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The Kodály Method and the Levels of Biblical Learning:

Teaching Theology and Hymns to Children

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Abstract

Hymns have played a vital role in the church by reflecting the theology and worship practices of its congregation. This paper explores the Kodály Method and the Levels of Biblical Learning and their respective sequences for teaching music and theology, as well as how they could be effectively combined with hymns to educate children in the church. In doing this, children are provided with a strong foundation of theology and music while preserving an important aspect of the Southern Baptist heritage.

Limitations of Study

Hymns provide an excellent opportunity to bridge the Kodály Method with the Levels of Biblical Learning to provide children with a strong musical and theological foundation. This paper provides a starting place for understanding the philosophies behind each component and practical examples, but it is not exhaustive. There are many more musical concepts and theological truths that can be drawn from many more hymns than listed here.

Additionally, there are several instances where a concept from the Levels of Biblical Learning is not explicitly stated in the text of the hymn. For example, hymn number 179 “Holy Bible, Book Divine” does not specifically address reading the Bible daily, as the assigned concept may suggest. However, the text talks about the importance of the Bible and how it is helpful:

Holy Bible, Book divine,

Precious treasure, thou art mine:

Mine to tell me whence I came;

Mine to teach me what I am. (Sims, 1956, hymn no. 179)

This verse, combined with the three successive verses, can be used to talk about how it is important to read the Bible daily because it can teach and guide.

Another limitation is that many of the hymns may be difficult for young children to sing, either because of large intervals in the melody or difficult text. The hymns included in the appendix were selected with these difficulties in mind, but their appropriateness for a children’s choir will vary with each situation. Each grade level’s hymns were selected based on the concepts to be extracted, but this does not mean that individual hymns cannot be introduced at an earlier age with different musical concepts in mind or just for the pure enjoyment of singing.

Finally, the Levels of Biblical Learning concepts associated with each hymn are intended to be guidelines for discussion and are not intended to be used unaccompanied by scripture references from the Bible.

Introduction

Music as a form of worship to God and theological expression dates all the way back to King David and the book of Psalms. Since then, music in the church has changed many times to reflect the culture and theology of the congregations. However, one thing has remained constant: music as an expression of praise and worship to God. Most recently, there has been a shift away from the learning and singing of hymns in many contemporary church services (Mouw & Noll, 2004, p. xii). Although this switch is not inherently wrong, there are many hymns of sound theology and doctrine that are being forgotten or replaced. Ultimately, if these older hymns are completely abandoned, the church will “have lost a precious treasure in the life of the believing church” (Mouw & Noll, 2004, p. xiii). By teaching hymns, children learn about the cultural heritage of the church, as well as important theological concepts that will enrich their knowledge and understanding of God.

In addition to theology, hymns provide an opportunity for teaching children musical concepts. According to the National Association for Music Education (NAfME), music education has many cognitive, physical, and emotional benefits for children. These include, but are not limited to, improved language development and reasoning, increased coordination, higher self-esteem, increased spatial intelligence, and increased discipline (“20 Important Benefits of Music In Our Schools,” 2014). In essence, music education through hymns is a valuable way to teach children important truths about God while instilling a passion for music and assisting in their overall development.

While there are many ways this can be achieved, the Kodály Method and Lifeway’s Levels of Biblical Learning provide a age-specific sequencing for teaching musical and theological concepts, respectively. Combining these two sequences with hymns that reflect good

musicality and theology, a children's choir curriculum could be created that teaches music and theology while preserving an important aspect of the musical heritage in the Baptist church. In order to accurately combine and apply the Kodály Method and the Levels of Biblical Learning to teaching hymns, each component must be examined individually before being effectively combined. Unless otherwise mentioned, all hymn references are from *Baptist Hymnal* (1956).

Zoltan Kodály and the Kodály Method

Biography

Zoltán Kodály was born on December 16, 1882 in Kecskemét, Hungary. A child of amateur musicians, he grew up singing in the cathedral choir and learning piano and violin (Mark, 1986, p. 123). Kodály studied composition at the Ferenc Liszt National Academy of Music. He received a degree in composition in 1904, and the following year, earned a degree in teaching (Houlahan & Tacka, 2015, p. 15). Kodály had “a strong interest in the nationalistic music of Hungary” (Mark, 1986, p. 123), and in 1906 earned a Ph.D. for his study of Hungarian folk songs (Houlahan & Tacka, 2015, p. 16).

Recognizing a need for understanding the musical culture of Hungary, Kodály traveled around the Hungarian countryside with his friend, Béla Bartók, and collected native folk songs (Mark, 1986, p. 123). Over the years, Kodály collected more than three thousand folk songs (Houlahan & Tacka, 2015, p. 16) to create a collection of music literature that he and Bartók “felt could serve as the basis for development of Hungarian nationalistic pride and self-knowledge” (Mark, 1986, p. 123). In essence, Kodály and Bartók developed a two-fold goal for teaching: “to teach the *educated* people to be *Hungarian*, and to *educate* the millions of *Hungarians*” (Sándor, 1966, p. 21).

In addition to collecting folk songs, Kodály composed and taught music. He joined the faculty at the Liszt Academy in Budapest in 1907 where he taught “music theory, composition, ethnomusicology, and solfège until the mid-1950s” (Houlahan & Tacka, 2015, p. 16). In the 1920s, Kodály focused his efforts on the musical education of children and composing for children’s choirs, as well as writing articles about Hungarian folk music. In refining his philosophy of music education, Kodály became dissatisfied with Hungarian music education; he felt that Hungarians were “losing their national identity” (Houlahan & Tacka, 2015, pp. 16-17; Rich, 1988, p. 16) as well as their love and knowledge of music (Rich, 1988, p. 16). He stressed the importance of choosing music of quality to teach children because they were the “foundation and the future of Hungary” (Rich, 1988, p. 19). Furthermore, Kodály stated, “Nobody is too great to write for the little ones; indeed, he must do his best to be great enough for them” (Rich, 1988, p. 17).

As Kodály continued to strive for improvements in Hungarian music education, he put together many song collections for teachers to use. One such collection, *Iskolai Énekgyűjtemény I-II* (Collected Songs for Schools), contained 630 melodies that were “arranged according to a methodological sequence” (Houlahan & Tacka, 2015, p. 17). Kodály also worked for better music education in the Hungarian Schools, and in the 1950s, he established a Singing Primary School in his hometown as an experiment of his philosophy and methodologies. This was extremely successful, and by 1963 there were over 140 schools in Hungary that followed Kodály’s methodology (Kite, 1990, pp. 34-35). The expansion of Kodály’s methodology gained international attention by the Budapest Conference of the International Society for Music Education in 1964, and Kodály was recognized as “a prominent figure in twentieth-century music education” (Houlahan & Tacka, 2015, p. 18).

After Kodály retired, he continued to refine the philosophy of music education that had defined and shaped his career (Kite, 1990, p. 35). Before his death in 1967, the Kodály Method had spread to many countries, including the United States. In 1974 the Organization of American Kodály Educators (OAKE) was established in Anaheim, California as an “informational source for music educators who wish to communicate accurate knowledge about Kodály to others in the music education professions” (Kite, 1990, p. 40-41). Kodály’s life made an immense impact on music education throughout the world, and in order to adapt his methodologies to the unique needs of a church children’s choir program, it is important to better understand the intricacies of Kodály’s philosophy and purpose for music education.

Philosophy

There can be no method without a philosophy, so to understand how to teach the Kodály Method, it is important to understand how Kodály’s beliefs about music education shaped the methodology that eventually developed. In *The Kodály Context* (1981), Lois Choksy describes this in greater detail: “What evolved in Hungary under Kodály’s guidance, in actuality is not a method at all, but a life-permeating philosophy of education of which only the pedagogical principals may be said to have ‘method’” (p. 6). This philosophy incorporates many aspects of music, but begins with a single premise: “music must belong to everyone” (Mark, 1986, p. 128). In saying this, Kodály believed that “it is the right of every citizen to be taught the basic elements of music” (Houlahan & Tacka, 2015, p. 19) which include “the competencies of musical hearing, reading, and writing” (Mark, 1986, p. 128).

Kodály realized that for these basic elements of music to be taught, children needed to be exposed to music of quality (Houlahan & Tacka, 2015, p. 54). He believed that this repertoire could be found within the folk music of the child’s own culture. Furthermore, Kodály

considered folk music to be “the ‘musical mother tongue’ of all peoples in all nations” (Houlahan & Tacka, 2015, p. 54), and because of this, children should first “learn the folk-songs of their own people in the same way that they learn first the language of their own people” (Szönyi, 1979, p. 33). Just like language, folk songs are a very accessible product of culture, especially as reflected in the singing games of children (Kite, 1990, p. 36). By choosing folk songs of musical quality, children gain access to a piece of their culture while learning music skills, and, ultimately, acquire “a deep and lasting appreciation of art music” (Kite, 1990, p. 36).

In addition to being quality music to teach to children, Kodály considered the folk-song to be “a complete formal unit in itself; a harmonious union of words and music, and a spontaneous expression of the nation’s spirit” (Szönyi, 1979, p. 33). As an expression of culture and spirit, folk songs allow children to become the retainers of culture for the next generation. In his speech to candidates at Music Secondary School, Kodály states:

You will be the power-lines of our country’s cultural life in just the same way that a network of power-lines runs right across Hungary. Wherever you go in life, you will take with you musical culture and love of music and its light will burn brightly in your homes and places of work. It will radiate brilliance and heat, and will make your life, and other people’s, finer and better. (Sándor, 1966, p. 160)

Although the Kodály Method eventually spread beyond Hungarian borders, Kodály’s focus was not international; he promoted the use of quality Hungarian music that he “felt could serve as the basis for development of Hungarian nationalistic pride and self-knowledge” (Mark, 1986, p. 123). He also believed that music education should “be designed to teach the spirit of singing to everyone, to educate all to be musically literate, to bring music into every day for use in homes and in leisure activities, and to educate concert audiences” (Mark, 1986, p. 123). Ultimately,

Kodály “created his pedagogical system in order to help the schools reawaken the musicality of the Hungarian people” (Mark, 1986, p. 123). Although popular, Kodály’s philosophy was controversial among many people who felt that that teachers needed to move beyond the use of folk songs. Kodály responded to this controversy by stating, “This is quite true; we must, indeed. But before we can begin to do so, we must first get as far as folksong” (Kite, 1990, p. 35).

