

# PSALM

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## Tradition and Change in the New World

### *The role of music in liturgy today*

by Mark Bailey

Each time Orthodox Christians gather in worship, they celebrate a new world. Each sung moment of their liturgical supplication and praise acknowledges a Savior who has revealed Himself and who has promised a heavenly, perfect existence. Each liturgy itself enables a taste of, and a glimpse into, that divine revelation and promise.<sup>1</sup>

This fundamental theology expresses a world beyond our everyday existence that is critical to the liturgical experience. As well, it allows us to place liturgical music at the very heart of that experience, not as an aesthetic product designed to enhance and ornament sacred gatherings, but as an actual means of sung prayer and supplication that enables a sense of presence in the realm where God dwells. One could say, in fact, that the pulse and flow of liturgical music shaped around sacred text actually helps to carry the assembly into that realm. That is to say, liturgical music is not an accessory to worship, but an essential ingredient. And this universal concept applies to all Orthodox sacred gatherings. Therefore, our liturgical music practices today have ramifications beyond the particular church community in which they are rendered, just as the Church in all its fullness is more than liturgy celebrated in any one church community.

In this sense, when pondering liturgical music, we should pursue universal and timeless principles that honor the fullness of liturgy—not just its musical dimensions—and then discover how those principles apply more specifically to our conditions today. Even more to the point, liturgical music is much more than what it actually sounds like on the surface, and the music itself has meaning beyond the



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**Liturgical music is first and foremost the Church's sung commitment to a God in whose presence the faithful stand whenever they are liturgically together.**



ethnicity to which it is linked—Greek, Russian, Serbian, Ukrainian, Georgian, Romanian, and so on. Liturgical music, before it is associated with a particular tradition, is first and foremost the Church's sung commitment to a God in whose presence the faithful stand whenever they are liturgically together, whether their song is monophonic, polyphonic, modal, diatonic, or chromatic, and whether it originated in one place or another. As Johann von Gardner puts it:

*The Church in a sense is timeless, existing both outside of time and encompassing all of time, its singing also must preserve the traditions of the past while maintaining a link to the present. Above all, the singing of the Church must never stray from its central essence: the liturgy. It must avoid at all costs the tendency to pursue exclusively aesthetic or personal, subjective goals.<sup>2</sup>*

Gardner's words emphasize that before liturgical music fulfills the criteria toward an association or a perception of, say, authentic Slavic style or Byzantine style, or even an American style, there is a theologically conceived new world experience primarily concerned with *liturgical* style, in whatever ways that concept is expressed in various regions and throughout various historical periods. Gardner helps to put things in the right order, therefore. And he suggests that liturgical musicians and liturgical theologians necessarily share common interests and objectives regarding sacred music as the subject of any meaningful discussion on tradition and change.

The purpose of this article, therefore, is to pursue the concepts of tradition and change in terms of liturgical music primarily as a matter of liturgical theology, and to propose a manner of reconciliation and co-existence between the two concepts that informs and guides the way we select and compose music for worship, as well as the way we sing that music before God and the assembly.

### **Does liturgy change?**

One often encounters the notion that Orthodox liturgy by and large escapes change, that it has remained essentially the same over the centuries. And there is some truth to this. For example, liturgy is in one sense a means of communication. Three hundred years ago, which is a short time in liturgy years, society essentially communicated face to face or by letter. Eventually came the telegraph and the telephone, then video cameras and video conferencing, computers and electronic mail, wireless phones with instant text messaging services, and all

sorts of technologies and gadgets enabling numerous forms of instant communication throughout the world. These advances represent monumental changes in the way society now communicates and functions. In contrast, liturgy has remained by design and by principle a face-to-face in-person gathering of the faithful, who communicate through spoken and sung voice in real time, as it were, directly to God and to each other. And this is essentially the same way Christian liturgy has been celebrated over the course of two thousand years. In this sense, therefore, liturgy has not changed.

In musical terms, one also notes various forms of enduring stability. While in the Western Church the use of musical instruments and the creation of a vast sacred instrumental and instrumental-choral repertoire evolved over time, the Eastern Church has by and large resisted the same use of musical instruments. In this sense, as well, Orthodox liturgy has not changed.

At the same time, from a more focused or detailed point of view, there are instances of significant and dramatic change in Orthodox worship. For example, when one reads the fourth-century account of the pilgrim Egeria regarding the Vespers entrance as it was celebrated in Jerusalem,<sup>3</sup> or the accounts of the same rite in *Apostolic Constitutions* written around the same time,<sup>4</sup> one notices not only differences in the entrance from one great urban center to the next, but, more to the point, how dramatically differently the entrance is celebrated today,<sup>5</sup> even the fact that in daily services it is missing.

Moreover, the Vespers service itself has undergone so many significant stages of evolution and restructuring that, especially considering the contrasting dimensions of cathedral and monastic practice—and then the subsequent aspects of fusion between these practices—Vespers of the distant past most likely would be unrecognizable as such to the average churchgoer today. For example, ancient witnesses tell us that toward the end of the first Christian millennium, one could in some places encounter Vespers celebrated daily with eight antiphons leading into the evening entrance, and another set of three antiphons with “Only-Begotten Son” and the Trisagion after the prokeimenon and before the readings. Just this one snapshot of ancient Vespers reveals significant differences from current practice, meaning that change has been at work.

The same sort of liturgical consideration reveals dramatic change in music as well. For example, after the conversion of Kievan Rus' in 988, what starts as

an attempt to mimic Byzantine chant eventually evolves into monophonic Znamenny chant, a new system. After that, most Slavs embraced indigenous polyphony, as well as part-singing in the Western manner. This further evolved into complex styles of choral anthem singing, and eventually into a unique manner of harmonizing or polyphoning ancient chant in choral settings of two or more voice parts (for example, the compositions of Kastalsky). Therefore, any subsequent style after Znamenny chant reveals significant musical change from the original chant material. Liturgy simply sounds much different in many churches today, especially in numerous Slavic or Slavic-influenced churches, than it did at various times in the past. And that unavoidably is an indication of change at work as well.

