

# The ART of CHRISTIAN MUSIC



## Psalm 150 (the Message)

Hallelujah!  
Praise God in his holy house of worship,  
praise him under the open skies;  
Praise him for his acts of power,  
praise him for his magnificent greatness;  
Praise with a blast on the **trumpet**,  
praise by **strumming soft strings**;  
Praise him with **castanets and dance**,  
praise him with **banjo and flute**;  
Praise him with **cymbals and a big bass drum**,  
praise him with **fiddles and mandolin**.  
Let every living, breathing creature praise GOD!  
Hallelujah!

Good people, cheer GOD! Right-living people  
sound best when praising. Use guitars to reinforce  
your Hallelujahs! Play his praise on a grand piano!  
Invent your own new song to him; give him a  
trumpet fanfare. Psalm 33 (Msg)

In the book, "What Every Pastor Needs to Know about Music" which he co authored, Garth Bolinder tells this story of a young man, in his congregation coming to him and saying, "When are we going to sing some 'Spirit-filled' songs on Sunday evening?" "When I asked him what he meant (I thought I already knew), he responded, "Well, I was thinking of some of the new praise choruses. They're the ones the Lord's using today." Indeed! Give me a praise chorus anytime. Sing them over again to me. But don't forget to throw in some great hymns of the church. Then there's the Gloria Patri or the Kyrie eleison. An antiphon or two wouldn't hurt. And what about a Gregorian chant? Just what is the Lord using today, anyway? BOLINDER, GARTH ; MCKEE, TOM ; CIONCA, JOHN R.: *What every pastor needs to know about music, youth, and education, The Leadership Library*. vol. 6. Carol Stream, IL; Waco, TX : Christianity Today, Inc.; Word Books, 1986.

That's a good question to ponder when we think about the music of God's people today. What Music speaks to you on your faith journey? What Christian songs stirs your soul and draws you closer to God? Is it the songs from a Hymnal, or the latest contemporary gospel songs we hear on the radio or CD's? Maybe its country gospel that sets your soul on fire and stirs you to lift your heart to God in praise or prayer or both. Is it bluegrass gospel, or perhaps reflective choruses? Can you believe that God works in us and inspires us via every one of these musical expressions?

Perhaps you have heard it said in your parish, "*Lets sing some lively songs not those dreadful hymns that don't do anything for me anymore!*" or something to that affect. I think, what lies behind these sentiments are not that the hymns we sing in church today, are irrelevant to todays worshiper: for The hymns of the church are wonderful songs conveying the great tenants of our faith. Rather, I wonder if it's that we are a people who just want to express our faith with more variety and also in other musical styles that are familiar to us today. This is what it is for me! Some of the simplest of Christian choruses and songs can stir my soul just as deeply as our most cherished hymns. William P. Merrill Presbyterian clergyman and hymn writer said, "*There is nothing in the world so much like prayer as music is.*" I think that goes for Christian music whether it be old or new, contemporary or traditional.

My hope with the presentation and the few songs included in this handout is to encourage the musicians hanging out in the shadows of our parishes, many of whom have seen modeled for ages and perhaps were told that the only acceptable music form in worship is the organ and a choir, to seek out places to sing and to write music and play for God's Glory. The drummer in our band will tell you that; *he can't preach Jesus from a pulpit but he can sing and play God's message*. As the psalmist says, "*Use guitars to reinforce your Hallelujahs! Play his praise on a grand piano! Invent your own new song to him; give him a trumpet fanfare. Psalm 33*"

**Some music to have fun with:** The following are some songs that we re-lyriced into Christian versions of popular 1960's songs and use in our worship services. "Come Let Us Gather To Worship our Lord" is a song set to Scarborough Fair by Simon & Garfunkel. We sing this song to begin worship or as the offertory, just before communion. The song "Christmas Ballad" is set to the tune of "The Skye Boat Song" a Scottish folk song recalling the escape of Prince Charles Edward Stuart (Bonnie Prince Charlie) to the Isle of Skye after his defeat at the Battle of Culloden in 1746. "Christmas Hymn" is a song written as a ballad but can be sung very well to the tune of (*Good King Wenceslas CM#145*). The forth song is a great children's song, "I Love Jesus". It's hard to stay sitting in your seat with this one. Easy to play using 2 chords and a repetitive chorus. Goes by the tune of "I want Candy" by the Strangeloves.

Try singing "Amazing Grace" to the tune of House of the rising sun. It sounds great or "Jesus Loves me" to the tune of "Johnny B Goode". These are just a few novel ways to be artful with music in the expression of our faith. Try writing your own Songs or do what we did with these songs. Above all have fun using the wonderful gift of music for God's glory and praise. I would like to encourage you and help you however I can. Please Just ask. My email address is: [ronbarkhouse@hotmail.com](mailto:ronbarkhouse@hotmail.com)

Come Let Us Gather To Worship our Lord (tune of Scarborough Fair)

Lyrics by Mary Rafuse

[verse1]

Am Em Am  
Come let us gather to worship our Lord;  
D Em  
Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.  
Am C G  
We are here in love and fellowship;  
Am G Em Am  
our thanks and praise we offer this day.