In essence, Kodály saw folk music as be the basis of Hungarian music education for national, pedagogical, and aesthetic reasons. However, the goal of the Kodály Method was “not to shut Hungarian children between the walls of Hungarian music” (Sándor, 1966, p. 23). Kodály’s goal was this: “Once they have mastered their musical *mother*-language, they should make themselves masters of the miraculous *world*-language of music” (Sándor, 1966, p. 23). After providing a good foundation in the folk songs of their own culture, children should be “guided to understand the association between folk music and classical music” (Houlahan & Tacka, 2015, pp. 54-55). Kodály states: “The final purpose of all this [folk music] must be to introduce pupils to the understanding and love of great classics of past, present, and future” (Houlahan & Tacka, 2015, p. 55). He argues that classical composers based their own music in the folk-music of their heritage, so bridging folk-music and classical music can be done with ease (Houlahan & Tacka, 2015, p. 55).

Kodály’s philosophy of music education comes back to two themes: teach children basic musical concepts and “make the music of a child’s own culture known to him through the folk songs of his language and culture” (Eisen, & Robertson, 2010, p. x). Folk music is a symbol of unity within a nation and its past, so when children grow up singing the folk music of their culture, they are exposed to an aspect of their culture that is “as important to the people and the

nation as the spoken language” (Sándor, 1966, p. 22). When combined with the sequencing of musical concepts that Kodály created, children will learn and grow musically while preserving their cultural heritage (Eisen, 2010, pp. x-xi; Sándor, 1966, pp. 60-61).

Method and Sequencing

According to Michael L. Mark in *Contemporary Music Education* (1986), the Kodály Method is “a developmental curriculum that includes reading and writing music, ear training, rhythmic movement, singing, and listening” (p. 123). The sequence is based on child development by following “the way a child learns naturally in a step-by-step sequence” (Eisen, 2010, p. x). When teaching the Kodály Method, teachers employ a “four-part learning structure: prepare, make conscious, reinforce and assess” (Neumann, 2006, p. 48). In her article “The Kodály Method and Learning Theories” (2006), Carolyn Neumann explains this in greater detail:

In the prepare section of the lesson, students are exposed to musical concepts through singing games, folk songs and various music making activities. The musical element the teacher plans to share with the students is not isolated until they have had many opportunities to experience it directly in authentic music situations. The teacher then identifies the element by bringing it to the attention of the children in a familiar context (i.e. a song that they already know) and introduces the formal name and sign if appropriate. This step in the teaching sequence is called “make conscious.” Students then practise this music concept in new situations using the formal name and after many musical opportunities in a variety of settings; the students are assessed on their knowledge and skills. (pp. 48-49)

It is with these four steps that teachers guide students to encounter music in the classroom (Neumann, 2006, p. 48).

Erzsébet Szönyi was a student of Kodály and the “first to outline a complete teaching sequence and incorporated many of the techniques of Kodály pedagogy into books” (Kite, 1990, p. 39). This sequencing of rhythmic and melodic elements contributes to the four steps previously stated because it gives teachers an order to follow for making students conscious of a concept. The process of identifying music concepts varies with age and the frequency of music class each week, but the sequencing gives teachers a flexible road map for teaching these concepts in their own classroom (Szönyi, 1979, p. 34).

In developing a curriculum that follows the Kodály Method, it is important to carefully choose and sequence the repertoire as well as musical concepts such as rhythm and pitch. According to *Kodály Today* (2015), there are six principles for selecting music for instructional use:

1. Select quality musical materials.
2. Songs must have a musical appeal.
3. The text of the song and the music should complement each other; the rhythmic accent and melodic inflection should match the structure of the language.
4. Songs should be developmentally appropriate; songs should be relevant for specific age groups.
5. Selected songs should reflect the cultural backgrounds of students in your classroom.
6. Some songs should be selected for their pedagogical function. (Houlahan & Tacka, p. 57)

Finding songs that reflect these six principles are “critical to the success of a music curriculum” (Houlahan & Tacka, 2015, p. 57).

In *An American Methodology: An Inclusive Approach to Musical Literacy* (2010), Ann Eisen and Lamar Robertson outline a sequence of learning that reflects the Kodály Method regarding important musical concepts to be taught in each elementary grade level:

Table A

Suggested Kodály Sequences for Music Concepts for Kindergarten – 5th Grade

Grade Level	Musical Concepts to be Introduced
Kindergarten	Develop a Repertoire of 50 Songs Develop a Feeling for the Steady Beat Fast-Slow Loud-Soft High-Low Short-Long Same-Different Smooth-Jerky
Grade One	Heartbeat Rhythm Ta, Ti-Ti, Rest (Quarter Note, Barred Eighth Notes, Quarter Rest) Repeat Sign Sol and Mi La in slsm Pattern (Major 2 nd and Minor 3 rd)
Grade Two	La in smlsm Pattern (Perfect 4 th) Ta-a (Half Note) Four Beat Meter Do (Major 3 rd and Perfect 5 th) Re (Major 2 nd , Perfect 4 th , and Perfect 5 th) (Compound Rhythms Six Eight Meter)
Grade Three	Pentatonic Tika-Tika (Sixteenth Notes) Ti-Tika (An Eighth and Two Sixteenth Notes) Tika-Ti (Two Sixteenth and An Eighth Note) Letter Names on the Staff Low La (Minor 3 rd and Perfect 5 th) Low Sol (Major 3 rd , Perfect 4 th , Perfect 5 th , Major 6 th) Single Ti

	<p>First and Second Endings Do Pentatonic</p>
Grade Four	<p>High do Ti-Ta-Ti (Syncopa) La Pentatonic Whole Note Half Rest Sol Pentatonic Tam-Ti Fa in a sfmr Pattern Whole Steps and Half Steps (Major 2nd, Minor 2nd) Do Pentachord B-flat Key Signature: F Major</p>
Grade Five	<p>Re pentatonic Whole Rest Low Ti (dt,l and dt,d) La Pentachord F# Key Signature: G Major Ti-Tam Ti (d'tl and d'td')</p> <p>Upbeat (♩ ♪ and ♫) Dotted Half Note Three Beat Meter Tim-Ka</p>
Grade Six	<p>Eighth Rest Major Scale C# Key of D Major Compound Rhythms Six Eight Meter Natural Minor Scale E-flat Keys of B-flat Major and G Minor Fi Dorian Mode Si Harmonic Minor Scale Melodic Minor Scale Binary and Ternary Form Ta(y) Triplet</p>

Note: Adapted from A. Eisen & L. Robertson, 2010, *An American methodology: An inclusive approach to musical literacy* (2nd Ed.), pp. 23-24. Copyright 2010 by Sneaky Snake Publications, LLC.

These concepts, combined with Kodály's philosophy of using quality folk music to preserve the child's culture, are the principle components of the Kodály Method. Using this method in a church children's choir setting lays the musical foundation for creating a curriculum that incorporates hymns and the Levels of Biblical Learning (Houlahan & Tacka, 2015, pp. 54-56).

The Levels of Biblical Learning

The Levels of Biblical Learning were originally created in the late 1990s by Dr. Thomas Sanders and LifeWay Christian Resources in Nashville, Tennessee. During this time, Dr. Sanders served as the director of the Preschool Sunday School Ministry Department until 2001 when he became the Childhood Ministry Publishing Director. In 2000, Dr. Sanders published his book *Teaching Preschoolers* which introduced the Levels of Biblical Learning concept for preschoolers. When Dr. Sanders became the director for the new Childhood Ministry Department in 2001, the statements were expanded from preschool to include children through preteens and, the following year, the complete levels were published (Dr. W. Summey, personal communication, April 3, 2017).

The initial purpose of the Levels of Biblical Learning was to be a marketing product and philosophy statement of how children learn about God, as well as the best ways to teach them (Dr. W. Summey, personal communication, April 3, 2017). In 2000, the first publication of this document contained theological statements divided into three categories: God, self, and others. These statements provided a coordinated approach to teaching children with "an integrated, focused plan detailing accomplishments levels designated for certain ages or grade levels" (Morrow & Ward, 2000, p. 64). Once the Levels of Biblical Learning were expanded to include

children and preschool in 2002, the publication contained six divisions by grade level from birth to 6th grade and scaffolding theological statements for ten different concept areas. The publication also contained lists of age-appropriate foundational stories, as well as information about how to apply the levels to a lesson and how to talk to children about salvation and baptism. Finally, this resource explained the four philosophy statements that guided its development:

1. The Bible as Our Textbook
2. The Child as Learner
3. The Teacher as Guide
4. Parents as Primary Teachers (*Levels of Biblical learning*, 2002, p. 4)

The Levels of Biblical Learning was reformatted four times in 2005, 2007, 2012, and 2013 until Landry Holmes, manager of the Kids Ministry Publishing department at LifeWay, was given the task of reviewing and revising the document in 2014 (Dr. W. Summey, personal communication, April 3, 2017). For this review, LifeWay Kids enlisted the help of experts in the fields of education, theology, church ministry, and pediatrics to assist in thoroughly evaluating the Levels of Biblical Learning philosophy, as well as the individual concepts. These experts served on the guest review team and individually evaluated the Levels of Biblical Learning before collaborating as a group to finalize their evaluations and recommendations. After this process, the LifeWay staff completed the final draft and the updated Levels of Biblical Learning were published in 2015 (Holmes, 2014, pp. 1-2).

For this updated publication, three major types of changes were made. The first change was the switch from grade divisions. Since children develop differently and come from a variety of backgrounds, the review team switched from grade divisions to age groupings to make it more applicable to more children. For example, the elementary grade divisions became younger kids,

older kids, and preteens. Secondly, the review team shifted some of the theological concepts down to lower age groupings to affirm that certain concepts such as the Holy Spirit and Salvation could be taught at lower age-levels, like preschool, using age-appropriate terminology. Finally, the wording of the concept statements was revised so that they became “God/People” statements, instead of “I” statements, to make them sound less legalistic (Dr. W. Summey, personal communication, , April 3, 2017). For example, in the 2007 Levels of Biblical Learning publication, under the “Self” category for grades 3-4, there is the following concept statement: “I can recognize and reject wrong actions and wrong influences of others” (*Levels of Biblical Learning*, 2007, pg. 11). In the revised Levels of Biblical Learning (2015), the category was changed to “People,” the age grouping became “Middle Kids,” and the statement became “God wants me to honor Him by choosing to do what is right and reject what is wrong” (*Growing in God’s Word: Levels of Biblical Learning*, 2016, p. 12). Overall, the Levels of Biblical Learning were created and revised as a tool for teachers and ministers to use as a guide on how to teach children theology in age-appropriate.

