a)—and then the repeated “and call on the name of the Lord” (Ps 116:13b, 17b). In the final portion of the refrain, the psalmist says, “I will fulfill my vows to the Lord in the presence of all his people,” (Ps 116:14, 18), the final refrain ending with “in the

---

113 Gerstenberger (2), 291.
114 Gerstenberger (2), 294.
courts of the house of the Lord—in your midst, Jerusalem” (Ps 116:19). Responding to the story of the road to Emmaus as well as the text in verse 9—“that I may walk before the Lord in the land of the living”—the antiphonal text asks the Lord to “Walk with us, talk with us,” before moving to two optional texts, one for general use and one for communion. The music employs a rising major third motif, that moves from D Major to E Major to F♯ Major to G Major, before a half cadence in A Major.

Psalm 118:1–2, 19–29 – “The prophets spoke of a feast and banquet to bring the nations all together.”

Palm Sunday, Liturgy of the Palms, Years A, B, C. Individual song of thanksgiving (royal) in three parts: 1) summons to give thanks, 2) thanksgiving ceremony, 3) summons to give thanks. The full psalm is divided into four parts. Like other psalms in Book Four, Psalm 118 opens with the summons to “Give thanks to the Lord, for his is good; his love endures forever” (Ps 118:1). Moving directly to verse 19, the next eight verses, the thanksgiving ceremony, are subdivided into four parts, the third part, the communal hymn, subdivided into six parts. The psalm begins with a call to move into the sanctuary. Next are prophetic passages, mainly verse 22—“The stone the builders rejected has become the chief cornerstone”—and verses 26 and 27c—“Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord . . . with boughs in hand, join in the procession.” It is no wonder this prophetic psalm is designated for use on Palm Sunday, Liturgy of the Palms! The psalm closes with an anaphoric phrase in verse 28—“You are my God, and I will praise you; you are my God, and I will exalt you,” and ends in verse 29 the way it began—“Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good; his love endures forever.” The antiphonal text offers

---

115 Gerstenberger (2), 300.
116 Gerstenberger (2), 300, 307.
two options: the one above and “The prophets spoke of a gentle rabbi who comes to save the ones who killed him.” Musically, the antiphon is sturdy and straightforward, one that could be sung with gusto and celebration during the Liturgy of the Palms.

Psalm 121 – “From the mountain, visible are the blessings of the Lord. Lift your eyes; call God’s name; Christ will make your spirits soar!”

2nd Sunday in Lent, Year A. Song of trust in two parts: 1) affirmation of confidence, 2) consolation, words of assurance. A true song of ascent, this was a pilgrimage psalm sung en route to worship at the temple in Jerusalem. In the first two verses, depending on the translation, the question was asked and answered: “where does my help come from? My help comes from the Lord” (Ps 121:1b–2a). What follows in verses 3–8 are promises of help: “He will not let your foot slip,” he . . . will neither slumber not sleep,” “The Lord watches over you,” “the sun will not harm you,” “The Lord will keep you from all harm—he will watch over your life; the Lord will watch over your coming and going” (Ps 121:3–8). These promises are punctuated by the final cola, “both now and forevermore” (Ps 121:8b). This psalm has been favored by composers because of its form, length, and poetry. The antiphon text presupposes the arrival atop the mountain: “From the mountain, visible are the blessings of the Lord.” The music is set in C harmonic minor, an augmented second used on the words “of the” in the phrase “blessings of the Lord.” The augmented second notwithstanding, this durable melody meant to be sung enthusiastically.

117 Gerstenberger (2), 322.
118 Anderson, 185.
Psalm 122 – “Flood the valley of darkness and death and carry me to the mountain of light and life!”

1st Sunday of Advent, Year A. Hymn (song to Zion) in three parts: 1) account of pilgrimage, 2) praise of Jerusalem, 3) hymn to Jerusalem. Another song of ascent, the text reflects arrival at the temple in Jerusalem following a recounting of pilgrimage. Jerusalem is addressed directly, like lamentations found in other Old Testament texts such as Isaiah, Ezekiel, and Lamentations. The city itself is a worship destination for all people, representing heaven-on-earth, where all can come “to give thanks to the name of the Lord” (Ps 122:4d). The final portion of the psalm is a hymnic prayer, beginning with the iconic “Pray for the peace of Jerusalem” (Ps 122:6a), followed by petitions for peace, security, and prosperity. Another psalm popular with composers, Psalm 122 has its most famous setting by the British composer Sir Charles Hubert Hastings Parry (1848–1918)—the coronation anthem for King Edward VII (1841–1910), *I Was Glad* (1902). The antiphon text reflects the accompanying lectionary lessons, employing antithetic parallelism (see Example 2.1). The music begins in C minor, cadencing in the parallel C Major.

Psalm 126 – “In a cold and barren land only Christ can give new life: bring his light into the world!”

3rd Sunday of Advent, Year B/5th Sunday in Lent, Year C. Community Lament in three parts: 1) praise of liberation, 2) petition, 3) farmer’s song. Another song of ascent, part one of this brief psalm recounts liberation from bondage and exclaims uncontrollable physical praise to God as the people’s mouths were “filled with laughter,” and their tongues “with shouts of joy” (Ps

---

119 Gerstenberger (2), 326.
120 Anderson, 186.
121 “YouTube I Was Glad Parry,” https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6Mx0nEGyt4w (accessed February 29, 2024).
122 Gerstenberger (2), 339.
The second and third parts, the petition and the farmer’s song, are radically different in language and posture. Following the petition, the song is a mixture of prayer and prophecy, reflecting time in bondage through agrarian metaphors. Tears turn to shouts of joy, weeping and bearing burdens turns to more shouts of joy and reaping of the harvest. The final two verses are the basis of Knowles Shaw’s (1834–1878) hymn Bringing in the Sheaves, music by George A. Minor (1845–1904). While the hymn’s first two stanzas are inspired by the grueling work of harvesting crops, stanza three and the refrain are psalm paraphrases: “Going forth with weeping, sowing for the Master, / Tho the loss sustained our spirit often grieves; / When our weeping’s over, He will bid us welcome, / We shall come rejoicing, bringing in the sheaves.” This text directly references Psalm 126:5–6: “May those who sow in tears reap with shouts of joy. Those who go out weeping, bearing the seed for sowing, shall come home with shouts of joy, carrying the sheaves.” Psalm 126 is found in the lectionary during Advent and Lent, and the antiphon presents two text options: the one above for Advent and “In a chasm, dark and drear, only Christ can make us new: bring his light into the world!” for Lent. The music is an optional three-part canon. For Advent, the mode is C Dorian, and for Lent, C minor.