Therefore, even if one may argue in broadly conceived terms that liturgy does not embrace change, the truth from a more detailed viewpoint is that indeed change is an inherent reality of the ongoing liturgical experience handed down from one generation to the next. Perhaps it is even a natural law of liturgy and life. In short, liturgies evolve as the Church and the human condition evolve, and that allows for change.

### Liturgy and adaptability

If one sees change as liturgy's ability and even willingness to adapt to local and evolving circumstances and recognizes that music will also vary as part of the adaptation process, then change is not a problem per se. Consider this famous observation by liturgist Anton Baumstark:

*It seems to be the nature of liturgy to relate itself to concrete situations of times and places. No sooner had the vast liturgical domains come into being than they began to be divided up into smaller territories whose several forms of worship were adapted to local needs.*<sup>6</sup>

In this sense, we should not expect liturgy in musical or any other terms to be copied slavishly from one church to the next, or from one generation to the next, as certain forms of adaptation are conceived and enacted to help liturgy address the very people gathered for the sake of its celebration.

The problem comes, however, when change, usually as a result of external factors, creates a liturgical dilemma—or when change and tradition are conceived and presented as opposing liturgical factors. Continuing the discussion of Vespers, a study of evening worship as an ancient rite of the Church reveals that this service, arguably *with* an entrance,

is designed so that the faithful may experience and celebrate it each day, not simply once a week on Saturdays or on the eves of the great feasts. Consider the words of St. Basil:

*And when the day is ended, thanksgiving should be offered for what has been given us during the day for what we have done rightly, and confession made for what we have failed to do.*<sup>7</sup>

Or similarly the words of St. John Chrysostom:

*Let each one go to his affairs with fear and trembling, and so pass the time of day as one obliged to return here [to church] in the evening to give the master an account of the entire day and ask pardon for failures . . . every evening we must ask the master's pardon for all . . . faults. . . . Then we must pass the time of night in sobriety and thus be ready to present ourselves again at the morning praise.*<sup>8</sup>

Clearly, Vespers is designed to contextualize the Christian life by commemorating each sunset with thanksgiving and forgiveness, and by offering the chance for daily assemblage, so that the faithful may consult God during this transition from daytime to evening. At this evening gathering, of course, Christ, the Light who illuminates the paths of the faithful and liberates them from darkness, is elevated as the supreme Light without whom the faithful would be blind, which is one of Christianity's most powerful metaphors.

Yet, changes have occurred in our culture to such a degree that most Orthodox churches, at least in the United States, logically decline to hold daily Vespers, since most Orthodox Christians would be unable to attend due to their prohibitive schedules. In fact, in today's society, many of the faithful have no conscious awareness of when sunset even takes place—let alone when the church might sing Vespers—as the faithful are too often preoccupied and beset by long work hours, evening activities, and so forth. One is tempted, as a result, to compare daily Vespers, which is rooted in Orthodox liturgical tradition, to the cultural changes that have rendered it no more than a weekend or festal service (or



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in some churches, not a service at all). And in this equation, the concept of change has served to betray and to deteriorate tradition.

It becomes especially difficult for liturgical musicians when certain musical settings are plugged into the polemics of the tradition-versus-change conflict—that is, when certain musical settings become associated positively with tradition, and other settings become associated negatively with change. This type of polemic more often has to do with cultural bias and personal taste, rather than history and the actual functional integrity of music in worship. Therefore, it is necessary to distinguish the kind of change that deteriorates liturgical practice from the sort of evolutionary change that actually allows liturgy to progress and grow organically from one generation to the next. Change in and of itself is inherently neither liturgically good nor liturgically bad. Rather, it is the impact change has on the faithful and on the Church through worship that determines whether change is, in any given circumstance, a positive or negative condition.

### **Liturgy as the cause of change**

A relevant theological proposition that helps to uphold the balance between tradition and change actually speaks of change in the other direction. This theology proposes that liturgy changes the faithful, and that as the faithful change, so too will liturgy change. This change is organic, often imperceptible—but nevertheless critical—and indeed it is the theological intention of the ongoing liturgical experience that continually allows Christ and His gospel message to confront the Church. Consider the words of Aidan Kavanagh in this extended passage that auspiciously capitalizes on music imagery to make the point:

*The liturgy, the dwelling place of present and remembered encounter with the living God, itself begins to think and speak for the assembly and turns wholly into music, not in the sense of outward, audible sounds, but by virtue of the power and momentum of its inward flow. Then, like the current of a mighty river polishing stones and turning wheels by its very movement, the flow of liturgical worship creates in passing, and by the force of its own laws, cadence and rhythm and countless other forms and formations. . . .*

*What results from a liturgical act is not only “meaning,” but an ecclesial transaction with reality, a transaction whose ramifications escape over the horizon of the present, beyond the act*

*itself, to overflow even the confines of the local assembly into universality. The act both changes and outstrips the assembly in which it occurs. The assembly adjusts to that change, becoming different from what it was before the act happened. This adjustment means that subsequent acts of liturgy can never touch the assembly in exactly the same way as the previous act did.<sup>9</sup>*

For the liturgical musician, this theological precept suggests another level of musical presence in worship. Indeed, liturgical music by its own nature is a series of musical shapes that move over sacred text from one gesture or phrase to the next. But music also can become the expression of a larger and more powerful form of liturgical cadence as worship transacts with reality. This, done in God’s presence, actually changes those who worship Him. Therefore, following the meaning of this theology, music resonates with liturgy so as to become part of its inherent flow and power.