The Levels of Biblical Learning “covers 10 biblical concept areas – God, Jesus, Holy Spirit, Bible, Salvation, Creation, Church, People, Family, Community & World – that children can learn as they study God’s Word” (*Growing in God’s Word: Levels of Biblical Learning*, 2016, p. 1). Just like the Kodály Method follows a child development approach (Eisen, 2010, p. x), these biblical concepts are broken down by age level based on how children develop and learn (*Growing in God’s Word: Levels of Biblical Learning*, 2016, p. 1). There are six age levels, but for the purposes of this paper, only Younger Kids (Kindergarten – 2nd Grade), Middle Kids (3rd & 4th Grade), and Preteens (5th & 6th Grade) will be used (Bill Emeott, Childhood & Family Ministry Summit, notes from lecture). Table B includes a small sample of the Levels of

Biblical Learning concepts and how the information is scaffolded to meet the child's range of development:

Table B

Levels of Biblical Learning Concepts Organized by Age Range

Biblical Concepts	Younger Kids (Kindergarten – 2nd Grade)	Middle Kids (3rd & 4th Grade)	Preteens (5th & 6th Grade)
God	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • God is perfect. • God loves people enough to provide forgiveness for sin. • God tells people to worship Him. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • God is holy and perfect. • God proved His unconditional love for people by sending Jesus. • God is worthy of worship. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • God is eternal, holy, and perfect. • God proved His unconditional love for people through the sacrifice of Jesus the Christ. • God expects people to worship Him with all their hearts, souls, minds, and strength.
Jesus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jesus died on the cross, and God raised Him from the dead. • Jesus was sent to be my Savior. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jesus died to pay the penalty for sin. • Jesus is the Messiah and Savior. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jesus' crucifixion, burial, and resurrection were a necessary part of God's plan for the forgiveness of sin. • God sent Jesus to fulfill His promise of redemption.

Holy Spirit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Holy Spirit helps people in times of trouble. • The Holy Spirit helps Christians tell others about Jesus. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Holy Spirit is the Comforter. • The Holy Spirit helps Christians tell others about Jesus. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jesus promised that God would send the Holy Spirit as a Comforter. • The Holy Spirit empowers Christians to tell other about Jesus and God's plan for salvation.
Bible	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Bible helps me know more about God, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit. • The Bible teaches that Jesus died on a cross, was buried, and was raised from the dead. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Bible is God's message about Himself. • The Bible teaches that Jesus died on a cross, was buried, and was raised from the dead. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Bible is God's message about Himself and God's plan for salvation. • The Bible teaches that salvation through Jesus is God's gift of forgiveness.
Salvation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sin is choosing my way instead of God's way. • People who trust Jesus as their Savior and Lord are Christians. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The punishment for sin is separation from God. • When the Holy Spirit convicts me of my sin, I can trust Jesus as my personal Savior. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The punishment for sin is eternal death and hell. • A growing relationship with Jesus is important and necessary. A Christian experiences joy when he recognizes God is at work

			in his life and in the lives of others.
Creation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • God created the world from nothing. • God wants me to praise Him for His creation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • God created the world from nothing. • God wants me to praise Him for His creation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creation can be credited only to God. • God wants me to praise Him for His creation.
Church	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The church meets the needs of people. • God wants people to gather to worship Him. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • God uses the church to meet the needs of people in the community and around the world. • God wants people to gather to worship Him. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • God uses the church to meet people's needs as an expression of His love. • Corporate worship is responding to God.
People	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People can follow Jesus' example by obeying God. • Good and bad happen to people, but God still loves them. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People can follow the examples, teachings, and commands of Jesus. • People can learn to respond in positive ways to what happens to them. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People can take deliberate actions to grow in Christlikeness. • People can live with joy regardless of their circumstances.
Family	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • God tells children to respect and obey their parents. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • God expects children to honor Him in the way they honor their parents throughout their lives. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • God expects children to honor Him in the way they honor their parents throughout their lives.

Community & World	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People can pray for every people group. • The Bible tells me to love others in my community and world. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People can pray for the specific needs of others. • God creates opportunities for people to connect with others. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People can pray for all people serving on mission. • God creates opportunities for people to connect with others in all walks of life.
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Note: Adapted from *Growing in God's word: Levels of Biblical learning booklet*, 2016 reprint, pp. 9-14. Copyright 2016 by LifeWay Kids.

The Levels of Biblical Learning are similar to the Kodály Method in that they create a sequencing of theological and musical concepts, respectively, for teaching children. Therefore, these two sequences could be combined to create a church music curriculum that effectively teaches music and theology. To remain true to Kodály's philosophy of preserving cultural heritage through folk music, this curriculum would need to include the folk song of the Baptist church: hymns.

Hymnology

History

Hymns have played an integral role in the evangelical church in the United States for a long time. Influences such as Isaac Watts and the gospel song helped to create an American hymn tradition that influenced theological education, the missionary movement of the twentieth century, and many personal experiences of faith. Additionally, hymns influenced many theological changes during the eighteenth century by providing "a platform of common theological affirmation for the otherwise fractious evangelical movement" (Mouw & Noll, 2004, p. xviii). By studying and singing hymns, the theology and cultural heritage of previous generations of Christians is preserved for future generations.

Singing in church has not always been a part of the Baptist tradition. The opposition to sacred music was prominent from the early seventeenth century English Baptist tradition through the end of the century among the General Baptists (McElrath, 1984, p. 4). In 1691 Benjamin Keach, an outspoken pastor in London, published a pamphlet and collection of hymns that strongly promoted congregational singing (McElrath, 1984, p. 4). Keach's influence spread to the United States in the early 18th century and many churches adopted public singing as a doctrinal standard (Reynolds, 1964, p. xv). By the end of the 18th century, the use of hymns in congregational singing became "a generally recognized part of public worship among Baptists and Independents" (Newport, 1984, p. 4).

Despite this brief 200-year period of opposition to congregational singing, church music has played a large role in the church since before the Protestant Reformation. In the Old Testament, the book of Psalms contains many songs of praise that provide the foundation for "all subsequent church song" (Eskew & McElrath, 1980, p. 72). Furthermore, Paul instructs in Ephesians 5:19 to "Speak to one another with psalms, hymns and spiritual songs. Sing and make music in your heart to the Lord" (The New International Version). During the Middle Ages, plainsong was the prominent music of the Catholic Church. Also known as Gregorian Chant, plainsong was "sung congregationally in unison with a harmonized accompaniment" (Eskew & McElrath, 1980, p. 35) and was creedal in nature for use in the monastery (Eskew & McElrath, 1980, p. 90). One of the most well-known plainsong hymn tunes today is "O Come, O Come Emmanuel," (hymn no. 76) in the 1991 Baptist hymnal. The development of Gregorian Chant in the church continued until the Protestant Reformation in the 16th century when Martin Luther's theological and musical influence spread across Europe.

During the Protestant Reformation, Luther reemphasized “congregational singing in the church” (Music, 1996b, p. 37). By doing this, he changed the liturgy from Latin to the vernacular so the musical texts could be better understood by the congregation. Additionally, Luther invited “others to write hymns for use in the new [Protestant] church” (Music, 1996b, p. 37). In a preface for *Gesangbüchlein*, a songbook by Johann Walther, Luther wrote:

That it is good and acceptable to God to sing spiritual songs, I believe, is obvious to Christians, since everyone has not only the example of the prophets and kings of the Old Testament (who praised God with singing and playing, with poems and stringed instruments), but also the common use of psalmody in early Christianity. Indeed, St. Paul appointed it in 1 Cor. 14 and admonished the Colossians to sing spiritual songs and psalms from their hearts to the Lord. By these means, God’s word and Christian doctrine may be instilled and practiced on a regular basis. (as cited in Music, 1996b, p. 39)

The hymns Luther encouraged were arranged into four voices, as are the hymns found in *Baptist Hymnal* (1956), so that “young people, who should and must be trained in music and the other fine arts, had something to make them abandon love tunes and carnal songs and in their place learn something wholesome, and thus fill the good with pleasure, as is best for the young” (Music, 1996b, p. 40).

In creating and modifying hymns for the new church, the Lutheran Chorale was developed. Musically, these chorales reflected many different styles including medieval plainsong and baroque continuo, and in contrast with the unison vocal line in Gregorian chant, these chorales generally included 4-part harmonization (Eskew & McElrath, 1980, pp. 36-37). As previously mentioned, Luther advocated for congregational involvement through music which reflected his belief in “the priesthood of all believers” (Eskew & McElrath, 1980, p. 91).

One of Luther's most famous chorales can be found in *Baptist Hymnal* (1956) as "A Mighty Fortress is Our God" (hymn no. 40).

During the Reformation there were many other influential musicians and theologians, including Martin Bucer and Thomas Est. Martin Bucer was a Protestant minister who "published a vernacular liturgy that gave congregational singing an important place" (Music, 1996b, p. 57) in the church. In 1592, music publisher Thomas Est published the *Whole Book of Psalms*, a collection of harmonized tunes that was "among the first music publications to be printed in score format, rather than in individual parts; it was also the first psalter to give names to individual tunes" (Music, 1996b, p. 76). Bucer, Est, and Luther's influence did not stay confined to Europe, however, and eventually made its way to America where new churches and beliefs were being established.

The first Baptist church in America was established in 1639 in Rhode Island and one year later, in 1640, the *Bay Psalm Book* was published by the Puritans (Eskew, Music, & Richardson, 1994, p. 15; Eskew & McElrath, 1980, p. 110). The *Bay Psalm Book* was the first collection of English metrical psalter to be published in an American Press, and it "dominated congregational song in New England for nearly a century" (Music, 1996b, p. 83). However, it was not until 1766 that the first Baptist collection was published on American soil (Reynolds, 1964, p. xi).

Another significant person who influenced the development of music in the church was Isaac Watts. Commonly referred to as the "Father of English hymnody," Watts played a large role in "the transition from metrical psalmody to hymnody" (Music, 1996b, p. 115). As a minister and theologian, he was able combine the two main types of church song, "paraphrases of Scripture and devotional lyric poetry" (Eskew & McElrath, 1980, p. 118) to create a twofold theory for church song:

1. Truly authentic praise for Christian folk had to go beyond the mere words of Scripture to include original expressions of devotion and thanksgiving.
2. If the psalms were to be used in Christian worship, they must be renovated by Christianizing them. (Eskew & McElrath, 1980, p. 118)

Watts supported hymns that reflected the personal aspects of humanity because he recognized the need for “hymns of human composure” (Mouw & Noll, 2004, p. 20) as well as the importance of writing text of hymns plainly so that the common Christian could understand it. Watts wrote songs that wrapped “the profound message of the gospel in the homespun verse and language of the people” (Mouw & Noll, 2004, p. 21). Many of these hymns are still in use today, including “When I Survey the Wondrous Cross” (hymn no. 99) and “Joy to the World” (hymn no. 65).