Psalm 127 – “God, Restorer of Life! Turn our poverty into plenty! May our children’s children honor your name forever!”

25th Sunday after Pentecost, Year B. Wisdom (torah) psalm in four parts: 1) sayings, 2) exhortation, 3) felicitation, 4) beatitude. As mentioned above, Psalm 127 is the second psalm

---

123 Anderson, 191; Seerveld, 144.
126 Gerstenberger (2), 344.
attributed to Solomon. The first two parts use housebuilding language, toiling in vain unless “the Lord builds the house,” or “guards the city” (Ps 127:1). The wisdom here is that as Creator, God enables us to participate in creation; without God’s support, we “labor in vain” (Ps 127:1). The last two parts maintain a sense of protection but address the familial concerns of offspring. Depending on the translation used, the offspring mentioned are sons (NRSVUE) or children (CEV). While the poetry of the NRSVUE is more colorful, the inclusive nature of the CEV may be preferred. The antiphon text references “poverty” and “plenty,” and prays for generational faithfulness—“May our children’s children honor your name forever.” The music is hymnic, beginning in C Major with a mediant cadence in E Major. The pitch E is a pivot note between the two chords.

Psalm 130 - "My voice is mute, and yet my soul cries out to you: 'Lord, send your Spirit, and make these dry bones dance again!'"

5th Sunday in Lent, Year A. Individual lament (penitential) in six parts: 1) invocation, 2) initial plea, 3) confession of guilt, 4) affirmation of confidence, 5) personal prayer, 6) exhortation of community. Another song of ascent, Psalm 130, like Psalm 51, is a classic personal lament. The psalmist is in a groveling state, calling to God from the proverbial Pit. The psalmist uses both antithetical and synthetic parallelism, with a unique tonal shift from one bicola to another: “If you, O Lord, should mark iniquities, Lord, who could stand?” (Ps 130:3). This pessimistic statement is contrasted with a hopeful verse 4: “But there is forgiveness with you, so that you

---

127 Gerstenberger (2), 344.
128 Anderson, 192.
129 Gerstenberger (2), 355.
may be revered.” A prayer is offered, expressing vulnerability and patience, and when the psalmist finally addresses the community, there is a bold shift in tone from utter depression to rallying community engagement. This psalm is also a favorite of composers, linked to Martin Luther’s tune, bearing its Germanic title, AUS TIEFER NOT. The antiphon text reflects both the psalm and the accompanying lessons, ultimately focusing on the Ezekiel passage. The accompaniment is filled with heavy chromaticism and dissonance. The vocal part in C minor is unison, simultaneously representing loneliness and unanimity.

Psalm 131 – “When we trust your mystery, our fears will fall away.”

8th Sunday after Epiphany. Song of trust in three parts: 1) declaration of innocence, 2) affirmation of confidence, 3) exhortation of community. This song of ascent is one of the shortest in the Psalter and what Gerstenberger calls “a jewel of simplicity.” There is an innocence to this psalm, especially in the first two verses. The statements are unadorned, straightforward, yet impactful. The psalmist writes from a place of naïveté. The imagery is familial, specifically verse 2—“like a weaned child with its mother” (Ps 131:2b). Though the superscription attributes this psalm to David, it is possible the author is female. The final exhortation is the briefest verse of the three, a simple plea reminiscent of Psalm 130:7a and Psalm 121:8c. The antiphon text is short and simple. Set in E minor, the accompaniment employs an altered Neapolitan chord (with an added fourth in the bass) on the word “mystery,” and increases the measure from 4/4 to 5/4. The melody is simply an ascending and descending half-scalar passage in E minor.

---

131 Gerstenberger (2), 359.
132 Gerstenberger (2), 359.
133 Gerstenberger (2), 362.
Psalm 136 – “God’s love endures forever.”

Easter Vigil, Years A, B, C. Storytelling psalm in six parts: 1) summons to give thanks, 2) thanks for creation, 3) thanks for liberation, 4) thanks for protection, 5) thanks for sustenance, 6) summons to give thanks. While a number of psalms in Book Five begins with a responsive call—“O give thanks to the Lord, for his is good, for his steadfast love endures forever” (Ps 136:1)—Psalm 136 continues this form throughout all twenty-six verses. Without this response, Psalm 136 is a full and complete psalm; a storytelling psalm that could also be classified as a hymn or community thanksgiving psalm. However, the response both gives clues as to how this psalm was used in worship and is a model for responsive liturgy. The first three verses are anaphoric—“O give thanks to the Lord/God”—as well as verses 4–6, 10, 13, and 16–17 with the word “Who.” And though the psalmist could have continued the storytelling aspect of this psalm after verse 22, they abruptly end and turn to a general thanksgiving statement tricola—“it is he who remembered us . . . and rescued us . . . who gives food” (Ps 136:23–25)—before ending the way the psalm began. The antiphon text gives three options: “God’s love endures forever. / God’s love endures forever,” “God’s love was sent to save us; / God’s love will never fail us,” and “We are God’s sons and daughters. / God’s love, it never falters.” The structure of the musical setting maintains that of the psalm: the cantor chants, the congregation responds. The music for both the cantor and the congregation is simple, straightforward, and repetitive, using pandiatonicism to add color in the accompaniment.

134 Gerstenberger (2), 384.
135 Gerstenberger (2), 388.
Psalm 137 – “Our cities are empty; we weep in silence. Our spirits long to dance again.”