But how does music change or adapt itself so that it can continuously pulse at the heartbeat of liturgy whenever and wherever the faithful gather? One answer is that those who sing at worship must remain completely attentive to, and absorbed in, the dynamics of corporate prayer as it is taking place. And then they must sing accordingly, in the liturgical moment so to speak, and not by seeking to replicate a rigidly predetermined concept of the music as formulated ahead of time outside of liturgy, perhaps even at rehearsal. The point of the liturgical music rehearsal, in fact, should be to remove any technical impediments of pitch, rhythm, intonation, diction, and so forth, so that the music may truly live in the liturgical moment; the point is not to dictate how the music itself will be performed at liturgy.

In addition, an extension of the theological precept that Kavanagh articulates is that the assembly must not simply attend but must actually engage or participate in liturgy for theological change to occur. This does not mean a series of surface gestures that imply participation to the onlooker. More to the point, this also does not simply mean congregational singing—although that could be part of it—but it suggests that the assembly must at all times sing in their hearts, as the music rinses through their ears and souls, so that what the faithful hear and experience resonates as an expression of the natural pulse and flow of worship in the moment. The song in the heart, in other words, is the quintessential

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# BREATHING NEW LIFE INTO YOUR CHOIR

by Anne Schoepp

One Sunday after church, Nektarios approached me excitedly. After singing bass in our choir for almost twenty years, he had had a revelation. “You know how you’re always telling us to sing in our head? Well, I think I finally understand! I saw Chanticleer on TV, and that’s how they sing. All those things you say finally make sense to me!” Then it was my turn for a revelation: perhaps a new approach, a little audio example, would have helped my lessons!

Very few choir directors in the Orthodox Church are fully trained for their ministry. This vocation optimally requires training in music theory, vocal technique, conducting, liturgics, and liturgical history and theology. But here we are, trying to do the best we can with what we have, and it can be very frustrating at times.

In addition, different people learn in different ways, and a varied approach can help meet their varied needs. The voice is an internal instrument. We can’t see it or touch it. We rely on visual pictures and analogies to explain vocal technique. Sometimes men can learn better by a vocal example from a man than from a woman, and vice versa.

Even well-trained choir directors can get tired and overworked, and that often leads to getting stuck in a rut. A little help from outside can renew us and help us break that cycle. The bottom line is, varied stimulation can help everyone!

The purpose of this article is to provide ideas for a fresh approach, or for simply supplementing your current methods of teaching your choir. These ideas will never substitute for solid rehearsal technique, but they can supplement it and fill in the gaps. We will look at three ways to acquire new materials, methods, and inspiration: educate yourself, bring in others to teach in your parish, or take your choir members out to be educated. These three approaches can be used in any order at any time. Do

whatever you can, whenever you can, with the resources available to you!

## **Continuing Education for Yourself**

We all need to keep learning and filling in the gaps in our preparation to serve as choir directors. Even the most educated among us can collect new ideas and be inspired by other teachers and musicians. There are many ways to further your education. If you are not trained musically, look into the offerings at your local community college. You should be able to find classes in music theory, keyboard skills, vocal technique, and maybe even conducting. Or find a voice teacher through the Music Teachers Association. Many local conductors will accept private conducting students, even if they don’t offer a class. If cost is an issue, you could ask your parish to sponsor your studies for a specified length of time, especially if you serve as a volunteer.

Visiting other people’s rehearsals can help you develop your own rehearsal and conducting skills. Take note of the process of rehearsal that others use. Any rehearsal will do—orchestral, choral, or some other ensemble. Especially note which methods seem to be effective and which methods don’t. You will probably find both. Watch conducting technique and learn everything you can from it. My Italian friend used to say, “Be a cat.” Observe and critique everything you can.

Listen to liturgical and secular recordings of choral music. (See Recommended Recordings on page 9 for some good choices.) Listen for choral tone that you would like to have your choir strive for. Listen for good phrasing and diction. Listen to recordings of pieces that you would like your choir to learn, or that you already sing. Find different recordings of the piece and compare how they are sung.

Participate in another music ensemble, whether instrumental or vocal; it can provide inspiration and

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# Recommended Reading List

## **Music Theory, Harmony, and Composition**

- Brimhall, John, *John Brimhall's Complete Theory Notebook*. Hanson House, 1969.
- Harrison, Mark, *Contemporary Music Theory, Levels One–Three: A Complete Harmony and Theory Method for the Pop and Jazz Musician*. Hal-Leonard, 1999. A workbook suitable for class use, also recommended for classical theory & harmony.
- Schachter, Carl, and Edward Aldwell, *Harmony and Voice Leading*. Wadsworth Publishing, 3rd ed., 2002. Workbook also available.
- Schachter, Carl, and Felix Salzer, *Counterpoint in Composition*. Columbia University Press, 1989.
- Seaton, Douglass, *Ideas and Styles in the Western Musical Tradition*. Mc-Graw Hill, 1991. An overview that is a good read! Requires understanding of musical terms.
- Surmani, Andrew, with Karen Farnum Surmani and Manus Morton, *Alfred's Essentials of Music Theory, Complete*. Alfred Publishing Company, Inc. Purchase of Teacher Key and Ear Training CDs is recommended.