[verse2]

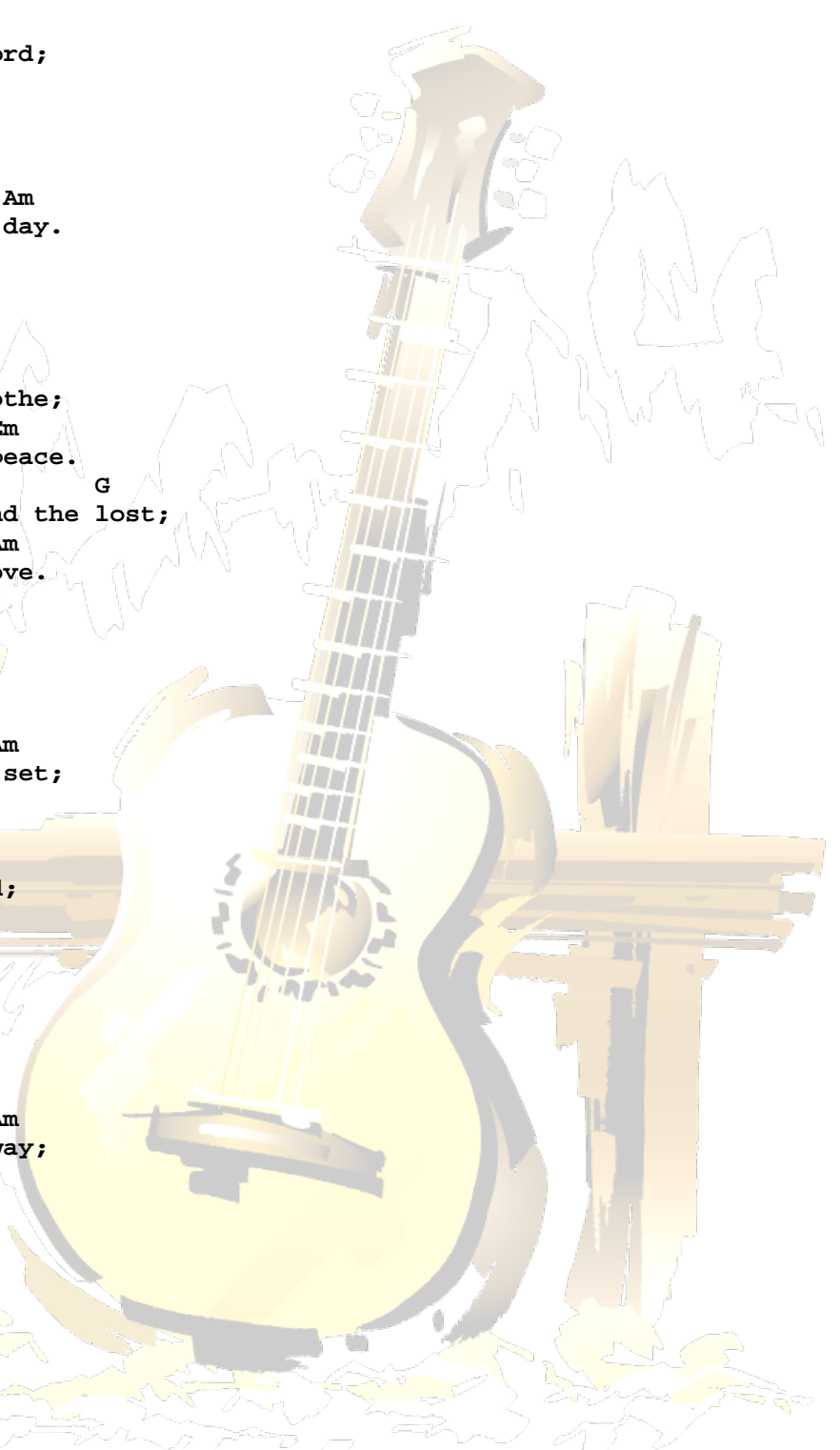
Am Em Am  
Your Word we hear to comfort and soothe;  
D Em  
to share with all, Your message of peace.  
Am C G  
Our prayers we offer for the sick and the lost;  
Am G Em Am  
forgiveness You give in mercy and love.

[verse3]

Am Em Am  
For the Heavenly Feast the table is set;  
D Em  
bread and wine to nourish our souls.  
Am C G  
"Taste and see that the Lord is good;  
Am G Em Am  
happy are they who trust in Him."