World Communion Sunday, Year C. Community lament in three parts: 1) complaint, 2) vow, 3) imprecatory prayers. This psalm was composed during the Babylonian exile (587–540 BCE). The psalmist remembers Jerusalem, the temple, and the community. The opening two verses paint a pastoral picture of distress: there are rivers and trees, there is resting (sitting down) and music (harps). However, the rivers are in Babylon; when they sat down, they wept; there are trees (willows), but their harps are hung on them. Their captors insist on hearing their songs of ascent, but the psalmist asks, “How could we sing the Lord’s song in a foreign land?” (Ps 137:4). The next section uses anaphoric language with the words “If I . . .” in verses 5–6, making a vow to keep Jerusalem in the psalmist’s heart. The final section is a curse on the captors. Interestingly, it is delivered in a beatific form: “Happy shall they be who . . .” (Ps 137:8b, 9a). The curse is often omitted in corporate worship, possibly because of the imagery of verse 9—“Happy shall they be who take your little ones and dash them against the rock!” However, as Anderson points out, “it was Dietrich Bonhoeffer who insisted that the psalm be prayed in its fullness. Sitting in his Nazi cell, awaiting execution, he observed that praying this psalm somehow brought him peace, allowing him to hand over to God all desire for vengeance.” The antiphonal text references a decayed civic spirituality—“Our cities are empty; we weep in silence”—and a longing for spiritual rejuvenation. The optional bells evoke Holy Spirit, and the dissonance of Baroque weeping evokes resignation. Psalm tone 7 (tonus peregrinus) is used here for the second time in this Psalter (Psalm 22) and is aptly fitting given the displacement theme in the psalm.

---

136 Gerstenberger (2), 390.
137 Anderson, 204.
138 Anderson, 204.
Psalm 149 – “Praise be to Christ; God’s Love, our Light! Christ shines through the dark.”

14th Sunday after Pentecost, Year A. Hymn of instruction in five parts: 1) opening cheer, 2) summons to praise, 3) hymnic affirmation, 4) instruction, wish for revenge, 5) closing cheer. Known as one of the “Hallelujah” or “Hallel” psalms, Psalm 149 echoes Psalm 96 in its summons to “Sing to the Lord a new song” (Ps 149:1b). It is filled with parallelism and anaphora, as well as imagery of celebrations of the children of Zion in the presence of God. There is singing, dancing, and musicking by way of singing (melody), playing the tambourine (rhythm), and the lyre (harmony). In verse 3b, the phrase “making melody” is used in the NRSVUE, while “playing music” is found in the CEV. This call to action is likely related to “making music” in a general sense than specifically creating a single line melody. Verses 6–9a shift from a celebratory scene and a hymn to what Gerstenberger calls both “instruction” and a “wish for revenge.” It would be taboo for a modern congregation to pray or “wish” for these specific events to unfold; however, in the psalmist’s context, this “wish” was for mortal survival. The antiphon text has little to do with the subject of the psalm; rather it has a Christological emphasis. The music, however, is celebratory and ecstatic, shifting from compound to simple meter in both the introduction and the sung antiphon proper. The antiphon begins in A♭ Major, cadencing in F Major.

---

139 Gerstenberger (2), 452.
140 Anderson, 219–220.
141 Gerstenberger (2), 455.
142 Gerstenberger (2), 457.
Psalm 150 – “When the world demands the stillness that you show, point them to the clouds and sing: Alpha es et O! Praise ye the Lord!”

2nd Sunday after Easter, Year C. Hymn of praise in three parts: 1) opening cheer, 2) summons to praise, 3) closing cheer.143 The final “Hallelujah” or “Hallel” psalm, Psalm 150 marks the end of the Psalter.144 Anaphoric from beginning to end, the word “praise” begins not only every verse, but every cola, save for 6a (6b echoing verse 1, “Praise the Lord!”) Verse 1 tell us to praise God “in his sanctuary” and “in his mighty firmament.” Verse 2 tells us we should praise God “for his might deeds . . . according to his surpassing greatness.” Verses 3–5 tell us to praise God with “trumpet sound . . . lute and harp . . . tambourine and dance . . . strings and pipe . . . clanging cymbals . . . loud clashing cymbals!” The exuberance of verses 3–5 is one step away from onomatopoeia, its instructions ringing in the ears of the listener. The final verse is a charge to “everything that breathes.” This psalm was composed to be realized aloud; an exclamation mark at the end of the Psalter; a call to all creation to praise the Lord.145 In Christopher Smart’s (1722–1771) poem Jubilate Agno (1759–1763), popularized by Benjamin Britten’s Rejoice in the Lamb (1943), Smart describes his cat Jeoffry who “worships in his Way. / For this is done by wreathing his body seven times round with elegant quickness. / For then he leaps up to catch the musk, which is the blessing of God upon his prayer.”146 Is this an example of realizing Psalm 150:6a? The antiphon text uses the Latin words “Alpha es et O!” from Revelation 1:8—“‘I am the Alpha and the Omega.’” Because of this text, it seemed a natural fit to quote the German chorale IN DULCI JUBILO, a tune associated with the English text “Good Christian Friends,

143 Gerstenberger (2), 458.
144 Anderson, 222.
145 Gerstenberger (2), 460.
146 “YouTube For I Will Consider My Cat Jeoffry Britten,” https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EWxi0CH9Dwg (accessed February 29, 2024).
Rejoice.” In the original German, the macaronic refrain is, “Alpha es et O!” And just as the Psalter concludes, the final words sung by the congregation in this antiphon are “Praise ye the Lord!”

Through theological and musical analysis, I look back on this thesis and unequivocally call this “good work.” In doing so, I make no assertion that these responsive psalms will fit every context, nor will they satisfy every musical taste or theological interpretation. Neither do I claim that the use of these responsive psalms will guarantee the attainment of liminality or communitas. Claiming this as “good work” only validates that this project has been seen to completion. The pathway set forth was followed, the goals were met, and the results are documented.

Taken one step further, through the psalm reflections, I contend that this is not only “good work,” but the continuation of a larger exegesis of God’s Word. The Psalter is not humanity’s final word on God’s presence in (or perceived absence from) its life. The Great Commission found in the Gospel of Matthew 28:19–20 says, “Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age.” The first word of this passage is “Go,” an intransitive active verb. “Go” requires no direct object and yet it demands action. As Christians, we are called to “go.” As musicians, we are called to “make music.” As pastoral musicians, we are called to “go make music for the people of God.” In this thesis, this has been accomplished. Having completed the job, joining in the work of creation, the next step is to use these responsive antiphons in the liturgy—the work of the people—to continually act on the calling to “go” and “make.”
CHAPTER FIVE

God saw everything that he had made, and indeed, it was very good. And there was evening and there was morning, the sixth day. Thus the heavens and the earth were finished and all their multitude. On the sixth day God finished the work that he had done, and he rested on the seventh day from all the work he had done. So God blessed the seventh day and hallowed it, because on it God rested from all the work that he had done in creation.