## **Conducting, Vocal, and Choral Technique**

- Chesnokov, *The Choir and How to Direct It*. University of Missouri, Kansas City. This is a special-order item. Call Don Lampman in Textbooks at 816-235-1404. They will print a copy for you.
- Cooksey, John, *Working with the Adolescent Voice*. Concordia Publishing House, 1992.
- Demorest, Steven M., *Building Choral Excellence: Teaching Sightsinging in the Choral Rehearsal*. Weston Noble, 2003.
- Dickau, David C. & Allan Robert Petker, *Choral Questions and Answers (vol. I)*. Director's Edition P5001 (Singer's Edition P1011 avail. separately). Pavane Publishing, 1990.
- Glick, Sara, Judith A. Herrington, & Allan Robert Petker, *Choral Questions and Answers (vol. II), for Young Voices*. Pavane Publishing, 1991.
- Dickau, David C. & Allan Robert Petker, *Choral Questions and Answers (vol. III), for the Rehearsal*. Pavane Publishing, 1992.
- Rundus, Kathatin & Allan Robert Petker, *Choral Questions and Answers (vol. IV), Voice Training for the Singer*. Pavane Publishing, 1995.
- Ehret, Walter, *The Choral Conductor's Handbook*. Edward B. Marks Music Company, 1959.
- Farberman, Harold, *The Art of Conducting Technique: A New Perspective*. Warner Brothers Publications, 2001. An introduction to gesture-based conducting.
- Howard, Elizabeth, and Howard Austin, *Born to Sing: Beginners to Advanced High and Low Voice*. Vocal Power Institute, 1985. Includes technique book with four CDs or cassettes.

continue your growth as a musician. When we teach others all the time, we can start to feel drained. I find that making music myself reverses this process and fills me up musically, so I can keep giving.

Liturgical training can be acquired by attending church music conferences such as St. Vladimir's Summer Institute, the Annual Summer School of Liturgical Music at Holy Trinity Monastery in Jordanville, New York, the Greek National Forum Church Music Institutes, the PSALM's West Coast Liturgical Singing Seminar, and other conferences. (See the list on page 16.)

The best resources that I have gained from attending church music conferences over the years are friendships with others who share the same ministry. These relationships are invaluable and continue to be a source of materials, information, and encouragement for years.

Make use of knowledgeable people in your area, such as your parish priest and other local priests and choir directors. Ask a lot of questions. Write, call, or e-mail people who are more distant. Most of these people are willing to help as much as they can. Use the PSALM Directory to identify those near you, or people with specific skills or similar situations.

If you haven't visited the PSALM e-list, give it a try ([orthodoxpsalm@yahoo.com](mailto:orthodoxpsalm@yahoo.com)). Many experienced and knowledgeable people participate. In fact, several excellent articles could already be written from the expertise shared there over the last few years. Everything from liturgical theology and rubrics to pitching your choir and filing your music has been discussed. No question is too simple. Anyone can view and search the archives, and members who have registered with Yahoo can post messages and music files.

Our PSALM website ([www.orthodoxpsalm.org](http://www.orthodoxpsalm.org)) is becoming a valuable resource as well. PSALM is developing an online Liturgical Music Resource that will "provide a comprehensive listing of music available through various dioceses and publishers; offer PDF files of liturgical sheet music that can be downloaded to personal computers for a nominal fee; and feature helpful annotations of an educational and rubrical nature." Please see the announcement on page 12 for more details.

Don't forget reading. Please see the Recommended Reading List beginning this page.

## **Invite a Guest Teacher**

Keeping ourselves fresh will help us lead better rehearsals, but sometimes it's great to have an expert

come in and give us a hand, or a break! It can be as simple as inviting someone into a regular rehearsal, or the guest can provide a focus for a longer Saturday choir workshop. Either way, make use of the skills of others.

We have a member of our parish who is a music theory and composition teacher at the local community college. He did a Saturday workshop for us on singing solfège. It was fun and started out easy, but became more challenging as we progressed. We learned sight-singing skills and more about singing in tune. Lunch together added a social aspect to the event, which we all enjoyed.

Guest instructors can work on specific things such as vocal technique, choral blend, music reading, sight-singing, intonation, diction, and phrasing. You name it. Pick your area of need and find someone to help. Sometimes a guest instructor who simply has great rehearsal technique can help the choir learn a batch of new music more quickly than usual, and give you some tips on how to work the music at future rehearsals.

Make use of people in your parish who may be knowledgeable in languages you sing in, liturgics, or other related topics. Perhaps your priest or a visiting priest could teach a session on the meaning or historical development of different parts of the liturgy. Perhaps a church reader could teach everyone some basic rubrics.

If you want to bring someone in from a distance, spread the cost around by getting together with choirs from other parishes for a workshop. Don't forget to have some fun by singing together, singing for each other, and sharing meals together. If you want to host a PSALM workshop, PSALM can help you tailor it to the needs of your choir.

Make use of months when there are no feasts. October is a great time for some general work on choral technique, because there isn't as much variable hymnography to grind through at each rehearsal. Late January and February can also be a good time for this kind of work.

It can be a good kick-off to the Nativity or Lenten and Paschal seasons to have a special Saturday morning rehearsal of seasonal music. Make sure to include donuts and coffee. If you have anyone who can help you, break out into section rehearsals to learn parts and rehearse sectional sound. Another choir member with keyboard skills can help teach parts, while you rehearse another group. Then switch. Take this time to rearrange each section for an effective blend or a more desirable tone.

- Long, R. Gerry, *The Conductor's Workshop*. Wm. C. Brown Company Publishers, Dubuque, IA, 1977. A workbook for conducting practice.
- Marshall, Madeleine, *The Singer's Manual of English Diction*. Schirmer Books, New York, 1953.
- Phillips, Kenneth H., *Teaching Kids to Sing*. Schirmer Books, 1992. Video cassette available.
- Rao, Doreen, *We Will Sing!* Boosey Hawkes, 1993.
- Rudolph, Max, *The Grammar of Conducting*. Schirmer Books, 1980. A traditional pattern-based method.
- Telfer, Nancy, *Successful Sight Singing, Books 1 & 2*. Neil A. Kjos Music Company, 1992 & 1993. Teacher and student volumes available.
- Telfer, Nancy, *Successful Warmups, Books 1 & 2*. Neil A. Kjos Music Company, 1995 & 1996. Teacher and student volumes available.