In the 18th century, the Great Awakening served an important role in church music by renewing interest in singing (McElrath, 1984, p. 8). George Whitefield, an English evangelical preacher, assisted this movement by promoting the value of singing hymns, which he had witnessed in England firsthand (Reynolds, 1964, p. xvi). In addition to compiling his own influential hymnal, Whitefield promoted the use of Watts’ hymns in America (McElrath, 1984, p. 8; Reynolds, 1964, p. xvi). Aside from Whitefield, there were many other positive effects of the Great Awakening on the Baptist church, including decreasing opposition to singing, moving away from metrical psalmody to hymns, more freedom to use folk hymnody, and an increased desire for Baptist-specific music collections (McElrath, 1984, p. 9). However this growth did not end there; after the Great Awakening had ended, the hymns of Watts continued to spread and increase in popularity throughout the United States (Reynolds, 1964, p. xvii).

Another minister who greatly influenced 18th century church music was a Baptist pastor in London named John Rippon. His collection of 588 hymns, *A Selection of Hymns from the best authors, intended to be an Appendix to Dr. Watts's Psalms and Hymns*, was published in 1787 and then reprinted in the United States in 1792 (Reynolds, 1964, p. xvii). Widely circulated, this hymnbook was used as a standard reference source for future compilers because it drew from a wide variety of sources and gave names to each tune, which was unprecedented for hymnbooks of this time (McElrath, 1984, p. 7). Rippon's musical legacy continues today as two hymns included in his *Selection* can be found in the *Baptist Hymnal* (1956) as hymn number 124 "All Hail the Power" and "How Firm a Foundation" (hymn no. 263).

During the 19th century, the increase in hymn collections led to increased unity among Baptist churches "in fellowship, song, and denominational identity" (Music & Richardson, 2008, p. 237). However, there were still geographical limitations and cultural differences that led many Baptist churches to identify as either Northern or Southern (McElrath, 1984, p. 10). In 1843, Baron Stow and Samuel F. Smith published a milestone for Baptist hymnody, *The Psalmist*, since it was likely "the first Baptist hymnal in the country to be published by a denominational publishing house" (McElrath, 1984, p. 10). There are many songs included in this collection, particularly those by Lowell Mason, that remain in *Baptist Hymnal* (1956), including "My Country, 'Tis of Thee" (hymn no. 487), "My Faith Looks Up to Thee" (hymn no. 257), and "Nearer, My God, to Thee" (hymn no. 322). *The Psalmist* was immensely popular in the New England area, but failed to be as successful in the South because many of the popular southern folk-hymns were omitted from the collection (McElrath, 1984, p. 10; Reynolds, 1976, p. 216).

Although *The Psalmist* never gained immense popularity in the South, the growing culture of folk-hymns and spiritual songs resulted in two new collections that better served these Baptist churches. In 1844, B.F. White published *Sacred Harp*, a tune book that contained many folk songs. Although it was not used in worship services, this tunebook still “represented a focal point for Baptist church music in that it illustrated the folk-tune preferences that characterized the Baptist singing in the South” (McElrath, 1984, p. 11). The other important Southern collection was *The Baptist Psalmody*, a hymnal compiled by Basil Manly and Basil Manly, Jr. in 1850 (Eskew et al., 1994, p. 184; Reynolds, 1964, p. xxiv). This hymnal contained over 1,200 hymns, was recommended by the Southern Baptist Convention to churches, and eventually gained comparable acceptance to *The Psalmist* throughout the South (Eskew et al., 1994, p. 184).

In addition to his work on *The Baptist Psalmody*, Basil Manly Jr. positively influenced the rise of gospel music and Sunday School songs in the 19th century. In 1891, Manly published *Manly’s Choice*, a collection of hymns that he felt were going to be lost by history. In the preface to his collection, Manly states:

We cannot afford to lose these old hymns. They are full of the Gospel; they breathe the deepest emotions of pious hearts in the noblest strains of poetry; they have been listed and approved by successive generations of those who love the Lord; they are the surviving fittest ones from thousands of inferior productions; they are hallowed by abundant usefulness and tenderest memories. But the young people today are unfamiliar with them, and will seldom hear any of them if the present tendency goes on untouched.

(as cited in Reynolds, 1964, p. xxv)

Manly goes on to say that the purpose of his collection is to promote congregational singing as well as “to do something toward the elevation and general culture of musical tastes among the

Baptist people, whom I love” (as cited in Reynolds, 1964, p. xxv). This publication and Manly’s influence played a role in the initial rise in popularity of the gospel song among Southern Baptists, as did the influence of folk hymnody and campmeeting songs (Reynolds, 1964, p. xxv).

Another contribution to the rise of gospel songs was the increase in Sunday School song collections. These songs were initially written for children and had “simple lyrics, tuneful melodies, and uncomplicated harmonies in the popular parlor-style song of the day” (Music, 1996b, p. 203). One such collection by Robert Lowry and William H. Doane, *Pure Gold for the Sunday School*, contains hymns for all ages of Sunday School, not just children. Songs like these were especially important in churches that had moved away from traditional hymnody and towards gospel songs (Reynolds, 1964, p. xxv). The texts and music of these songs were simple, lively, and evangelistic so they fit well with the revivalistic culture of the church during the turn of the 20th century (McElrath, 1984, p. 13). Such songs include hymn 240 “Just as I Am,” “Nothing But the Blood” (hymn 204), “Jesus Loves Me” (hymn 512), “Sweet Hour of Prayer” (hymn 327), “My Hope is Built on Nothing Less” (hymn 283), “I Need Thee Every Hour” (hymn 334), and “What a Friend We Have in Jesus” (hymn 328), to name a few (Eskew & McElrath, 1980, pp. 176-177; McElrath, 1984, p. 13).

At the beginning of the 20th century there were two main figure in the Southern Baptist publishing world: Robert H. Coleman and B.B. McKinney. Both of these men published many collections of songs and hymnals that influenced many Southern Baptist congregations (Reynolds, 1964, p. xxviii). In fact, Coleman published thirty-three collections of hymns and gospel songbooks over the course of thirty years. McKinney was Coleman’s editor, but also published many hymns independently (Eskew, 1984, p. 30). In 1935, McKinney became the

first music editor of the Baptist Sunday School Board, during which he compiled and edited *The Broadman Hymnal* in 1940 (McElrath, 1984, p. 14).

The Broadman Hymnal was the “first hymnal to bring about any degree of unanimity in the congregational singing of Southern Baptists” (Reynolds, 1964, p. xxx). Although many popular hymns were missing from the collection due to copyright, *The Broadman Hymnal* still became “one of the most popular hymnals ever published in America” (Reynolds, 1964, p. xxx). The format and content resembled other gospel songbooks published before it, but it gradually displaced other collections as it was accepted as the main Southern Baptist hymnal (Eskew, 1984, p. 30). *The Broadman Hymnal* did two main things that made it stand apart from other collections: it standardized the Southern Baptist church’s repertory of congregational songs and included responsive readings, topical indexes, and other aids to help with ease of usage (Music, 1996a, p. 11). Ultimately, this hymnal had a large unifying influence over the congregational singing of Southern Baptist churches (McElrath, 1984, p. 14).

Despite the immense popularity of *The Broadman Hymnal*, by the 1950s there was a need for a new hymnal because of “the growing awareness of the significance of music in the churches, the increasing influence of the seminary music schools, and the appearance of better-trained leadership in church music” (Reynolds, 1964, p. xxx). In 1953, the Sunday School Board began plans for a new hymnal and launched a thirty-seven person committee to create it. The members of this committee included “pastors, theologians, teachers, church musicians, state music secretaries, and other denominational leaders” (Reynolds, 1964, p. xxx). When the *Baptist Hymnal* was published in 1956, it retained about 60 percent of *The Broadman Hymnal* but embodied “a greater balance between standard hymnody and the gospel hymn tradition” (Eskew, 1984, p. 31). Hymns that were introduced in *Baptist Hymnal* (1956) for the first time include

“Angels We Have Heard on High” (page 64), “All Creatures of Our God and King” (page 3), “Be Thou My Vision” (page 62), and “Praise to the Lord, the Almighty” (page 6).

Despite their similarities, the *Baptist Hymnal* (1956) introduced some significant changes from *The Broadman Hymnal* that increased its usefulness. For example, *Baptist Hymnal* (1956) “included no anthems or extended choral pieces, but increased the number of responsive readings by 70 percent (from 60 to 102) and added five new indexes” (Music, 1996a, p. 12).

Additionally, the hymns were arranged by topic and the categories were logically ordered (Music & Richardson, 2008, p. 433). For example, the category “His Birth” immediately precedes “His Life,” “His Suffering and Death” and “His Resurrection and Exaltation” (Sims, 1956). There are fourteen categories in *Baptist Hymnal* (1956) that cover “the major areas of Christian faith and worship” (Music, 1996a, p. 13) and reflect traditional Baptist theology by highlighting for the congregation “the close relationship between the songs they sang and the doctrines they believed” (Music, 1996a, p. 13).

In 1995 it was estimated that over six million copies of *Baptist Hymnal* (1956) had been sold. Although the 1956 edition is now out of print, many of the hymns that were originally included still play a large role in worship in Southern Baptist churches today. *Baptist Hymnal* (1956) can be credited with “having continued the standardization of Southern Baptist worship begun by *The Broadman Hymnal*” (Music, 1996a, p. 13). Although many hymnals have been published since then, including the 1975 and 1991 versions of *Baptist Hymnal*, no other hymnal has unified the Southern Baptist Convention in worship practice as much as the Baptist hymnal of 1956 (Music, 1996a, p. 14). The study of the history of hymns and the church reveals “the importance of the hymnal as a book of worship” (Music, 1996a, p. 16) as well as the tremendous

impact the Sunday School Board and *Baptist Hymnal* (1956) have had on worship practices in the Southern Baptist Church.

Hymnals in the Baptist Tradition

Aside from the historical role hymns have played in the Protestant Southern Baptist church, hymns have also played many other important roles, such as creating unity among Evangelical churches as well as specific denominational identities, through the use of theology and the personal nature of faith. Throughout the history of evangelical movements in the church, there were many periods of religious change. Hymns, especially those of Isaac Watts, provided “a platform of common theological affirmation for the otherwise fractious evangelical movement” (Mouw & Noll, 2004, p. xviii) which created “a core of hymn texts that preserve in sacred song the formative historical episodes in American Protestantism” (Marini, 2003, p. 184). This core includes “a common hymn repertory based on the poetical works of Congregationalist Isaac Watts, Methodist Charles Wesley, and a host of their successors and imitators” (Marini, 2003, p. 184). Although division among evangelical denominations remain today, hymns served as an “ecumenical counterforce” to unify Christians interdenominationally in their worship (Mouw & Noll, 2004, pp. 4-5, 15).