Genesis 1:31—2:3

Introduction

A Biblical quote about rest is apropos at this stage of the writing process, as this chapter offers final thoughts on the thesis. And while the presentation of the responsive psalmody is the first step in the macro-creative process—composition, realization, reception—this exercise is a necessary one, with the intent to look back on the work thus far and say that “indeed, it was very good.”

As discussed in chapter one, the tapestry of the RCL is extensive: at least three lessons and a Psalm of the Day per Lord’s Day and Feast Day worship, plus Thursday-through-Friday readings in preparation for Sunday worship and Monday-through-Wednesday readings as reflection on Sunday worship. The RCL is both prophetic and thorough, the connections between Old Testament and Gospel lessons the basis for all creative output in this thesis. The curators of the RCL, whose work is modeled on the Sacrosanctum Concilium, have produced a thoughtful guide for pastors, worship leaders, pastoral musicians, worship committees, teachers, and laypersons—anyone encountering these paradigms are beneficiaries of the wisdom of the RCL. Therefore,

147 Some days, such as All Saints’ Day, Year B and the 4th Sunday of Advent, Year C have optional Old Testament lessons and Psalms of the Day. Easter Vigil, Years A, B, and C have optional Gospel lessons.
this thesis is a continuation of the good work of the RCL, highlighting the prophetic connections between the Old Testament and Gospel lessons via the Psalm of the Day.

Little attention has been given to the Epistle lessons; however, I contend that a kinship exists between the Psalms and the Epistles, like the one between the Old Testament and Gospel lessons. Between the latter pairing, the connection is prophetic—an antecedence and a consequence—the essence of Christian hope. With the former pairing, the connection is not thematic, but functional. The Psalms address daily cultic life and raw human emotions in a pre-Messianic world.\footnote{Gerstenberger (1), 31.} The Epistles are apostolic letters addressing specific communities and their own issues in a post-Messianic world. As discussed in chapter two, the flow of the Epistle lessons through the RCL is either continuous, semicontinuous, or eclogadic, and therefore they may or may not be tied thematically to those from the Old Testament or Gospel. This does not negate their significance in the RCL, or this thesis, as words and phrases from the Epistle lessons have been used in creating antiphon texts. Given the musical nature of this thesis, the Psalm of the Day is the intended emphasis. Thus, while the Epistle lessons have purpose and standing, they have not been a primary focus.

A brief discussion is found in chapter one about the “new consensus,” a fourth-century debate posing the question: are the psalms words of humankind to God, or words of God to humankind?\footnote{Howard Neil Wallace, \textit{Words to God, Word from God: The Psalms in the Prayer and Preaching of the Church} (Burlington, Vermont: Ashgate Publishing Company, 2005), 6.} This debate was rekindled during the Reformation, John Calvin favoring the former argument, Martin Luther favoring the latter. I posit—ultimately siding with Calvin—that while some Psalms are prophetic, or at least have prophetic qualities, the Psalms are humankind’s reflections on matters of faith. Psalms are little ancient faith essays, dust-covered
diary entries expressing shared human emotions, either addressing God or other humans. As such, they relate to the Epistle lessons as commentary on contemporary life, a quality attributable to their universal appeal; words that speak to all humankind on familiar matters of peace, discord, and celebration, among others. The Psalms are humankind’s words, from a pre-Messianic world, that continue speaking to us and for us today. These cathartic words, combined with poetic nuance, form, and structure, give the Psalms universal appellation as lyrical theology.

Feedback and Observation

The traditional mode of singing Psalms in worship at my home church, Northridge Presbyterian, Dallas, Texas, is through metrical psalmody. However, this community has been both receptive and embracing of my responsive psalmody, having sung several settings over the past six years. Each time they were presented I elicited feedback from staff and members of the congregation.

Through conversations with the Northridge staff, there have been discussions regarding the language in the antiphons: how they support and interact with scripture, liturgy, and liturgical days. There have also been discussions with choir members who lead the antiphons, expressing their desire to understand what they are singing in the context of the entire responsive psalm. This has prompted deeper, more personal conversations where scripture is shared and discussed, along with the antiphon texts and the ethos of the complete responsive psalm, leading to more faithful singing and leading during worship.

The most interesting observation comes from the use of the antiphon for Psalm 96, “A new song of light...” on the 3rd Sunday of Advent, December 17, 2023. This was Northridge’s Lessons & Carols service, the antiphon sung in response to the ninth lesson, John 1:1–14, and during the bidding prayer. As the choir led the congregational response, two teenagers were
observed exchanging glances as the singing began, themselves singing with silly looks on their faces. What may have been interpreted as misbehaving during worship was in fact full participation, as they sang, from memory, all five responses with animated gusto. Any form of participation from teenagers is a positive sign of acceptance and I was elated by this observation.

Some of the most beneficial feedback came from the peer review sessions, having received constructive criticism about the theology in the antiphon texts, the melodies, the harmonies, and the accompaniment. An example of general feedback is limited use of specific expressive markings such as articulations and piano rolls. Upon receiving and considering this feedback, edits were globally applied as compositional rubrics. One such comment pertained to the inclusion of metronome markings while limiting tempo alterations such as ritard and accelerando. This comment was made with the intent of giving music directors freedom to adjust tempi as they deemed appropriate in their context.

Arguably the most valuable feedback from the peer review group came in response to the accompaniment, as I am not a keyboardist. Constructive criticism was offered regarding voicing, left hand arpeggiation, intervallic stretch, and considerations of adjusting for idiomatic tempi. All feedback was carefully considered and implemented either globally or in its isolated locus. Each comment was presented with care and respect by the members of the peer review group, and their candor is greatly appreciated.

Below are examples of specific feedback to antiphons. The antiphon for Psalm 15, “The world glows with the glint of diamonds...” is likely one of the most challenging in this collection due to the alternation of strict quarters and tresillo rhythms in the voices and accompaniment. The group spent considerable time on this antiphon, ensuring that the accompaniment was vocally supportive both rhythmically and harmonically. The piano rolls were deemed necessary
and kept in the score. Much discussion was held regarding the voicing of the final vocal A major chord, and it was determined that the voicing should be sopranos and tenors on the tonic, altos on the third, basses on the fifth.