### **Orthodox Liturgical Music**

- Bailey, Mark, "Composing Orthodox Liturgical Music in the Contemporary World," *St. Vladimir's Theological Quarterly*, 40:1-2 (1996).
- Cavarnos, Constantine, *Byzantine Sacred Music*. The Institute for Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies, Inc., 1974.
- Conomos, Dimitri, "The Musical Tradition of Mount Athos," *Sourozh: A Journal of Orthodox Thought and Life*, 68 (May 1997).
- Conomos, Dimitri, *Byzantine Hymnography and Byzantine Chant*. Holy Cross Orthodox Press, 1984.
- Conomos, Dimitri, *Late Byzantine and Slavonic Communion Cycle*. Dumbarton Oaks Center Studies, 1985.
- Conomos, Dimitri, *Studies in Eastern Chant*. St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 2001.
- Dixon, Graham, "William Birkbeck: An Englishman's Impressions of the Russian Church and Its Music," *Sourozh: A Journal of Orthodox Thought and Life*, 67 (February 1997).
- Dolskaya, Olga, *Russian Sacred Choral Music: A Study of Performance Practice*. University of Missouri, Kansas City. This is a special order item. Call Don Lampman in Textbooks at 816-235-1404. They will print a copy for you.
- Drillock, David, "Liturgical Song in the Worship of the Church," *St. Vladimir's Theological Quarterly*, 41:2-3 (1997).
- Foley, Edward, *Foundations of Christian Music: The Music of Pre-Constantinian Christianity*. The Liturgical Press, Collegeville, MN, 1996.
- Harakas, Stanley, *Living the Liturgy*. Light and Life Publishing, Minneapolis, MN. An introduction to the Divine Liturgy for the faithful.
- Jungman, Josef A., *The Early Liturgy to the Time of Gregory the Great*. University of Notre Dame Press, 1962.
- Kavanagh, Aidan, *On Liturgical Theology*. Pueblo Publishing Co., reprint ed. 1992.
- Lungu, Costeau, and Croitoru (eds.), *Guide to Music of the Eastern Orthodox Church*. Holy Cross Orthodox Press, 1984.

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### **Recommended Reading continued**

- Mother Mary and Kallistos Ware, *The Festal Menaion*. St. Tikhon's Seminary Press, reprinted 1990. Introductory chapters entitled "The Worshipping Church," "The Orthodox Services and Their Structure," and "The Common of the Vigil."
- Mother Mary and Kallistos Ware, *The Lenten Triodion*. St. Tikhon's Seminary Press, reprinted 1999. Introductory chapters entitled "The Meaning of the Great Fast" and "The Structure of Lenten Offices."
- Mazza, Enrico, *The Origins of the Eucharistic Prayer*. The Liturgical Press, 1995.
- Morosan, Vladimir, *Choral Performance in Pre-Revolutionary Russia*. Musica Russica, Madison, CT, 1984.
- Williams, Benjamin D. & Harold B. Anstall, *Orthodox Worship: A Living Continuity with the Synagogue, the Temple and the Early Church*. Light and Life Publishing, 1990.
- Schmemmann, Alexander, *Introduction to Liturgical Theology*. St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, Crestwood, NY, 1986.
- Schulz, Hans-Joachim, *The Byzantine Liturgy*.
- Taft, Robert F., *Beyond East and West: Problems in Liturgical Understanding*. Pastoral Press, 1984.
- Taft, Robert F., *The Byzantine Rite: A Short History (American Essays in Liturgy)*. The Liturgical Press, 1992.
- Taft Robert F., *The Great Entrance*.
- Taft, Robert F., *Liturgy in Byzantium and Beyond*. (Collected Studies Series, 493) Variorum, 1995.
- Taft, Robert F., *The Liturgy of the Hours in East and West: the Origins of the Divine Office and Its Meaning for Today*. Liturgical Press, 2nd edition, 1986.
- von Gardner, Johann, *Russian Church Singing, vol. 1: Orthodox Worship and Hymnography*. St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1980.
- von Gardner, Johann, *Russian Church Singing, vol. 2: History from the Origins to the Mid-Seventeenth Century*. St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 2000.
- Wybrew, Hugh, *Orthodox Feasts of Jesus Christ and the Virgin Mary: Liturgical Texts with Commentary*. St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 2001.
- Wybrew, Hugh, *Orthodox Lent, Holy Week and Easter: Liturgical Texts with Commentary*. St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1997.
- Wybrew, Hugh, *The Orthodox Liturgy: The Development of the Eucharistic Liturgy in the Byzantine Rite*. St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1990.
- Wybrew, Hugh, *Risen with Christ: Eastertide in the Orthodox Church*. Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 2001.

Most books are available at Amazon.com.

Liturgical books are also available from:

St. Vladimir's Seminary Bookstore, 575 Scarsdale Road, Crestwood, NY 10707; (800) 204-2665 or [www.svots.edu/SVS-Bookstore/](http://www.svots.edu/SVS-Bookstore/)

If you would like to review a book for *PSALM Notes*, please contact: [PSALMNotes@orthodoxpsalm.org](mailto:PSALMNotes@orthodoxpsalm.org)

One summer we had a month of sectionals. Each week we rehearsed a different section and worked on their specific problems and difficult passages. It was very exciting at the end of the month to bring everyone back together and hear the improvement.