Aside from interdenominational unity, hymns have also unified churches within their own denomination. Collections such as *The Psalmist* and *The Baptist Psalmody* contained hymns that reflected the theological stances of the Baptist church and “served to unite the churches in fellowship, song, and denominational identity” (Music & Richardson, 2008, p. 237). Forged out of theological controversy, the creedal nature of hymns provided “an alternate means of objectifying belief corporately” (Eskew & McElrath, 1980, p. 59). For example, hymns such as “My Jesus, I Love Thee” (hymn no. 289), “He Leadeth Me, O Blessed Thought” (hymn no.

58), and “Savior, Thy Dying Love” (hymn no. 400) each reflect “the strong Baptist emphasis on a personal relationship to the Savior” (Eskew & McElrath, 1980, p. 171).

In addition to their unifying nature, hymns teach theological concepts to those who sing and internalize their texts. Many times, they can be used to teach Christian doctrine by the mere repetition of singing the hymns each week. In fact, a result of this repetition is that many Christians “can quote more stanzas of hymns than they can verses of Scripture” (Eskew & McElrath, 1980, p. 59). Although hymns should not displace the importance of sound preaching and Biblical study, there is great value in teaching the contents of hymns to children when the songs “accurately reflect theological and biblical truth” (Eskew & McElrath, 1980, p. 59). For example, hymn number 283 “The Solid Rock” teaches a “simple confession of faith in Jesus Christ as all-sufficient Redeemer” (Eskew & McElrath, 1980, p. 59). In his book, *Sacred Song in America* (2003), S. A. Marini explains how hymns embody the theological beliefs of a congregation:

While scholars debate the intricacies of biblical narrative and systematic theology, the living belief of the church is inscribed in the words it sings and the melody it makes to God. It is no exaggeration to say that hymnals are the preeminent public expression of American Protestant sacred song and denominational identity. (p. 184)

However, hymns do not merely transmit theological concepts; they also record spiritual experiences and speak to the personal nature of faith (Mouw & Noll, 2004, p. xv).

Hymns have the power to impress their “theological point on your consciousness as no scholarly treatise can do” (Mouw & Noll, 2004, p. xiv). Additionally, the use of first person underlines the importance of a personal relationship with Jesus. Such evangelical hymns serve as “an important means for experiencing the communion of the saints” (Mouw & Noll, 2004, p.

xv) as well as serving as “a theological guidebook for meeting the challenges of daily living and the spiritual problems encountered in ordinary human relationship” (Eskew & McElrath, 1980, p. 60).

There are two types of hymns common to the hymnal: narrative and systematic. Narrative hymns focus more on a believer’s experience, such as “a character has a problem or dilemma; this leads either to an encounter or a journey; this encounter or journey brings a change in heart and/or circumstances, producing a new state of existence” (Mouw & Noll, 2004, p. 208). They tend to be written in first person and focus on the journey of faith to God. However, rather than being self-centered, narrative hymns focus on God’s character and His promises (Mouw & Noll, 2004, p. 214). Examples of narrative hymns in *Baptist Hymnal* (1956) include “On Jordan’s Stormy Banks” (hymn no. 479) and “Nearer, My God, to Thee” (hymn no. 322).

In contrast, systematic hymns do not tell a narrative or story. Instead, they “explore a point of Christian doctrine in a logical manner” (Mouw & Noll, 2004, p. 215). By progressing through systematic theology, the hymn prioritizes doctrine and makes many assertions about the nature of God and state of mankind and salvation (Mouw & Noll, 2004, p. 215). Some of the systematic hymns that are included in the *Baptist Hymnal* (1956) are “Alas, and Did My Saviour Bleed” (hymn no. 101), “Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing” (hymn no. 313), and “Hail, Thou Once Despised Jesus” (hymn no. 149). Despite the differences in narrative and systematic hymns, both play a large role in teaching theology to those who sing them.

Ultimately, hymns are a “great reservoir of helpful spiritual truth” (Eskew & McElrath, 1980, p. 60). These truths, however, play a larger role than merely “fostering the relationship of the individual to God, or acting solely as a devotional guide” (Mouw & Noll, 2004, p. 66); they have “the power to move people to act as disciples in the world, in all aspects of the world, just

as the Psalms had done for Jews through the centuries” (Mouw & Noll, 2004, p. 66). This power to impact Christian living comes from the role hymns play in worship, education, evangelism and ministry. Hymns can “make the doctrines of the faith memorable for Christian growth” (Eskew & McElrath, 1980, p. 60), but only as long as they are preserved and taught. In his “Comments of a Hymnal Editor,” David Hugh Jones states: “If a hymn is worth singing, it is worth studying seriously in concert or privately” (as cited in Eskew & McElrath, 1980, p. 243). The many reasons to study hymns include “to teach the message of the church, to help persons worship, to provide guidance in Christian living, and to present the vast heritage of the church, including knowledge of outstanding leaders in its history and its significant portion of its devotional literature and music” (Eskew & McElrath, 1980, p. 245).

For these reasons, children can benefit greatly from exposure to hymns through Sunday School and children’s choirs. When they learn to sing these songs, they internalize theological truths that they can carry into adulthood (Eskew & McElrath, 1980, p. 245). Although the depths of these hymns may be difficult for a child to fully grasp, they can still benefit from learning and discussing them. Ultimately, as they get older, “they will grow in their understanding of the hymns they have been taught” (Eskew & McElrath, 1980, p. 247) and apply what they have learned to their lives as disciples of Christ.

Culmination

“Train a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not turn from it.”

- *Proverbs 22:6 (The New International Version)*

Children are the foundation and future of the church, so it is imperative that they are well-educated in sound theology and music: theology, so they may grow in their personal relationship with God day by day and music, so they may contribute to the development of songs of praise and worship to God. One of Kodály’s formative beliefs was that children were the

“foundation and future of Hungary” (Rich, 1988, p. 19), and it is upon this tenet that he centered his philosophy of music education for children. By focusing on training children to read and create music, Kodály believed that they would channel their love for music as they grew, so that others would be exposed to their knowledge (Sándor, p. 1966, p. 160). This philosophy remains true for the church today. In teaching children about God through music, they are being prepared to share that love and knowledge with others everywhere they go.

The Kodály Method, the Levels of Biblical Learning, and hymns fit together well to establish a children’s choir curriculum that is suitable for elementary-aged students and their developmental levels. First, the Kodály Method and the Levels of Biblical Learning both contain sequences of learning that are based off of how children develop and understand the world around them (Eisen, 2010, p. x; *Growing in God’s Word: Levels of Biblical Learning*, 2016, p. 1). This allows for both sequences to be aligned to create a systematic approach to teach children age-appropriate music and theology.

One of the other main tenets of Kodály’s philosophy of music education is the use of folk songs to preserve cultural heritage (Kite, 1990, p. 36). As previously mentioned, hymns play a large role in the musical and theological heritage of the Protestant church, so by learning these songs, children will be immersed in music and texts that reflect the profound beliefs of Christians who lived before their time. By using the Levels of Biblical Learning, these deep theological truths found in the texts of hymns can be broken down into developmentally appropriate concepts that a child can understand. Then, as the child grows, these will continue to unfold new meaning into adulthood and the church’s heritage will live on.

For example, an appropriate song for Kindergarten would be hymn number 512, “Jesus Loves Me.” According to the Kodály Method, it would be appropriate to use the song to

reinforce steady beat (Eisen & Roberston, 2010, p. 23). As seen below, the strong meter and steady eighth notes of the first four measures reinforce the beat and could be sung while marching or walking to help the children internalize the steady beat:

Figure 1. Excerpt of “Jesus Loves Me” by “Jesus Loves Me,” W. H. Sims, 1956, *Baptist hymnal*, p. 512. Copyright 1956 by Convention Press.

SPECIAL OCCASIONS
512

Jesus Loves Me
CHINA. 7. 7. 7. 7. with Refrain

ANNA B. WARNER, 1820-1915

WILLIAM B. BRADBURY, 1816-1868



1. Je - sus loves me! this I know, For the Bi - ble tells me so;
2. Je - sus loves me! He who died Heav-en's gates to o - pen wide!
3. Je - sus loves me! love me still, Tho' I'm ver - y weak and ill;
4. Je - sus loves me! He will stay Close be - side me all the way;

Additionally, the refrain could be used to extract high and low. The repetition of the text helps to highlight the contrast between the high note ending of the first phrase and the low note ending of the second phrase:

Figure 2. Excerpt of “Jesus Loves Me” by “Jesus Loves Me,” W. H. Sims, 1956, *Baptist hymnal*, p. 512. Copyright 1956 by Convention Press.

REFRAIN



Yes, Je - sus loves me, Yes, Je - sus loves me,

After the children learn the first verse of the song, there are several Levels of Biblical Learning concepts from the Younger Kids section that can be extracted and taught. For example, the first line of the hymns states “Jesus loves me! This I know, For the Bible tells me so” (Sims, 1956, hymn no. 512) and can be used to talk about the concepts “Bible truths never change” and “The Bible helps me know more about God, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit” (*Growing in God’s Word: Levels of Biblical Learning*, 2016, p. 9). Additionally, verse three states “Jesus loves me! Loves me still, Tho’ I’m weak and very ill” (*Baptist Hymnal*, 1956, hymn no. 512). This line, though heavier in topic, can still be talked about at an age-appropriate level using the concept statement “Good and bad happen to people, but God still loves them” (*Growing in God’s Word: Levels of Biblical Learning*, 2016, p. 10).

For an older grade such as 5th grade, the Kodály and the Levels of Biblical Learning concepts are applied in the same way as the younger grades, however the content is more mature and appropriate for their age level. For example, hymn number 211 “Tell Me the Story of Jesus” is a harder hymn to learn than “Jesus Loves Me” (hymn no. 512), so it is designated to 5th grade. The main musical concept to be extracted from this hymn is tim-ka, which is the dotted eighth note – sixteenth note rhythmic pattern. This pattern occurs many times throughout the hymn, as shown below, so it can be easily identified and taught.

Figure 3. Excerpt of “Tell Me the Story of Jesus” by “Tell Me the Story of Jesus,” W. H.

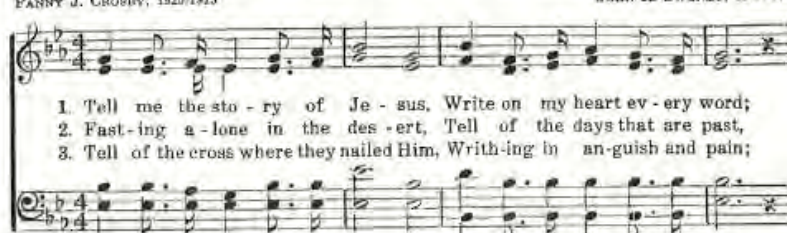
Sims, 1956, *Baptist hymnal*, p. 512. Copyright 1956 by Convention Press.