We discussed in detail Psalm 22, “Jesus drank the sour wine...” The peer group appreciated quotation of *O Haupt voll Blut und Wunden* as well as the dense harmonies in the accompaniment. However, they felt that on the text, “and the Spirit left, and the blood ran clean,” the accompaniment did not rhythmically support the vocal part. One solution was to set this portion of text as a unison vocal line. Therefore, the antiphon vocal line begins and ends with *divisi* interrupted by unison in the middle.

In an email exchange, there was a discussion about the antiphon text for Psalm 42 & 43, “Our feet are bound; our throats are dry...”, found in the RCL on the Second Sunday after Pentecost, Year C. The Gospel for that day is Luke 8:26–39, the story of the man from Gerasenes who was possessed by demons. When Jesus asked the man, “What is your name,” he said, “Legion.” (Luke 8:30) In writing the text, I debated whether to use the line, “God’s voice *sends screaming Legion* out,” or “God’s voice *drives unclean spirits* out.” Both “Legion” and “unclean spirits” mentioned in the text, I turned to the peer review group. It was unanimous that “drives unclean spirits” be used, mainly if there were an occasion to use this responsive psalm without the Gospel lesson proclaimed, avoiding contextual confusion.

In each context—worship, rehearsal, staff meetings, or peer review sessions—the music functioned to build *communitas*. Whether through presentation/performance, practice, or discussion, living in a space inspired by the pursuit and study of God’s Word allowed participants to grow closer to God and to one another. It is my objective that the responsive

---

psalms presented in worship help provide or maintain liminality, particularly during the psalm
cantoring. Maxwell E. Johnson’s quote in the introduction to this thesis—“Christians act
morally or ethically because of what they believe, and what they believe is continually shaped by
worship”—rings true in these observations.151 The robust singing and theological discussions
with the peer review group, staff, choir, and congregation have proven that people do not want to
sing what they don’t understand or believe. I intend to continue these discussions in order that a
lyrical theology would be substantial and easily communicable. “Always be ready to make your
defense to anyone who demands from you an accounting for the hope that is in you, yet do it
with gentleness and respect.” (1 Pet 3:15b–16a)

Influences, Path, and Purpose
As with any vocational career, one will undoubtedly have guiding principles set forth by those
whom they refer to as champions in the field. As a composer, I have been guided by those
whom, throughout this thesis, I have quoted: Benjamin Britten, D. H. Lawrence, Igor Stravinsky,
and Ned Rorem. Each quote has been a driving force during my compositional journey. Below
are brief reflections on these quotes.

Benjamin Britten, addressing his realizations of seventeenth-century English basso
continuo songs, “believed that there could be no ‘ultimate realisation’ and that each generation
should make its own, composed in personal and immediate terms.”152 While Britten’s comments
were directed at a specific genre, his words remain a calling to keep making old things new
again. Whether using preexisting texts or tunes, composers have been making old things new

---

151 Johnson, 98.
152 Rosamunde Strode and Colin Matthews. “Prefatory Note” to Five Songs from Harmonia Sacra by Pelham
Humphrey, William Croft, John Blow & Jeremiah Clarke for High Voice & Harp or Piano, Realized by Benjamin
again for hundreds of years: parody masses using *cantus firmus*; Herbert Howells’ (1892–1983) Evensong settings; Aaron Copland’s (1900–1990) 1942 orchestral suite *Rodeo* using the traditional Shaker tune SIMPLE GIFTS; Felix Mendelssohn’s (1809–1847) 1829 performance of J. S. Bach’s *St Matthew Passion*; The Oxford Movement of the mid-nineteenth century. In each instance, the old is revisited and given new life either by quotation, realization, rearrangement, or revitalization—*ars antiqua* versus *ars nova*. In her book *Virtuoso Theology*, theologian Frances Young ponders quotations from and allusions to classic works: “What is the role of quotation and allusion—is it mere repetition or creative renewal?”153 To Young’s question I emphatically answer, “creative renewal,” as Britten’s generational call to compose “in personal and immediate terms” continues to be a guiding creative principal.

Of his book *Pansies*, poet and author D. H. Lawrence said that the enclosed poems should “be taken as thoughts rather than anything else; casual thoughts that are true while they are true and irrelevant when the mood and circumstances changes.”154 Seemingly discounting some artistic creations as ephemeral, Lawrence permits art to be contextual: well-received in one setting, and not in another. This is not a value judgement on art, but a commentary on context. Igor Stravinsky famously said of his *Mass*, “My Mass was partly provoked by some Masses of Mozart that I found in a second-hand music store in Los Angeles in 1942 or 1943. As I played through these rococo-operatic sweets-of-sin, I knew I had to write one of my own, but a real one.”155 Stravinsky’s faith tradition was the Russian Orthodox Church, and therefore a Mozart Mass would not have been suitable in his religious context. Therefore, when he says, “I had to

---

write one of my own, but a real one,” he could have meant “one” that resonated within his Russian Orthodox tradition; “one” that proved functional in a liturgical setting; “one” that could be believed when sung.

Between and 1939 and 1940 Igor Stravinsky gave a series of lectures at Harvard University which were later collected and published as Poetics of Music in the Form of Six Lessons. Likely the most famous quote from these lectures and book is as follows:

“My freedom will be so much the greater and more meaningful the more narrowly I limit my field of action and the more I surround myself with obstacles. Whatever diminishes constraint diminishes strength. The more constraints one imposes, the more one frees one’s self of the chains that shackle the spirit.” ¹⁵⁶

This quote was touted by my first composition teacher, the late Dr. Edwin C. Robertson at the University of Montevallo in the mid 1990s during my bachelor’s degree studies. Since then, these words have guided my compositional craft toward efficiency of material and form. Dr. Rob encouraged his students to milk each compositional idea they had for all it was worth, leaving no fragmentation or variation on the table. And while this compositional edict is often broken, Stravinsky’s lesson teaches composers (and all artists) to use their artistic tools with great respect and care.

Finally, the unfiltered words of composer, writer, and critic Ned Rorem. When asked about his compositional motivation, Rorem said: “Why do I write music? Because I want to hear it—it’s that simple. . . I compose from necessity, and no one else is making what I need.” ¹⁵⁷

¹⁵⁶ Stravinsky, 65.
Rorem was not known to mince words and this quote typifies that presumption. He is not delivering a call to arms for composers to reclaim the past; nor is he dispensing self-effacing advice for keeping one’s ego in check; neither is he offering a mandate to strive for artistic efficiency. Rorem’s words are to the creative individual who composes for one reason: to hear the sounds they wish to hear. I imagine Rorem agreeing with Britten and Stravinsky—possibly with Lawrence—but that none of it matters if the creator doesn’t enjoy their creation.