Bring recordings into rehearsal for your choir to listen to. Or schedule a short rehearsal at somebody's house with refreshments, candlelight, and a listening session afterwards. Give the choir an opportunity to critique the various selections. If you invite them to bring recordings too, it will give them ownership of the experience. It may be helpful to include a recording of your own choir in the listening session. One thing they never get to do is hear themselves sing! One little tape can achieve more than you could ever imagine.

### **Take Everyone Out!**

Take your choir out to a concert together. Try to find the best choral groups in your area, or take advantage of touring groups. Take some time afterwards to review the concert together.

Attend a choir workshop with your choir members. Bringing them with you greatly multiplies the benefit of an available teacher. Take advantage of opportunities that already exist, or as mentioned before, help plan a workshop with other local parishes. The recently formed PSALM Events Committee can recommend guest speakers and provide you with the resources to make a workshop happen in your area.

At a national level, it is unreasonable to expect whole choirs to travel great distances to receive training. The only way to make significant progress in training choir members is to bring the training to them. Our goal for PSALM is to enable members in all regions of the country to host regular PSALM workshops. You might form a local group of directors who can plan these events together, and possibly even rotate locations in different years. Working together is less demanding, can be a load of fun, and takes advantage of each director's skills. If you need help finding other directors in your area, let us help.

Other choir members or interested church members can also be instrumental and even essential in planning the logistics of an event. We had a woman in our parish who was an event planner. She loved being able to use this skill for the church. I loved having her take care of the logistics for the Liturgical Singing Seminars, so I could concentrate on the program. In our current location, Santa Rosa, California, St. Seraphim's parish is particularly



gifted at hospitality, and has wonderfully taken over that whole aspect of the seminar for us.

It is wonderful for a whole choir to visit other parishes together and experience other ways of doing things. Again, the relationships developed at these events also provide growth and support all year long. What a joy it was for our parish choir to sing with St. Seraphim's for the consecration of their beautiful temple! Then when it came time for us to consecrate ours, we already had the music available.

## Make Learning Fun

Whatever you do, try to make each rehearsal engaging, instructive, and rewarding. Break the cycle of just singing through everything to get it back into everyone's head. Make some music! Take at least a small section of some piece and work it until it is beautiful. That moment of beauty will encourage and inspire future work.

There isn't time in the Orthodox liturgical cycles to rehearse everything to perfection. We need to choose wisely what we spend rehearsal time on. This is why it is essential to train our choirs to sing well in general. It is in our own interest as choir directors to educate our singers as musicians. In the long run, skilled singers will make our job easier, learn more quickly, sing better with less rehearsal time, and spread beautiful singing through the churches.

Seven of our choir members have moved to other parishes for various reasons and have been turned into choir directors by the Parish Need Fairy. Some have instrumental skills from their childhood, but beyond that, their only training for the job is their experience in our parish choir. When I counted them up one day, it made me realize how important it is for me to continue training singers. Every little bit of information and every skill that I pass on can go a long way! The good news is that it is possible for each and every one of us to help educate our singers. If you learn one new thing, you have something to share! †

*Anne Schoepp is the chairman of the PSALM Events Committee. You can be a part of building PSALM's membership by hosting a PSALM workshop. She can be contacted at schoepp6@cruzio.com*

## Recommended Recordings

In this issue we will recommend recordings in original languages that provide a frame of reference for the development of liturgical music in America. In the next issue we will feature recommendations sung in English.

### Slavonic Recordings

#### Contributed by Vladimir Morosan

Musica Russica item numbers included. More detailed reviews can be found at MusicaRussica.com.

*Rachmaninov: Complete Orthodox Choral Works, Vol. 1: Canticles of Vespers, op. 37— #A75*

*Rachmaninov: Complete Orthodox Choral Works, Vol. 2: Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom and other works— #A76*

*All-Night Vigil for the Vladimir Icon of the Mother of God— #B45*

All sung by the Choir of St. Nicholas Church in Tolmachi, Alexei Puzakov, conductor. The Choir of St. Nicholas Church sings with a combination of technical excellence, choral artistry, and spiritual understanding of what the music is all about in its liturgical context. These recordings are exemplary examples of liturgical choral singing.

*Holy Easter, Monks of Holy Trinity-St. Sergius Lavra (directed by Fr. Matthew Mormyl')— #B22*

*Funeral Service, Monks of Holy Trinity-St. Sergius Lavra— #B60*

*Hymns of the All-Night Vigil, Monks of the Holy Trinity-St. Jonah Monastery, Ukraine— #D84*

These recordings are more fine examples of "liturgical" choral singing in the Slavic tradition.

*Vespers of Great and Holy Friday— #B36*

*Matins of Great and Holy Saturday— #B37*

*Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom (sung in English)— #I-14*

London Russian Orthodox (Patriarchal) Cathedral Choir, Fr. Michael Fortunatto, conductor. These "live" recordings provide a liturgical context for this music, although the singing is not technically as proficient.

*Russian Medieval Chant/Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom, Russian Patriarchate Choir, Anatoly Grindenko, conductor— #B05*  
Opus 111 OPS 30-20

This recording of Znamenny chant, sung in unison without ison, provides an interesting historical perspective: something one used to be able only to read about, but now can hear.

#### Contributed by Walter Obleschuk

*Ed. note:* Some of these recordings are out of print, but if you can find a copy, it is worth the search.

*continued on next page*

## Recommended Recordings continued

*Ancient and Monastic Orthodox Chants*, male choir “Drevneruski Rospev,” Anatoly Grindenko, Director, Saison Russe/CDM LDC 288003. The settings found on this recording span several centuries and illustrate the changes that occurred in musical styles in Russian church singing from unison chant to four-part choral singing over that time period; sung by an exemplary male choral ensemble.