REPENTANCE AND CONFESSION

Tell Me the Story of Jesus 211

STORY OF JESUS. 8. 7. 8. 7. D. with Refrain

FANNY J. CROSBY, 1820-1915 JOHN R. SWENEY, 1837-1899



1. Tell me the sto - ry of Je - sus, Write on my heart ev - ery word;
 2. Fast - ing a - lone in the des - ert, Tell of the days that are past,
 3. Tell of the cross where they nailed Him, Writh - ing in an - guish and pain;

REFRAIN—Tell me the sto - ry of Je - sus, Write on my heart ev - ery word;

This hymn can also be used to reinforce musical concepts from previous grades, such as steady beat, half notes, do, re, me, fa, and so, which are all identifiable within the first two measures.

There are many Levels of Biblical Learning concepts from the Preteens section that can be extracted and discussed from the text of “Tell Me the Story of Jesus” (hymn no. 211). Many of these come from the section labeled “Jesus” since the text deals with many aspects of Jesus’ life:

Tell me the story of Jesus, Write on my heart every word;

Tell me the story most precious, Sweetest that ever was heard.

Tell how the angels, in chorus, Sang as they welcomed His birth,

“Glory to God in the highest! Peace and good tidings to earth.”

Fasting alone in the desert, Write on my heart every word;

How for our sins He was tempted, Yet was triumphant at last.

Tell of the years of His labor, Tell of the sorrow He bore,
He was despised and afflicted, Homeless, rejected, and poor.

Tell of the cross where they nailed Him, Writhing in anguish and pain;
Tell of the grave where they laid Him, Tell how He liveth again.
Love in that story so tender, Clearer than ever I see:
Stay, let me weep while you whisper, Love paid the ransom for me.

Refrain: Tell me the story of Jesus, Write on my heart every word;
Tell me the story most precious, Sweetest that ever was heard. (Sims, 1956, hymn no.
211)

Some of the concepts that can be extracted and discussed from this text include “God planned for Jesus to be the Savior from the beginning of time and sent Jesus to earth at the perfect time,” “Jesus’ crucifixion, burial, and resurrection were a necessary part of God's plan for the forgiveness of sin,” “Jesus is holy and perfect,” and “Jesus willingly died to provide salvation. Jesus' death and resurrection make salvation possible” (*Growing in God’s Word: Levels of Biblical Learning*, 2016, p. 13-14). The text also opens up opportunities for learning about many different stories of Jesus’ life as they are found in Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John of the New Testament, such as Jesus’ desert fast. There are many more concepts that can be extracted from numerous other hymns, but these examples show the immense opportunities there are to use hymns to teach children about God while reinforcing and teaching important musical concepts. For more examples, see the chart in the Appendix.

Conclusion

Both music and religion have the ability to touch the soul and impact those who share in the experience. By using hymns to educate children about Christianity as well as music, there is a great opportunity to impact many children in powerful ways. The Kodály Method and the Levels of Biblical Learning provide developmentally appropriate sequences that greatly assist in the process of teaching music and theology to children. When these sequences are combined with hymns, the “folk song” of the church, a curriculum can be created to preserve knowledge of theology and music through teaching children, the future of church.

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Appendix

Hymns with the Kodály Method and the Levels of Biblical Learning Sequencing

Kindergarten – Younger Kids			
Number	Name	Musical Concept	Level of Biblical Learning
59	This is My Father's World	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a Feeling for the Steady Beat • Loud-Soft 	<p>God:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • God is Creator and worthy to be praised. • God is powerful and in control of all things. <p>Creation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • God created the world from nothing. • God wants me to feel a sense of wonder as I enjoy His creation. • God wants me to praise Him for His creation.
65	Joy to the World	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High-Low 	<p>God:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • God shows His love to people. • God expects people to obey, respect, and honor Him. <p>Jesus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • God sent Jesus to earth in human form. • Jesus was sent to be my Savior.
204	Nothing but the Blood	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a Feeling for the Steady Beat • Short-Long • Same-Different 	<p>Jesus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jesus restored life. • Jesus died on the cross, and God raised Him from the dead. • Jesus was sent to be my Savior. <p>Salvation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • God sent His only Son, Jesus, to be the one and only Savior of the world. • Sin is choosing my way instead of God's way. • Jesus took the punishment for people's sins. • God will forgive me if I ask Him.
322	Nearer, My God, to Thee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a Feeling for Steady Beat • High-Low 	<p>Bible:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Bible helps me know more about God, Jesus and the Holy Spirit. <p>Creation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • God created people to have a relationship with Him. <p>People:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • God wants people to pray and read the Bible daily. • A disciple follows Jesus' example.
341	Child's Morning Hymn	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a Feeling for the Steady Beat • Short-Long 	<p>God:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • God hears and answers prayer. • God has concern and care for all people.

			<p>Creation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • God wants me to praise Him for His creation. <p>People:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • God wants people to pray and read the Bible daily. • God wants our actions, attitudes, thoughts, and words to be good.
512	Jesus Loves Me	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a Feeling for the Steady Beat • High-Low 	<p>God:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • God shows His love to people. <p>Bible:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bible truths never change. • The Bible helps me know more about God, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit. • The Bible teaches that Jesus died on a cross, was buried, and was raised from the dead. <p>People:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good and bad happen to people, but God still loves them. <p>Family:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • God's plan for mothers and fathers is to be examples of God's love.
514	Doxology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a Feeling for the Steady Beat 	<p>God:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • God tells people to worship Him. • God is the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. <p>Creation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • God wants me to praise Him for His creation. <p>Church:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The church is not a building; it is Christians who gather to worship and serve God. • God wants people to gather to worship Him.

1st Grade – Younger Kids			
Number	Name	Musical Concept	Level of Biblical Learning
44	Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Heartbeat • Ta, Ti-Ti 	<p>God:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • God is Creator and worthy to be praised. <p>Creation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • God wants me to feel a sense of wonder as I enjoy His creation. • God wants me to praise Him for His creation.
130	What a Wonderful Savior!	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Heartbeat • Ta, Ti-Ti 	<p>Jesus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jesus was sent to be my Savior. <p>Salvation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • God sent His only Son, Jesus, to be the one and only Savior of the world.
214	Jesus is the Friend You Need	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Heartbeat • Ta, Ti-Ti • La in a slsm Pattern (Major 2nd and Minor 3rd) 	<p>Jesus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jesus understands what it is like to be human. • Jesus was sent to be my Savior. <p>Salvation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People who trust Jesus as their Savior and Lord are Christians.
289	My Jesus, I Love Thee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Heartbeat • Ta 	<p>Jesus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People who love Jesus want to obey Him. • Jesus was sent to be my Savior. <p>Salvation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sin is choosing my way instead of God's way. • Jesus took the punishment for people's sins.
357	Take My Life, and Let It Be	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Heartbeat • Ta, Ti-Ti • Two Beat Meter 	<p>People:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • God helps people make good choices. • God wants people to use their talents and abilities in ways that please and honor Him. • God wants people to live every day in ways that please and honor Him.
511	Praise Him, All Ye Little Children (God is Love)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Heartbeat • Ta, Ti-Ti • Two Beat Meter • Sol and Mi 	<p>God:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • God is Creator and worthy to be praised. • God has concern and care for all people. • God shows His love to people. • God tells people to worship Him.

2nd Grade – Younger Kids			
Number	Name	Musical Concept	Level of Biblical Learning
1	Holy, Holy, Holy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ta-a (Half Note) • Four Beat Meter • Re (Major 2nd) 	<p>God:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • God is Creator and worthy to be praised. • God is the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.
6	Praise to the Lord, the Almighty	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do (Major 3rd and Perfect 5th) • Re (Major 2nd) 	<p>God:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • God is Creator and worthy to be praised. <p>Creation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • God wants me to praise Him for His creation.
73	Gentle Mary Laid Her Child	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ta-a (Half Note) • Four Beat Meter • Do (Major 3rd and Perfect 5th) • Re (Major 2nd) 	<p>Jesus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • God sent Jesus to earth in human form. • Jesus was sent to be my Savior. <p>Salvation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • God sent His only Son, Jesus to be the one and only Savior of the world. • People who trust Jesus as their Savior and Lord are Christians.
74	Good Christian Men, Rejoice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do (Major 3rd and Perfect 5th) • (Compound Rhythms Six Eight Meter) 	<p>Jesus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • God sent Jesus to earth in human form. • Jesus was sent to be my Savior. <p>Salvation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • God sent His only Son, Jesus to be the one and only Savior of the world. • People who trust Jesus as their Savior and Lord are Christians.
97	Jesus, Keep Me Near the Cross	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sol and Mi • La in slsm pattern 	<p>Jesus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jesus died on the cross, and God raised Him from the dead. • Jesus was sent to be my Savior. • Jesus ascended to heaven but promised He would return one day. <p>Salvation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • God sent His only Son, Jesus, to be the one and only Savior of the world. • Jesus took the punishment for people's sin. • God will forgive me if I ask Him. • People who trust Jesus as their Savior and Lord are Christians.
154	Great Redeemer, We Adore Thee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Four Beat Meter • Do (Major 3rd and Perfect 5th) • Re (Major 2nd) • Ta-a (Half Note) 	<p>God:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • God shows His love to people. • God expects people to obey, respect, and honor Him. <p>Salvation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • God sent His only Son, Jesus, to be the one and only Savior of the world.
155	Jesus Is All the World to Me	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • (Compound Rhythms Six Eight Meter) 	<p>God:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • God is fair and can be trusted.