Someone once asked what kind of music I composed, to which I jokingly replied, “Good music, because I don’t have time to write bad music.” This elicited a good laugh; however, I stand by this statement. If one composes something, one should like that which is composed; otherwise, why bother? Why spend time and energy creating and crafting a new work, cajoling performers to learn the music and inviting audience to sit through a concert, if the music is deemed on the spectrum of “bad music” by the composer? Thus, I take Rorem’s advice to heart.

And of the music in this thesis, I acknowledge that each quote applies. The antiphons are an exercise in revitalizing an existing form—*making old things new again*; composed for a specific context; are exercises in efficiency of material; and certainly, I want to hear them. But not only to hear them: I wish for them realized for the specific purpose of highlighting the prophetic connection between the Old Testament and the Gospel, drawing others into *communitas*, experiencing liminality.

Rev. Hal P. Oakley would close every sermon with this benediction: “Wherever we go, God has sent us. Wherever we are, God has [placed] us there. [God] has a purpose in our being there. [God] has something [God] wants to do through us, wherever we are.”

With time to reflect on

---

158 This is currently the end-of-worship charge at Covenant Presbyterian Church, Huntsville, Alabama, where Rev. Oakley served for over thirty years. I served with him for twelve years.
my academic, vocational, and creative work, and how they are intertwined, I offer a brief conclusion centered around path and purpose. Raised in the Church of Christ and later navigating Lutheran and Episcopal traditions, I have served in the Presbyterian Church [PC(USA)] for over two decades during which time I perceived three distinct paths: academic, vocational, and creative. Though these paths often crossed, it was not until my immersion in the Doctor of Pastoral Music (DPM) program at Southern Methodist University (SMU) that I was able to realize their intrinsic connections. Throughout my life I have constantly sought purpose, often noting that my academic and vocational works were linked, my academic and creative work were linked, but that my creative and vocational work were somehow askew, struggling to find how my compositional voice fit into the oeuvre of the Church’s Song. The fusing of the academic, vocational, and creative work through the DPM pursuit has identified the path followed and a purpose discerned: continuing my work in the tradition of the RCL.

Joining the work of the RCL to further highlight prophetic connections in God’s Word is a worthy purpose, one I have pursued during my time at SMU, finding a deeper appreciation and understanding of God’s Word, specifically the Psalms. I have seen my creative work intersect both artistically and functionally within the life of the church and will continue to pursue efforts through more compositions, contemplating how tradition, efficiency of material, context, and joy play a major role in my work. In closing, I offer a poem by the great American poet, essayist, and journalist, Walt Whitman (1819–1892). These words offer a guiding light in my journey:

Oh me! Oh life! of the questions of these recurring,
Of the endless trains of the faithless, of cities fill’d with the foolish,
Of myself forever reproaching myself, (for who more foolish than I, and who more faithless?)
Of eyes that vainly crave the light, of the objects mean, of the struggle ever renew’d,
Of the poor results of all, of the plodding and sordid crowds I see around me,
Of the empty and useless years of the rest, with the rest me intertwined,
The question, O me! so sad, recurring—What good amid these, O me, O life?
Answer.
That you are here—that life exists and identity,
That the powerful play goes on, and you may contribute a verse.¹⁵⁹

With *The Northridge Psalter*, I hope to contribute a verse to the Church’s Song, to life’s powerful play, and to the interplay of humanity with the Divine.

APPENDIX

Reproducible Parts (Permission Granted for Worshiping Communities):
Congregational Melody
Treble C Instrument (intended as flute)
Bass C Instrument (intended as cello)
Percussion (dual pitch drum / finger cymbals / tambourine, wind chimes)

7th Sunday of Easter, Year B
Psalm 1
"The heart of the world..."

Antiphon adapted from:
1 John 5:9-13
John 17:6-19;
Acts 1:15-17, 21-26

The heart of the world re-ject-ed you, but your heart wel-comes all!

Treble C Instrument

Bass C Instrument
Treble C Instrument

Bass C Instrument
Our souls have been transformed by Christ's presence in the world!

Treble C Instrument

Bass C Instrument

3rd Sunday of Easter, Year B

Antiphon adapted from:
1 John 3:1-7
Luke 24:36b-48
Acts 3:12-19

"Our souls have been transformed..."
Antiphon adapted from:
1 Kings 21:1-10, (11-14), 15-21a
Galatians 2:15-12
Luke 7:36-8:3

Drowning in our sins, Christ's buoy-ant grace makes us cry a-loud:

"Al-le-lu-ia! A-men!"

Treble C Instrument

Bass C Instrument
Antiphon adapted from:
Genesis 1:1-2:4a
Matthew 28:16-20
2 Corinthians 13:11-13

Trinity Sunday, Year A

Psalm 8
"The Holy Kiss of the Trinity..."

The Holy Kiss of the Trinity breathed life into the world!

Treble C Instrument

Bass C Instrument
Antiphon adapted from:
1 Samuel 17: (1a, 4-7, 19-23), 32-49
2 Corinthians 6:1-13
Mark 4:35-41

4th Sunday after Pentecost, Year B

Psalm 9:9-20
"Loud! Brash!"

Loud! Brash! The storms come crashing in! But our
faith in God delivers us and leads us home.

Treble C Instrument

Bass C Instrument

Percussion

366
5th Sunday after Pentecost, Year A

Psalm 13
"The waters of grace..."

The waters of grace will carry us all into the welcoming arms of our God.

Treble C Instrument

Bass C Instrument

Percussion

Antiphon adapted from:
Genesis 22:1-14
Romans 6:12-23
Matthew 10:40-42
Psalm 14

"Heaven rejoices when sinners return to the Lord."

Heaven rejoices when sinners return to the Lord.

Treble C Instrument

Bass C Instrument

Percussion

Antiphon adapted from:
Jeremiah 4:11-12, 22-28
Luke 15:1-10
4th Sunday after Epiphany, Year A

Antiphon adapted from:
Micah 6:1-8, 1 Corinthians 1:18-13
Matthew 5:1-12 "The world glows with the glint of diamonds..."

Psalm 15

The world glows with the glint of diamonds, but God's light (the light of love and live) never burns out!