*Vigil of the Protecting Veil of the Mother of God in the Monastery of the Caves in Kiev*, The Russian Patriarchate Choir, Anatoly Grindenko, Director, Opus 111, OPS 30-223.

This recording of an All-Night Vigil for the Feast of the Protection of the Theotokos coinciding with a Saturday evening Vigil is an excellent example of the proper pace at which a service should be sung by an ensemble that knows how to sing services properly.

*Romantic Choral Music from Russia*, The Russian Patriarchate Choir, Anatoly Grindenko, Director, Opus 111, OPS 30-110.

Nineteenth-century Russian choral repertoire sung as it should be, rather than the way it is commonly sung.

*Kiev Christmas Liturgy*, Moscow Liturgical Choir, Father Amvrosy, Director, Erato 2292-45961-2.

In actuality, the settings on this recording are portions of the Vespers Liturgy of St. Basil and the Vigil (Compline and Matins), rather than the Christmas Day Liturgy, taken from the 1901 *Notnii Obikhod* of the Kiev Caves Lavra.

This music, which offers a nice alternative to the Court Chant settings common to many American parishes, is sung by an experienced liturgical choir from Russia.

*Ed. note:* This disc is out of print, but all of the music plus four additional tracks are available on *Collection of Russian Choral Music*, same choir, RM cat. #D68.

*Early Russian Ecclesiastical Hymns (17th Century)*, male choir of staff members of the Publishing Department of the Moscow Patriarchate, N. Nosov, Director, RCD 15001.

*Come Let Us Worship (17th-century Liturgy)*, Heruvymy Ukrainian Female Quartet, Arktos 99038CD.

Although the music contained on either of these recordings of the Divine Liturgy would

not normally be sung liturgically today in most American parishes, nevertheless, these CDs can offer some insight into the drastic stylistic changes that occurred beginning around the turn of the seventeenth century in the church singing of the Eastern Slavs. These changes caused by foreign influences, in turn, have shaped our contemporary church singing. *Early Russian Ecclesiastical Hymns* contains examples of indigenous Russian polyphony (notated with neumes) which was musically unlike the polyphony in the West of the same period. *Come Let Us Worship* is a recording of a Liturgy written in the new Western harmonic style of singing introduced into Russia from Poland and Lithuania through Ukraine and through it, an increased use of staff notation. Comparing the two styles of singing, one can see the resulting clash of style and culture that Dr. Vladimir Morosan describes in his excellent article, “*Penie and Musikiia: Aesthetic Changes in Russian Liturgical Singing During the Seventeenth Century*,” *St. Vladimir’s Theological Quarterly*, 23:3-4, 1979.

## Byzantine Recordings

The following recordings are compiled by Anne Schoepp, with recommendations by John Boyer and Fr. Apostolos Hill via Liturgica.com. This again, is a source listing of Byzantine chant sung in original languages. Listening to different performing groups will provide an understanding of the variations in style from place to place. More detailed recommendations of each recording can be found at Liturgica.com.

### The Greek Byzantine Choir—directed by Lycourgos Angelopoulos

*The Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom*—new release, highly recommended

*The Akathistos Hymn* (also released as *Messe Byzantine/Hymn Akathiste*)

*Feast of St. George of Chozeba*—a live recording of this monastery’s patronal feast

*Music of the Byzantine Liturgy*

*Hymns to the Holy Mother of God*—composed by Iakovos Protopsaltis

*Ioannis Koukouzelis: The Byzantine Maestro*—Mathimata, Psalms, Sticheron, Karatima

*Christmas Hymns*

*Passion Hymns*—only available on cassette, but a particularly beautiful recording  
Lycourgos Angelopoulos, Protopsaltis at the Church of Saint Irene in Athens, formed the Greek Byzantine Choir with the aim of presenting to the public the traditional Byzantine music as it has been transmitted until the present day by both the oral and the written tradition. The singing is both clear and compelling. Although some of these discs are out of print, cassettes of these and more are available from Holy Transfiguration Monastery at thehtm.org. Highly recommended by Protopsaltis John Boyer.

**Sr. Marie Keyrouz**

*Byzantine Chant—Passion and Resurrection*—sung in Arabic and Greek (recommended by Fr. Apostolos Hill)

*Chants: Sacré de l’Orient* (sung in Arabic and Greek)

Sr. Marie is a Melkite nun who sings beautifully in Arabic in an open tone accessible to the Western ear. These recordings are an Arabic representation of the traditional melodies.

**Choir of Vatopedi Monastery, Mt. Athos**

*Holy Pascha* (recommended by Fr. Apostolos Hill)

*Christmas Hymns*

*Epiphany Hymns*

*Holy Monday*

*Holy Saturday*

*Hymns of Holy Week*

This series reflects monastery practice and

each CD includes a book with full text and Byzantine notation.

**Monks of Simonopetra Monastery, Mt. Athos**

*Agni Partheni* (highly recommended by

Fr. Apostolos Hill)

*Hymns from the Psalter* (recommended by

Fr. Apostolos Hill)

*Divine Liturgy*

*Great Vespers*

*Paraklesis*

*Service of Saint Simon*

*Sunday Matins*

Another monastic series, which when compared to the chanting of the Vatopedi Fathers, will reflect the differences in style even between monasteries on Athos.

**Theodoros Vassilikos with the Byzantine Music Choir**

*Hymns of Great Lent*

*Matins and Holy Mass of the Lord’s Resurrection*

*Oh Sweet Spring of Mine*, vols. 1 and 2, Hymns of the Passion

*The Divine Liturgy*

*The Office of the Lesser Paraklesis*

*Christmas and Epiphany Hymns*

*Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom*

A series produced by one of the foremost contemporary chanters in Greece, reflecting city practice.