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • God is the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.
159	Fairest Lord Jesus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ta-a (Half Note) • Four Beat Meter • Do (Major 3rd and Perfect 5th) • Re (Major 2nd) 	<p>God:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • God is Creator and worthy to be praised. • God tells people to worship Him. • God expects people to obey, respect, and honor Him. • God is the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.
179	Holy Bible, Book Divine	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ta-a (Half Note) • Do (Major 3rd and Perfect 5th) • Re (Major 2nd) 	<p>Bible:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bible truths never change. • The Bible teaches how God wants me to live. <p>Holy Spirit:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Holy Spirit led people to write the Bible. <p>People:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • God wants people to pray and read the Bible daily. • God helps me obey His commands in the Bible.
190	I Saw the Cross of Jesus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ta-a (Half Note) • Four Beat Meter • Do (Major 3rd and Perfect 5th) • Re (Major 2nd) 	<p>God:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • God loves people enough to provide forgiveness for sins. <p>Jesus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jesus died on the cross, and God raised Him from the dead. • Jesus was sent to be my Savior. <p>Salvation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jesus took the punishment for people's sins. • God will forgive me if I ask Him. • People who trust Jesus as their Savior and Lord are Christians.
221	I Need Thee, Precious Jesus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ta-a (Half Note) • Four Beat Meter • Do (Major 3rd and Perfect 5th) 	<p>Jesus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jesus restored life. • Jesus died on the cross, and God raised Him from the dead. • Jesus was sent to be my Savior. <p>Salvation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • God sent His only Son, Jesus, to be the one and only Savior of the world. • Sin is choosing my way instead of God's way. • People who trust Jesus as their Savior and Lord are Christians.
253	Have Faith in God	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ta-a (Half Note) • Four Beat Meter • Do (Major 3rd and Perfect 5th) • Re (Major 2nd) 	<p>God:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • God is powerful and in control of all things. • God is fair and can be trusted. • God knows everything. <p>People:</p>

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good and bad happen to people, but God still loves them.
260	When We Walk With the Lord (Trust and Obey)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ta-a (Half Note) • Do (Major 3rd and Perfect 5th) • Re (Major 2nd) 	<p>God:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • God is fair and can be trusted. <p>Jesus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People who love Jesus want to obey Him. <p>Bible:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Bible teaches how God wants me to live. <p>People:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People can follow Jesus' example by obeying God. • God helps me obey His commands in the Bible.
265	It Is Well With My Soul	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ta-a (Half Note) • Four Beat Meter • Do (Major 3rd and Perfect 5th) • Re (Major 2nd) 	<p>God:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • God has concern and care for all people. • God is fair and can be trusted. <p>People:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good and bad happen to people, but God still loves them. • God wants our actions, attitudes, thoughts, and words to be good.
316	More Like Jesus Would I Be	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do (Major 3rd and Perfect 5th) • Re (Major 2nd) • (Compound Rhythms) 	<p>People:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • God wants people to pray and read the Bible daily. • People can follow Jesus' example by obeying God. • God wants our actions, attitudes, thoughts, and words to be good. • A disciple follows Jesus' example.
327	Sweet Hour of Prayer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do (Major 3rd and Perfect 5th) • Re (Major 2nd) • (Compound Rhythms in Six Eight Meter) 	<p>God:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • God hears and answers prayers. <p>People:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • God wants people to pray and read the Bible daily.
367	Take Time to Be Holy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do (Major 3rd and Perfect 5th) • Re (Major 2nd) • (Compound Rhythms in Six Eight Meter) 	<p>God:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • God hears and answers prayers. <p>Bible:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Bible teaches how God wants me to live. <p>People:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • God wants people to pray and read the Bible daily. • People can follow Jesus' example by obeying God. • God wants people to live every day in ways that please and honor Him. • God wants our actions, attitudes, thoughts and words to be good. • A disciple follows Jesus' example.
369	Purer in Heart, O God	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ta-a (Half Note) • Four Beat Meter 	<p>People:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • God helps people make good choices.

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People can follow Jesus' example by obeying God. • God wants our actions, attitudes, thoughts, and words to be good.
438	Make Me a Channel of Blessing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do (Major 3rd and Perfect 5th) • Re (Major 2nd) • (Compound Rhythms in Six Eight Meter) 	<p>Church:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The church meets the needs of people. <p>People:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • God wants people to use their talents and abilities in ways that please and honor Him. <p>Community and World:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • God works through people to do His work in their communities and world. • Christians are called to tell the people of the world about Jesus. • The Bible tells me to love others in my community and world.
456	O God, We Pray for All Mankind	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do (Major 3rd and Perfect 5th) • Re (Major 2nd) • (Compound Rhythms in Six Eight Meter) 	<p>God:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • God hears and answers prayers. • God loves people enough to provide forgiveness for sin. <p>Salvation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jesus took the punishment for people's sins. <p>People:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • God wants people to pray and read the Bible daily. <p>Community and World:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Christians are called to tell the people of the world about Jesus. • People can pray for every people group.
509	I am So Glad That Our Father (Jesus Loves Even Me)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do (Major 3rd and Perfect 5th) • Re (Major 2nd) • (Compound Rhythms Six Eight Meter) 	<p>God:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • God shows His love to people. <p>Bible:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bible truths never change. • The Bible teaches that Jesus died on a cross, was buried, and was raised from the dead. <p>People:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good and bad happen to people, but God still loves them. <p>Family:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • God's plan for mothers and fathers is to be examples of God's love.

3 rd Grade – Middle Kids			
Number	Name	Musical Concept	Levels of Biblical Learning
62	Be Thou My Vision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low La • Low Sol 	<p>God:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • God is everywhere at all times. • God is all-powerful and in control of all things. <p>People:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • God wants people to communicate with Him through praying and reading the Bible daily. • God wants people to have pure thoughts and actions.
153	For the Beauty of the Earth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low La • Low Sol • Do Pentatonic 	<p>God:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • God is Creator and worthy to be praised. <p>Creation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • God created the world from nothing. • God wants me to feel a sense of wonder as I enjoy His creation. • God wants me to praise Him for His creation. <p>Church:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The church is not a building; it is Christians who gather to worship and serve God. • God wants people to gather to worship Him.
160	How Sweet the Name of Jesus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pentatonic • Low La • Low Sol 	<p>God:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • God has concern and care for all people. <p>Jesus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jesus is the Messiah and Savior. <p>People:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • God wants believers to be disciples who grow in their faith and knowledge of Jesus.
188	Amazing Grace	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pentatonic • Low La • Low Sol 	<p>God:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • God proved His unconditional love for people by sending Jesus. <p>Salvation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Salvation is the gift of eternal life in heaven with God. Through salvation, God adopts us as His children. • God's salvation is a gift that every person needs and can receive. • When the Holy Spirit convicts me of my sin, I can trust Jesus as my personal Savior.
258	Tis So Sweet to Trust in Jesus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low La • Low Sol • Do Pentatonic 	<p>God:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • God is faithful and just. • God has always been and always will be. <p>Jesus:</p>

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jesus taught about faith, trust, and obedience to God. • People can obey Jesus as a response to His love. <p>People:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • God wants every person to trust in Jesus as Savior and Lord.
259	Trusting Jesus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low La • Low Sol 	<p>God:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • God has concern and care for all people. • God is faithful and just. <p>People:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People can learn to respond in positive ways to what happens to them.
283	The Solid Rock	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low Sol • Do Pentatonic 	<p>Jesus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jesus died to pay the penalty for sin. • Jesus is the Messiah and Savior. <p>Salvation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The punishment for sin is separation from God. • Jesus died to pay the penalty for my sins. • When the Holy Spirit convicts me of my sin, I can trust Jesus as my personal Savior. <p>People:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People can follow the examples, teachings, and commands of Jesus.
313	Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ti-Tika • Do Pentatonic 	<p>God:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • God has concern and care for all people. • God is worthy of worship. <p>People:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People can develop and use their abilities and talents in ways that please and honor God.
334	I Need Thee Every Hour	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low La • Low Sol 	<p>God:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • God has concern and care for all people. • God is all-powerful and in control of all things.
348	Let Others See Jesus in You	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low La • Low Sol 	<p>People:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People can follow the examples, teachings, and commands of Jesus. • God wants me to honor Him by choosing to do what is right and reject what is wrong. <p>Community and World:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • God works through people to do His work in their communities and world. • Christians are called to tell people of the world about Jesus.
392	Here at Thy Table, Lord	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do Pentatonic 	<p>Church:</p>

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Lord's Supper is a way to remind people about what Jesus did. Christians participate in the Lord's Supper.
415	Stand Up, Stand Up for Jesus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Low La Low Sol 	<p>God:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> God deserves respect, obedience, and honor. <p>Jesus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> People can obey Jesus as a response to His love. <p>People:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> People can follow the examples, teachings, and commands of Jesus. God wants me to honor Him by choosing to do what is right and reject what is wrong. God wants believers to be disciples who grown in their faith and knowledge of Jesus.

4 th Grade – Middle Kids			
Number	Name	Musical Concept	Level of Biblical Learning
20	O Worship the King	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fa in a sfmrd Pattern • Whole Steps and Half Steps (Major 2nd, Minor 2nd) • Do Pentachord 	<p>God:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • God is Creator and worthy to be praised. • God proved His unconditional love for people by sending Jesus. • God is worthy of worship. • God deserves respect, obedience, and honor.
40	A Mighty Fortress Is Our God	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High do • Fa in a sfmrd pattern • Whole steps and Half Steps (major 2nd, minor 2nd) 	<p>God:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • God is all-powerful and in control of all things.
64	Angels We Have Heard on High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fa in a sfmrd Pattern • Whole Steps and Half Steps (Major 2nd, Minor 2nd) • Do Pentachord 	<p>God:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • God is worthy of worship. <p>Jesus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jesus was born of a virgin. • Jesus is fully God and fully man. • Jesus is the Messiah and Savior.
69	There's a Song in the Air	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sol Pentatonic 	<p>God:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • God is God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit (Trinity). <p>Jesus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jesus was born of a virgin. • Jesus is the Messiah and Savior.
77	Away in a Manger	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High Do • Fa in a sfmrd Pattern • Do Pentachord • B-flat; Key Signature: F Major 	<p>Jesus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jesus was born of a virgin. • Jesus is God in human form. • God sent Jesus to fulfill His promise of redemption.
99	When I Survey the Wondrous Cross	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do Pentachord • Key Signature: F Major 	<p>God:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • God proved His unconditional love for people by sending Jesus. <p>Jesus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jesus died to pay the penalty for my sin. • Jesus is the Messiah and Savior. <p>Bible:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Bible teaches that Jesus died on a cross, was buried, and was raised from the dead. <p>Salvation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • God provided a plan for salvation because He loves me. • The punishment for sin is separation from God. • Jesus died to pay the penalty for my sins. • When the Holy Spirit convicts me of sin, I can trust Jesus as my personal Savior.