Treble C Instrument

Bass C Instrument

369
Antiphon adapted from:
Acts 2:14a, 22-32
1 Peter 1:3-9
John 20:19-31

Psalm 16
"God of words, test our faith..."

God of words, test our faith; God of flesh, doubts dispelled;
God of breath, all our sins forgiven.

Treble C Instrument

Bass C Instrument

370
Antiphon adapted from:
Genesis 32:22-31
Romans 9:1-5
and Matthew 14:13-21

Psalm 17
"God blesses us with blessings..."

God bless-es us with bless-ings to give them a-way, that the whole world should be blessed.

Treble C Instrument

Bass C Instrument
Psalm 19
"The heart and mind of God..."

The heart and mind of God are tuned to justice, honor, love, respect, and peace.
Psalm 22
"Jesus drank the sour wine..."

antiphon adapted from
Isaiah 52:13-53:12; Hebrews 10:16-25;
John 18:1-19:42

Jesus drank the sour wine of sin on the cross, and the
Spirit left, and the blood ran clean, and the world went dark.
Good Shepherd Sunday, Year A

Psalm 23
"We, your sheep..."

Antiphon adapted from:
1 Peter 2:19-25
John 10:1-10

We, your sheep, who have gone astray, have now come home!

Treble C Instrument

Bass C Instrument

374
All Saints' Day, Year B
"Will you eat at the feast..."

Will you eat at the feast of the Lamb? Will you rule the city on the hill? Will flowing wine replace all your tears?

Yes, Lord! We believe! You Make all things new!

Treble C Instrument

Bass C Instrument

Percussion

375
Antiphon adapted from:
Jeremiah 33:14-16
1 Thessalonians 3:13-19

1st Sunday of Advent, Year C
Psalm 25:1-10
"Will you sit and watch and wait..."

Will you sit and watch and wait? Will the Promise Keeper come?

Will the earth turn again for us?

Treble C Instrument

Bass C Instrument
Antiphon adapted from:
Isaiah 6:1-8
Romans 8:12-17
John 3:1-17

Trinity Sunday, Year B
Psalm 29

"How shall we be born again?"

Listen to the Wind's Song: "Ho-ly, ho-ly, ho-ly is the Lord!"

Treble C Instrument

Bass C Instrument

Percussion

377
Palm Sunday, Liturgy of the Passion, Years A, B, C

Psalm 31:9-16

"God be in my feet, in my hands, in my mouth..."

"God be in my head" from Sarum Primer

Treble C Instrument

Bass C Instrument

Percussion
Psalm 32
"We are bound to our nakedness..."

but Christ has led us out of the wilderness of sin.

Antiphon adapted from:
Genesis 2:15-17; 3:1-7
Romans 5:12-19
Matthew 4:1-11
All Saints' Day, Year A

Psalm 34:1-10, 22

"A-men! Praise, glo-ry, wis-dom, thanks, hon-or, power, and strength be-long to our God for-ev-er and ev-ver! A-men!"

Treble C Instrument

Bass C Instrument
Antiphon adapted from:
1 Kings 19:1-5
Galatians 3:23-29
and Luke 8:26-39

"Our feet are bound; our throats are dry..." OLD TOLL ROAD

Our feet are bound; our throats are dry; our empty bellies ache.

God's voice drives unclean spirits out; calms fires and winds and quakes!

Treble C Instrument

Bass C Instrument

381
Psalm 46

"God bless the shepherds who care for God's sheep."

Antiphon adapted from:
Jeremiah 23:1-6

Alternate Response

"You are our shepherd, we are your sheep."

Antiphon adapted from:
Jeremiah 23:1-6

Easter Vigil, Year A, B, C
Psalm 46

"Jesus, remember us, though we have strayed."

Treble C Instrument

Bass C Instrument

382
8th Sunday after Pentecost, Year C

Psalm 49:1-12
"Vanity of Vanities!"

"Van-i-ty of van-i-ties!" All we do and all we have and all we make is nothing next to the love of the Lord!

Treble C Instrument

Bass C Instrument
Antiphon adapted from:
Joel 2:1-2, 12-17
Isaiah 58:1-12
2 Corinthians 5:20b-6:10
Matthew 6:1-6, 16-20

Ash Wednesday, Years A, B, C

Psalm 51:1-17
"Praise God in the light..."

Praise God in the light of the assembl-ed, but pray in the shad-ow of your hearts.

Treble C Instrument

Bass C Instrument
Psalm 65

"Follow your faith to the feast and fountain!"

Sisters and brothers, you are made whole! Give thanks to the One whose love knows no boundaries, the One from whom all blessings flow.

Treble C Instrument

Bass C Instrument

Percussion

385
Psalm 67

"As we prayed by the water..."

antiphon adapted from
Acts 16:9-15
Revelation 21:10, 22:2-5
John 14:23-29, 5:1-9

As we pray by the water, your glory shines brighter!

Your Spirit fills our hearts with perfect peace!

Treble C Instrument

Bass C Instrument

Percussion

386
Antiphon adapted from:
Isaiah 60:1-6
Ephesians 3:1-12
Matthew 2:1-12

Epiphany of the Lord, Years A, B, C
Psalm 72:1-7, 10-14
"In a dream, God's light showed the way..."

In a dream, God's light showed the way. "A -
rise! Go forth into the mys-te-ry!"

Treble C Instrument

Bass C Instrument

Percussion

387
Flaming wind, sent down from heaven,
blaze the path that's straight and narrow;
guide me to the curtained river!

Treble C Instrument

Bass C Instrument

Percussion
Psalm 80
"When nations rise and fall..."

When na-tions rise and fall, and rul-ers' reigns have end-ed, the
pro-phe-cy re-mains: a vir-gin shall bear "God with us."

Psalm 80
"Though earth shall pass away..."

Though earth shall pass a-way, the winds an-nounce your glo-ry! So,
we must stay a-wake: the Pot-ter will come for the clay!

Treble C Instrument

Bass C Instrument

Percussion

4th Sunday of Advent, Years A & C

Years A & C Antiphon adapted from:
Micah 5:2-5a; Isaiah 7:10-16
Hebrews 10:5-10; Romans 1:1-7

1st Sunday of Advent, Year B

Year B Antiphon adapted from:
Isaiah 64:1-9
1 Corinthians 1:3-9
Mark 13:24-37
Antiphon adapted from:
Isaiah 40:1-11
2 Peter 3:8-15a
Mark 1:1-8

2nd Sunday of Advent, Year B

Psalm 85:1-2, 8-13
"The patient flow of water..."