[verse4]

Am Em Am  
Filled with the Spirit we go on our way;  
D Em  
the Good News our duty to spread.  
Am C G  
To love and serve the Risen Lord,  
Am G Em Am  
Praise be to God, Alleluia.  
Am G Em Am  
Praise be to God, Alleluia.



Christmas Ballad (lyrics by Mary Rafuse) tune of Skye Boat

**[Chorus]**

D Bm G A D G D A  
Dark was the night, and the Angels did sing, to the gift that was sent from above.  
D Bm G A D G D  
For here lay the lad who's born to be King, He'll rule with peace and love.

**[Verse 1]**

Bm Em Bm  
A star was their light, tired and scared, no place to lay their heads.  
Bm Em Bm Em A A7  
Surrounded by beasts, Mary's joy became known, a manger- a royal bed.

**[Chorus]**

**[Verse 2]**

Bm Em Bm  
Shepherds were told, the sky was ablaze, Angels brought news of joy.  
Bm Em Bm Em A A7  
Prophets-foretold, saved from our sin, The Messiah, a baby boy

**[Chorus]**

**[Verse 3]**

Bm Em Bm  
Far in the East, a journey began, The Bright Star be their only guide.  
Bm Em Bm Em A A7  
Gifts for the King, bowing in praise, (praying-Herod) would not find.

**[Chorus]**

**[Verse 4]**

Bm Em Bm  
Jesus our King, born at this time, God sent pure love to us  
Bm Em Bm Em A A7  
Sharing this joy, spreading His Word, Worship His Holiness

**[Ending Chorus]**

D Bm G A D G D A  
Dark was the night, and the Angels did sing, to the gift that was sent from above.  
D Bm G A D G D  
For here lay the lad who's born to be King, He'll rule with peace and love.

Verse 1

You left your throne of Glory  
To dwell with us on Earth  
Sent from God our Father  
In a manger you had your birth.  
Glory to God in the highest  
The angels sang that night  
Jesus is born in Bethlehem  
The world has seen a great light

Verse 2

The Star shone High in Heaven  
Above that lowly place,  
The shepherds gazed at your Glory  
Saviour of the human race  
Glory to God in the highest  
The angels sang that night  
Jesus is born in Bethlehem  
The world has seen a great light

Verse 3

Jesus Christ the light from Heaven  
Illumine the hearts of mankind  
To bring us peace, to show us love  
And to reflect your life divine.  
Glory to God in the highest  
The angels sang that night  
Jesus is born in Bethlehem  
The world has seen a great light

Verse 4

As you came that first Christmas  
Lord come to us today  
Fill our hearts, our souls, our lives  
With your unending praise.  
Glory to God in the highest  
The angels sang that night  
Jesus is born in Bethlehem  
The world has seen a great light

*[spoken as tune continues quietly]*  
To the shepherds the angel said, "Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all people. For to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. And this will be a sign for you: you will find a baby wrapped in swaddling cloths, lying in a manger." And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among those with whom he is pleased

[ending chorus]

Glory to God in the highest  
The angels sang that night  
Jesus is born in Bethlehem  
The world has seen a great light

**I Love Jesus** (lyrics by Rev'd Ron Barkhouse) *tune of "I Want Candy" by the Strangeloves*

*G-A chord progression*

*( sounds wonderful with any drum) We sing this often when children are present.*

Verse 1

A G A  
I know a man who calmed the seas  
A G A  
Healed the sick made the blind to see  
A G A  
Raised the dead set the leper free  
A G A  
The way to God He showed to me

