



GLORY
TO GOD

A DOZEN THINGS TO KNOW

about the new Presbyterian hymnal

Glory to God (September 2013)

1. For the first time ever, PCUSA congregations have a choice about the color of the hymnal they purchase to put in their pew racks (either purple or cranberry red; for a small additional fee, a name can be embossed on the front of the hymnal, in silver for purple editions, or in gold for red). (Non-Presbyterian groups can also purchase *Glory to God* in an “ecumenical” edition: same colors and contents, but no PCUSA name or seal.)
2. The hymnal weighs 2 pounds, 3.5 ounces, making it slightly lighter (and thinner) than the 1990 hymnal. It will fit easily into existing pew racks!
3. The hymnal includes roughly 30 pages of liturgical material, including orders of service for daily worship and a service of word and table, with options for prayers and sung responses. The book also includes some responsive readings.
4. The hymnal committee did extensive research so that the words of hymns more often reflect versions being used by others of our ecumenical partners – so that, in other words, even though as Christians we have divided ourselves into different denominations, we can still sing the same words to the same songs!
5. The order of hymns in the book follows the outline of salvation history, from Creation to New Creation. Hymns and songs for the liturgical year are sequenced in this outline from God’s covenant with ancient Israel (anticipating the coming Messiah); through the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ; to the sending of the Holy Spirit into the life of the church.
6. A setting of all but two lectionary psalms is included, but these are distributed thematically throughout the book rather than separated into a distinct Psalter section. These psalm settings reflect a diversity of musical genres, from the Genevan and Scottish Psalters to global and contemporary Praise and Worship arrangements.
7. While hymns and songs written to be sung in unison appear in the pew edition with just the singing part printed (the melody line, without the musical staves underneath for piano or organ accompaniment), most of these have chord symbols that guitar or keyboard players can use. (Where no chord symbols are included, it is because the music comes out of a tradition that does not use chordal accompaniment.) Over two-thirds of the hymns, however, still appear for singing in four-part harmony.
8. Music from churches in Africa, Latin America, and the Middle East is amply reflected in the book, as is a wide representation of songs from Asia (especially from places like Korea and Taiwan, where the Presbyterian Church is strong). But in most instances, the English words appear directly under the music, with words from the other languages further down the page.

9. A number of the most respected song-writers of the contemporary worship movement are represented (people like Paul Baloche, Michael Joncas, Graham Kendrick, Rich Mullins, Martin Nystrom, Twila Paris, Martin Smith, Michael Smith, Chris Tomlin).
10. Even more gospel songs and African American spirituals than in the 1990 hymnal are included, e.g.:
 - Just a Closer Walk with Thee
 - Keep Your Lamps Trimmed and Burning
 - Lead Me, Guide Me
 - Steal Away
 - Swing Low, Sweet Chariot
 - Take Me to the Water
 - Walk in the Light (Jesus, the Light of the World)
11. Over 65% of the blue 1990 hymnal is carrying forward, from old standards to “new” favorites (like Here I Am, Lord; Lord of the Dance; God of the Sparrow; Lord, You Have Come to the Lakeshore; Lift High the Cross). The majority of the hymns from the blue hymnal not chosen for use in *Glory to God* include pieces that had not been widely used by congregations around the country: certain settings of the Psalms, pieces of service music, late 20th century texts, and global songs – and so, different examples in each of these categories were sought.
12. A number of old favorites from the 1955 “red” hymnal are making a come-back, including such beloved “heart songs” as:
 - Be Still, My Soul
 - (God Himself Is With Us, also in 1975, as God, Reveal Your Presence)
 - I Heard the Voice of Jesus Say
 - I Love to Tell the Story
 - I Need Thee Every Hour
 - Jesus Calls Us, O’er the Tumult (also in 1975)
 - Judge Eternal, Throned in Splendor (also in 1975)
 - Rock of Ages, Cleft for Me
 - Sometimes a Light Surprises
 - We Praise Thee/You O God, Our Redeemer, Creator (also in 1975)

and some “golden oldies” NEVER or RARELY before in Presbyterian hymnal

 - Shall We Gather at the River (only 1874)
 - His Eye Is on the Sparrow
 - It Is Well with My Soul
 - Leaning on the Everlasting Arms
 - Softly and Tenderly, Jesus Is Calling
 - Standing on the Promises