156	Jesus, Lover of My Soul	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fa in a sfmrd Pattern • Whole Steps and Half Steps (Major 2nd, Minor 2nd) • Do Pentachord 	<p>Jesus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jesus died to pay the penalty for my sin. <p>Salvation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • God's salvation is a gift that every person needs and can receive.
222	Tell Me the Old, Old Story	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High do • Fa in a sfmrd Pattern 	<p>God:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • God proved His unconditional love for people by sending Jesus. <p>Jesus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jesus is the Messiah and Savior. <p>Bible:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Bible teaches that Jesus died on a cross, was buried, and was raised from the dead. <p>Salvation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • God provided a plan for salvation because He loves me.
225	Jesus Paid it All	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High do • Tam-Ti 	<p>Jesus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jesus died to pay the penalty for sin. • Jesus is the Messiah and Savior. <p>Salvation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The punishment for sin is separation from God. • Jesus died to pay the penalty for my sins. • When the Holy Spirit convicts me of my sin, I can trust Jesus as my personal Savior.
226	Come to the Savior Now	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High do • Do pentachord 	<p>Jesus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jesus died to pay the penalty for sin. • Jesus is the Messiah and Savior. <p>Salvation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The punishment for sin is separation from God. • Jesus died to pay the penalty for my sins. • When the Holy Spirit convicts me of my sin, I can trust Jesus as my personal Savior.
240	Just As I Am	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tam-Ti • Fa in a sfmrd Pattern • Whole Steps and Half Steps • Do Pentachord 	<p>Jesus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People can obey Jesus as a response to His love. • Jesus died to pay the penalty for sin. <p>Salvation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • God's salvation is a gift that every person needs and can receive. • When the Holy Spirit convicts me of my sin, I can trust Jesus as my personal Savior.
257	My Faith Looks Up to Thee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High do • Whole Note • Tam-Ti 	<p>God:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • God knows what people need and desire but still expects them to pray. <p>Salvation:</p>

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jesus died to pay the penalty for my sins. • When the Holy Spirit convicts me of my sin, I can trust Jesus as my personal Savior. <p>People:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • God wants people to communicate with Him through praying and reading the Bible daily. • God wants every person to trust in Jesus as Savior and Lord.
269	Blessed Assurance, Jesus Is Mine	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High do • Whole Steps and Half Steps • Do Pentachord 	<p>God:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • God is worthy of worship. <p>Jesus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jesus is the Messiah and Savior. <p>Salvation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When the Holy Spirit convicts me of my sin, I can trust Jesus as my personal Savior. <p>Community and World:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Christians are called to tell people of the world about Jesus.
343	Our Father in Heaven	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tam-Ti • Do Pentachord 	<p>God:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • God knows what people need and desire but still expects them to pray. <p>People:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • God wants people to communicate with Him through praying and reading the Bible daily.
363	I Surrender All	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High do • Tam-Ti • Fa in a sfmrd Pattern 	<p>God:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • God deserves respect, obedience, and honor. • God is all-powerful and in control of all things. <p>Jesus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jesus taught about faith, trust, and obedience to God. • People can obey Jesus as a response to His love. <p>People:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People can learn about and recognize God's authority.
412	Onward, Christian Soldiers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High do • Whole Note • Tam-Ti • Fa in a sfmrd Pattern • Whole Steps and Half Steps • Do Pentachord 	<p>Church:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A church is a group of baptized believers who meet together to worship and serve God. • God uses the church to meet the needs of people in the community and around the world. <p>People:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • God wants me to honor Him by choosing to do what is right and reject what is wrong.

532	May the Words of My Mouth	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Tam-Ti• Fa in a sfmrd Pattern• Whole Steps and Half Steps	People: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• People are responsible for their choices.• People can follow the examples, teachings, and commands of Jesus.• God wants me to honor Him by choosing to do what is right and reject what is wrong.• God wants people to have pure thoughts and actions.
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5 th Grade - Preteens			
Number	Name	Musical Concept	Level of Biblical Learning
12	Come, Thou Almighty King	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low Ti (dt,d) • Key Signature: G Major • Dotted half note • Three Beat Meter 	<p>God:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • God deserves respect, obedience, and honor. God wants us to live for His Glory. • God reveals Himself to us as God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit (the Trinity). • God is omnipotent - He is all-powerful, sovereign, and good.
41	To God Be the Glory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Three Beat Meter 	<p>God:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • God proved His unconditional love for people through the sacrifice of Jesus the Christ. • God expects people to worship Him with all their hearts, souls, minds, and strength. <p>Jesus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jesus' crucifixion, burial, and resurrection were a necessary part of God's plan for the forgiveness of sin. <p>Salvation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jesus willingly died to provide salvation, Jesus' death and resurrection make salvation possible. • People cannot save themselves. Jesus died to pay the penalty for my sins, redeeming and rescuing me from sin and death.
63	The First Noel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ti (dt'l) • Three Beat Meter 	<p>God:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • God, the Creator, is to be worshiped, not His Creations. <p>Jesus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jesus was born of a virgin. • God planned for Jesus to be the Savior from the beginning of time and sent Jesus to earth at the perfect time. <p>Creation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creation can be credited only to God. • God is still at work in His creation and cares what happens in it, working all things for His glory.
81	Hark! The Herald Angels Sing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low Ti (dt,l and dt,d) • Key Signature: G Major 	<p>God:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • God reveals Himself to us as God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit (the Trinity). <p>Jesus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jesus was born of a virgin. • Jesus is God in human form. • God sent Jesus to fulfill His promise of redemption. <p>Salvation:</p>

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jesus willingly died to provide salvation. Jesus' death and resurrection make salvation possible. • People cannot save themselves. Jesus died to pay the penalty for my sins, redeeming and rescuing me from sin and death.
165	Holy Spirit, Faithful Guide	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low Ti (dt,l and dt,d) • Key Signature: G Major • Dotted Half Note • Three Beat Meter 	<p>Holy Spirit:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Holy Spirit is given to a person when he trusts Jesus as Savior and Lord. • Jesus promised that God would send the Holy Spirit as a Comforter. • The Holy Spirit is eternal and active. The Holy Spirit intercedes for us.
200	Grace Greater Than Our Sin	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low Ti (dt,l and dt,d) • F#; Key Signature: G Major • Dotted Half Note • Three Beat Meter 	<p>God:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • God proved his unconditional love for people through the sacrifice of Jesus the Christ. <p>Jesus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jesus' crucifixion, burial, and resurrection were a necessary part of God's plan for the forgiveness of sin. <p>Salvation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • God's salvation is eternal. Nothing can separate Christians from God's love.
211	Tell Me the Story of Jesus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tim-Ka 	<p>Jesus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • God planned for Jesus to be the Savior from the beginning of time and sent Jesus to earth at the perfect time. • Jesus' crucifixion, burial, and resurrection were a necessary part of God's plan for the forgiveness of sin. • Jesus is holy and perfect. • Jesus willingly died to provide salvation, Jesus' death and resurrection make salvation possible.
216	I Am Resolved	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low Ti (dt,l and dt,d) • Tim-ka 	<p>Salvation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A growing relationship with Jesus is important and necessary. A Christian experiences joy when he recognizes God is at work in his life and in the lives of others. <p>People:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People can take deliberate actions to grow in Christlikeness. • God expects people to remain pure in all aspects of life: with their bodies, thoughts, attitudes, actions, and speech.
371	Leaning on the Everlasting Arms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ti (d'tl and d'td') • Tim-Ka 	<p>God:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • God is omnipotent - He is all-powerful, sovereign, and good. • God is eternal.

			<p>Holy Spirit:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Jesus promised that God would send the Holy Spirit as a Comforter.
398	Be Known to Us in Breaking Bread	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Low Ti (dt,l and dt,d) Ti (d'tl and d'td') Dotted Half Note 	<p>Church:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The body and blood of Jesus are represented in the Lord's Supper. The Lord's Supper is a church ordinance.
455	We've a Story to Tell	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ti (d'tl and d'td') Tim-Ka 	<p>Salvation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> People cannot save themselves. Jesus died to pay the penalty for my sins, redeeming and rescuing me from sin and death. <p>Community and World:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> God allows people to join Him in His work throughout the world. All Christians are called to be on mission with God. People can pray for all people serving on mission. God creates opportunities for people to connect with others in all walks of life. Missionaries are Christians called by God to tell another group of people the good news about Jesus. Missionaries are sometimes in danger because they boldly tell others about Jesus.
483	When We All Get to Heaven	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ti (d'tl and d'td') Tim-Ka 	<p>God:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> God is eternal. <p>Jesus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Jesus taught that He is the only way to God.
492	We Gather Together	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ti (d'tl and d'td') Three Beat Meter 	<p>God:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> God hears people's prayers and communicates with them. God has concern and care for all people, no matter their status, race, or ethnicity. God is omnipotent - He is all-powerful, sovereign, and good.
47	Great is Thy Faithfulness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ti (d'tl and d'td') Three Beat Meter Tim-Ka 	<p>God:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> God is eternal, holy, and perfect. God hears people's prayers and communicates with them. God has concern and care for all people, no matter their status, race or ethnicity. <p>People:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> People can live with joy regardless of their circumstances.

6 th Grade - Preteens			
Number	Name	Musical Concept	Level of Biblical Learning
75	O Little Town of Bethlehem	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fi; Minor scale 	<p>Jesus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jesus was born of a virgin. • Jesus is God in human form. • God sent Jesus to fulfill His promise of redemption.
93	The Old Rugged Cross	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Compound Rhythms • Six Eight Meter • Keys of B-flat Major and G Minor • Fi • Si 	<p>Jesus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jesus' crucifixion, burial, and resurrection were a necessary part of God's plan for the forgiveness of sin. • God sent Jesus to fulfill His promise of redemption. <p>Salvation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jesus willingly died to provide salvation. Jesus' death and resurrection make salvation possible. • People cannot save themselves. Jesus died to pay the penalty for my sins, redeeming and rescuing me from sin and death.
212	Love Lifted Me	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Compound Rhythms • Six Eight Meter • Keys of B-flat Major 	<p>God:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • God proved His unconditional love for people through the sacrifice of Jesus the Christ. <p>Jesus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jesus transformed people through His love. • Jesus' crucifixion, burial, and resurrection were a necessary part of God's plan for the forgiveness of sin. <p>Salvation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People cannot save themselves. Jesus died to pay the penalty for my sins, redeeming and rescuing me from sin and death. • God's salvation is eternal. Nothing can separate Christians from God's love.
236	Softly and Tenderly	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Compound Rhythms • Six Eight Meter 	<p>Jesus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jesus transformed people through His love. <p>Salvation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People cannot save themselves. Jesus died to pay the penalty for my sins, redeeming and rescuing me from sin and death.
331	Speak to My Heart	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Compound Rhythms 	<p>God:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • God hears people's prayers and communicates with them. <p>People:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • God wants people to communicate with Him and study the Bible daily.
505	Tell Me the Stories of Jesus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Compound Rhythms 	<p>Jesus:</p>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Six Eight Meter• Fi	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Jesus performed miracles because He is God's Son.• Jesus transformed people through His love.• The Bible teaches how to live a Christian life by following Jesus.
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