**A G A  
I Love Jesus X4**

Verse 2

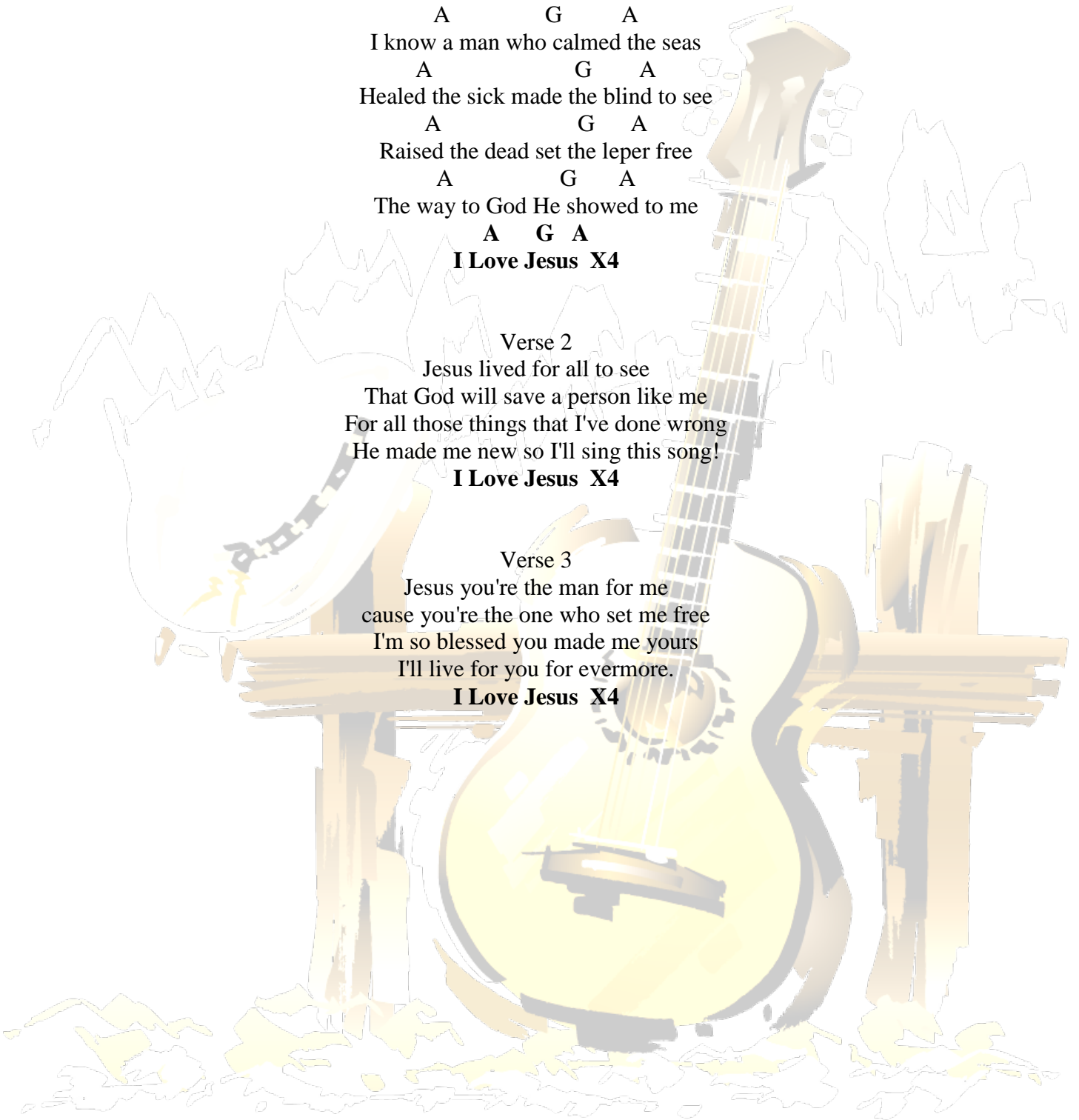
Jesus lived for all to see  
That God will save a person like me  
For all those things that I've done wrong  
He made me new so I'll sing this song!

**I Love Jesus X4**

Verse 3

Jesus you're the man for me  
cause you're the one who set me free  
I'm so blessed you made me yours  
I'll live for you for evermore.

**I Love Jesus X4**



### Some resources that may be helpful

Common Praise online- contains sample clips of many (not all ) of the hymns in the Anglican Common Praise Hymn Book. Good source for learning the melodies of these hymns to lead in worship (especially for those of us who don't read music).

<http://www.commonpraiseonline.ca/index.php/home>

Ultimate Guitar Chords- I use this site frequently to find chords to popular contemporary Christian songs and secular songs also. The site is easy to use but often when a chord sheet is printed it may place the chords in the wrong spot and make the song sound wrong. So just take notice of that.

<https://www.ultimate-guitar.com>

YouTube- videos- I use this site constantly to get the air of contemporary Christian songs and hymns of the church.

<https://www.youtube.com>

Church copyright licence : these are annually paid subscriptions (not cheap) but makes copying of the songs in print form legal and the artists are compensated for their work. 10000's of songs and hymns on this site.

<https://songselect.ccli.com/>

The hymnary. org: another site where lyrics can be found for many hymns especially those not found in our Anglican hymn book. Just highlight, copy and past into a word processor.

<http://www.hymnary.org/>

St. Marks YouTube site. Where there are examples of some of the music played at Sunday Services. Easy way to get there is go to the parish website, click on contacts and then the little box that says YouTube.

<http://stmartinswesternshore.weebly.com/contact.html>

An excellent tool in most hymnals is the **Metrical Index**. (Page 945 in The Anglican Common Praise Hymn Book.) A **hymn metre** indicates the number of syllables for the lines in each stanza of a hymn. This provides a means of marrying the hymn's text with an appropriate hymn tune for singing. There are numerous songs that can be played by other tunes if they have the same metre . The above song "Christmas Hymn" is an example of this. The meter is 76 76 D.