The patient flow of water marks the way of our salvation:

God's Word withstands the fire!

Treble C Instrument

Bass C Instrument

Percussion

390
Psalm 89:1-4, 19-26
"Our Lord does not dwell in cedar mansions..."

Our Lord does not dwell in cedar mansions but moves among the people on winds of ancient promises fulfilled.

Treble C Instrument

Bass C Instrument

Percussion

wind chimes
Psalm 91
"Fight the good fight..."

Fight the good fight and follow Christ: walk in
right-eous-ness, god-li-ness, faith, love, pa-tience, and meek-ness.

Treble C Instrument

Bass C Instrument

392
3rd Sunday in Lent, Year A

Psalm 95
"Suffering from thirst..."

Antiphon adapted from:
Genesis 2:15-17; 3:1-7
Romans 5:12-19
Matthew 4:1-11

Suffering from thirst, and wand'ring in the wilderness, your spring-fed pastures offer hope and truth and life.

Treble C Instrument

Bass C Instrument
Nativity of the Lord, Years A, B, C

Psalm 96
"A new song of light!"


Treble C Instrument

Bass C Instrument
Psalm 104:24-34, 35b
"The Spirit in the clouds..."

"Drink if you are thirsty; forgive and be forgiven;
peace and light shall flow from your heart."

Treble C Instrument

Bass C Instrument
Antiphon adapted from:
Ezekiel 37:1-14
Acts 2:1-21
Romans 8:22-27
John 15:26-27; 16:4b-15

Day of Pentecost, Year B

Psalm 104:24-34, 35b
"The Spirit found a home..."

"Your gifts will grow with patience; my hope will shatter weakness; open up your heart and be transformed."

Treble C Instrument

Bass C Instrument
"Your eyes and ears deceive you; I abide within you; the world betrays, but I give perfect peace!"

Treble C Instrument

Bass C Instrument
Psalm 105:1-11, 45b
"What shall we ask..."

What shall we ask of the Lord, who gives us all we need? Stay with us, Lord!

Antiphon adapted from:
Genesis 29:15-28
1 Kings 3:5-12
Romans 8:26-39
Matthew 13:31-33, 44-52

Treble C Instrument

Bass C Instrument
Psalm 107
"To the children of wrath..."

To the children of wrath God sent a child of peace.
Those who look to the child will find light and life!
Antiphon adapted from:
Romans 6:3-11
(Year A) Matthew 28:1-10
(Year B) Mark 16:1-8
(Year C) Luke 24:1-12

The Great Vigil of Easter, Years A, B, C

Psalm 114
"Christ surprises us with water..."

Christ surprises us with water; now the drought of
death is ended! Sing, "Al-le-lu-ia!"

Treble C Instrument

Bass C Instrument

Percussion

400
Antiphon adapted from:
Acts 2:14a, 36-41

3rd Sunday of Easter, Year A

Psalm 116
"Walk with us, talk with us..."

Communion Response
Walk with us, talk with us, open your eyes; now we see your face.

Treble C Instrument

Bass C Instrument

"Walk with us, talk with us, be known to us when we break your bread."
Psalm 118:1-2, 19-29
"The prophets spoke..."

The prophets spoke of a feast and banquet to bring the nations all together.

Alternate Response

The prophets spoke of a gentle rabbi who comes to save the ones who kill him.

Treble C Instrument

Bass C Instrument

Percussion

dued pitch drums
Psalm 121
"From the mountain..."

Antiphon adapted from:
Genesis, 12:1-4
John 3:1-17
Romans 4:1-5, 13-17

From the moun-tain, vis-i-ble are the bless-ings of the Lord.

Lift your eyes; call God's name; Christ will make your spir-its soar!
Psalm 122

"Flood the valley of darkness and death..."

Flood the valley of darkness and death, and carry me to the mountain of light and life!

Treble C Instrument

Bass C Instrument
Advent Antiphon adapted from:
Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11
1 Thessalonians 5:16-24
John 1:6-8, 19-28
Luke 1:46b-55

3rd Sunday of Advent, Year B
Psalms 126
"In a cold and barren land..."

Lenten Antiphon adapted from:
Isaiah 43:16-21
Philippians 3:4b-14
John 12:1-8

5th Sunday in Lent, Year C
Psalms 126
"In the chasm, dark and drear..."

Treble C Instrument

Bass C Instrument

Percussion

* use A for Advent
use A for Lent
play these two measures only
if singing three-part canon

= 56
pizz.

= 56
finger cymbals

= 56
arco

play these two measures only
if singing three-part canon
Psalm 127
"God, Restorer of Life!"

God, Restorer of Life! Turn our poverty into plenty! May our children's children honor your name forever!

Treble C Instrument

Bass C Instrument

Percussion

tambourine
Antiphon adapted from:
Ezekiel 31:1-14
John 11:1-45
Romans 8:6-11

Psalm 130
"My voice is mute..."

My voice is mute, and yet my soul cries out to you:

"Lord, send your Spirit, and make these dry bones dance again!"

Treble C Instrument

Bass C Instrument
antiphon adapted from:
Isaiah 49:8-16a
1 Corinthians 4:1-5
Matthew 6:24-34

8th Sunday after the Epiphany

Psalms 131
"When we trust your mystery..."

When we trust your mystery, our fears will fall away.

Treble C Instrument

Bass C Instrument

Percussion

wind chimes
finger cymbals
Response adapted from:
Psalm 136

**Psalm 136**

*Easter Vigil, Years A, B, C*

Alternate Response #1

God’s love was sent to save us;

God’s love will never fail us!

Alternate Response #2

We are God’s sons and daughters.

God’s love, it never falters!

Treble C Instrument

Bass C Instrument
Our cities are empty; we weep in silence. Our spirits long to dance again.
Praise be to Christ; God's Love, our Light! Christ shines through the dark.
Psalm 150
"When the world demands..."

When the world demands the stillness that you show,
point them to the clouds and sing: Alpha et O! Praise ye the Lord!

Treble C Instrument

Bass C Instrument

Percussion
REFERENCES


Joint Committee of the American and Canadian Churches. 1905. *The Psalms in Meter*. Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A.


