

MUSIC NOTES FROM TUDY!

Dear, *Dear* Trinity People:

I'm writing to thank you for the smiles, tears, laughter, (giggles!) wonderful words, and other special ways with which you show your appreciation for Trinity's Music, AND to praise you for how you all personally add to our corporate worship experiences...the love you show all of us Note-Folk is more gratifying than you could ever imagine!

This article has been long-in-coming. Sallee Anderson said that my music planning "process" would be of interest to some of you, so here goes...

People have frequently commented on how closely our anthems, instrumental pieces, and hymns reflect each day's scripture readings, and you've probably guessed that I have a sort of "formula" for selecting the music for every service so that the elements combine to form an integrated whole...when we all do our "homework" for the Lord, it's amazing how He puts it all together! Of course, for me, that starts with studying every Bible passage that will be included, and then checking a musician's liturgical guide for appropriate music suggestions. And, even if a hymn's words are already familiar, I still take time to look at all the stanzas to see what would best cover-all-the-bases. But that's just the beginning...there are always MORE hymns that could be wonderfully related to the themes of the day, so I next consult my own memory-bank (I know LOTS of songs!) to see what else would hit-the-spot. I also go through the index of each of our sources, looking for titles and "first-lines" that seem to link to the day's readings...and, of course, I always try to keep in mind what *your* favorites are—some of you have let me know which songs are particularly special to you, and it's such a pleasure to be able to include them when they match the day's themes (This is a major hint: TELL me what YOU like!!!).

The "formula" continues, though...and this may sound somewhat "bridal" in nature: "something old, something new, something borrowed, something blue"!

The blue part is often fun—an energetic, or folksy, or jazzy, or old-time-Gospel-type number for the Choir *or* something for the congregation from one of our supplemental hymn sources. This is true, as well, for the borrowed approach, because our supplements contain a wide variety of songs that are quite different in nature from those found in our 1982 Hymnal. And, as for the old—well, that's pure pleasure, because there are so many beloved, long-known hymns with which we associate loving, precious memories.

As for the "something new"...you know, I've visited many, many different churches through the years, and the imaginative spirit at Trinity is truly gratifying and inspiring. Most full-sized hymnbooks contain around six hundred pieces (we have over 700!), but many congregations could easily downsize to a hymnal that's less than a quarter of an inch in thickness, because they sing the same-old, same-old songs—over, and Over, and OVER again. And although that can be a comfort, it's a real shame when so many other fine pieces are never even tried. So much loving thought, labor, and prayerful consideration went into creating our hymnal-gifts, and yet so many BodiesOfChrist never seem to get beyond the "thumbnails" of the music that was meant for their exploration and edification...and nourishment.

Not eager to mix metaphors (I don't intend to suggest a diet of thumbnail-biting!), I'm going to go ahead and say that we have a veritable *banquet* of music laid out on the pages of our hymnals---and I am SO glad that you are willing to participate in our discovery of the feast that's been prepared. As tricky as it may be to approach a totally new piece of music, we should keep in mind that even our best-known songs were, at one time, completely unknown to us. We may have learned something so

long ago that we've forgotten that it, too, was at one time "the new", foreign entity, with notes, rhythms, and words that seemed beyond our interest and ability...what a loss it would have been if we'd not bothered to learn something that was to become so dear to us! AND, besides all that, Trinity's congregation does some pretty *fabulous* reading of music!! When met with an unfamiliar hymn or service-setting, you give it the ol' college try, even if that attempt is merely to silently read the text while gently humming the new notes...but that tentative approach isn't long-lasting, because you're up-and-singing in practically no time--I am continually both surprised and delighted by how quickly you make a relatively new piece of music ring the HolyRafters—Bravo, Trinity!

Soooo...as we continue to celebrate that with which we're already familiar and comfortable, we also proceed to be Explorers, Feast-Tasters, and Gift-Openers. I am so very proud of you all for your boldness in discovering the *treats* that have been prepared for us...the lyrics alone are Soul-Food, and sometimes the accompanying music is Substance itself—and you all make the Banquet a Feast worth attending!

One more thing...you may already realize that the Choir has been going without LEVAS hymnals so that there could be at least 1 book in each pew for the congregation's use. We've invited donations in the past, so that Choir members could also have "hard copies", but it's possible that people have been waiting to respond—and that turned out to be a good choice, because the former price has greatly changed! Previously, the cost per hymnal was \$22.00 plus shipping...but I found a *terrific* online deal in which each book is priced at just under \$15.00, shipping included!! Soooooo...if you'd like to see some verrrry happy Choir-faces, and you'd just happen to want to make that happen soon, \$15.00 would do it--Are you willing? Are you able?? Your generosity would be so very much appreciated and, besides praising you to the skies, we'll be sure each new LEVAS hymnal is inscribed with the name of the *magic* donor...If you find it possible to be a part of making this happen, please contact me directly—but whether or not this is the right time for you, I thank you for all you do...and all you are!

Christ's Blessings on You, Everyone...See You in Church!!

-- Your Tudy