**Ormylia—Convent of the Annunciation**

*Akatalipton Esti*: That which is fulfilled in thee is beyond the understanding of angels

*St. Maria Magdalene*—vols. 1 and 2

A choir of nuns singing in a rich, but somewhat heavy alto tone, in a more syllabic style. †

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## PSALM Notes

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*The articles and opinions expressed herein do not necessarily reflect the views of the editors. While the editors assume responsibility for the selection of the articles included, the authors assume responsibility for facts and interpretations that appear in their articles.*

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**Submission Deadline for PSALM Notes Vol. 8 No. 2: June 15, 2003**

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## *PSALM's Online Liturgical Music Resource Receives Grant*

**W**e are thrilled to announce that PSALM has been awarded a grant of \$15,000 from the Virginia H. Farah Foundation in support of the development of an online Liturgical Music Resource (LMR).

The Liturgical Music Resource Project addresses the need for a central resource for musical materials (particularly sheet music) and the need for pooling the resources of all Orthodox musicians and dioceses. While this project has been in progress for several years, the grant from the Farah Foundation will help to accelerate the completion and public launch of this technically complex undertaking. The LMR will provide a comprehensive listing of music available through various dioceses and publishers; offer PDF files of liturgical sheet music that can be downloaded to personal computers, free of charge or for a nominal fee; and feature helpful annotations of an educational and rubrical nature.

Driven by a master database comprised of nearly 2500 liturgical hymn categories, the LMR will ultimately contain music for the entire cycle of liturgical services. Eventually, it will offer thousands of pieces from all traditions that are appropriate for a wide variety of parish situations, from large mixed choir to unison chant to congregational singing. All music in the primary music database will undergo thorough editorial scrutiny for accuracy and quality, will be typeset and published to industry standards,

and will have been reviewed by a committee of expert musicians and clergy.

The LMR will also provide a place for composers, arrangers, and adapters to share their music at no cost to them or to the user, and will provide a site where the various Orthodox dioceses and jurisdictions can post their own music publications and translations.

When asked for comment, John Erickson, Dean of St. Vladimir's Orthodox Theological Seminary and a composer himself, said, "Hats off to PSALM! I know of no other organization that has done more to raise the level of Orthodox liturgical singing in this country. This project has the potential to cut across jurisdictional and national lines and serve all Orthodox musicians and clergy."

The team of volunteer consultants that have been working on the development of the LMR for the past eighteen months includes Vladimir Morosan, Project Manager (Connecticut), Michael Farrow (Virginia), Kevin Lawrence (North Carolina), Walter Obleschuk and Theodore Feldman (Massachusetts), Kurt Sander (Kentucky), and attorney Michael Khoury (Michigan).

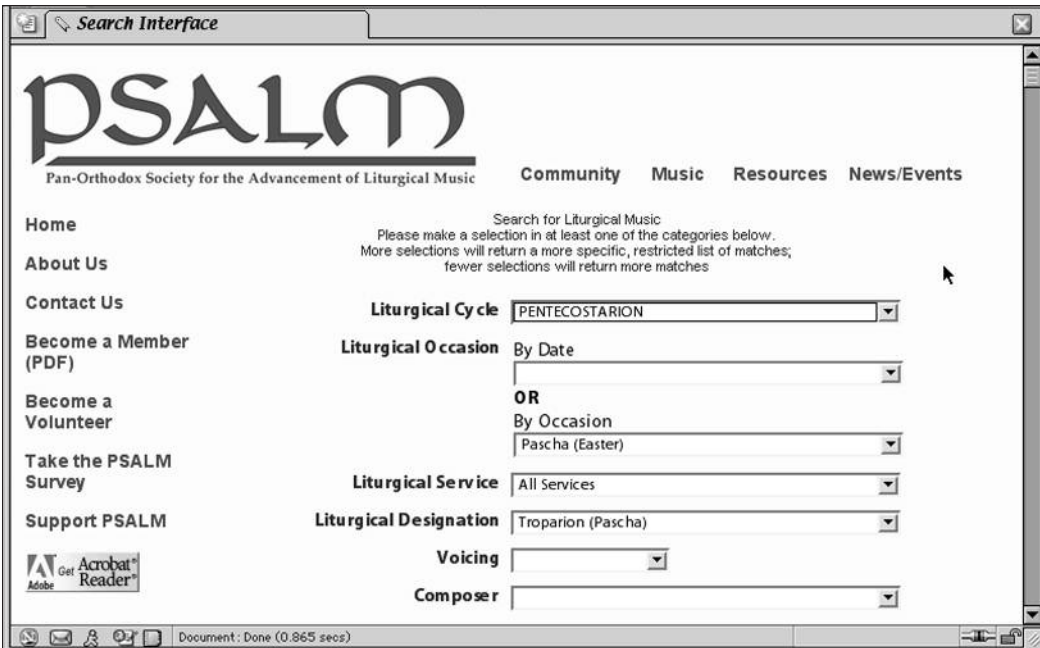
For more information on PSALM's online Liturgical Music Resource, contact Vladimir Morosan, Project Manager, at (203) 458-3225 or via e-mail at [vlad@musicarussica.com](mailto:vlad@musicarussica.com).

### **A Gift That Keeps on Giving . . .**

The Liturgical Music Resource will be a gift for all of us—clergy, monastics, choir directors, singers, readers, chanters, composers, and arrangers. **We need your help** to make this gift to the entire Church by September of this year. Grant funds only cover two-thirds of the project costs, and must be supplemented by donations from PSALM members and supporters.

Please consider supporting the Liturgical Music Resource with a tax-deductible contribution and give a gift that will keep on giving for generations to come! You can use the enclosed envelope or send your gift to:

**PSALM, 21 Winding Way, Andover, NJ 07821-4044**

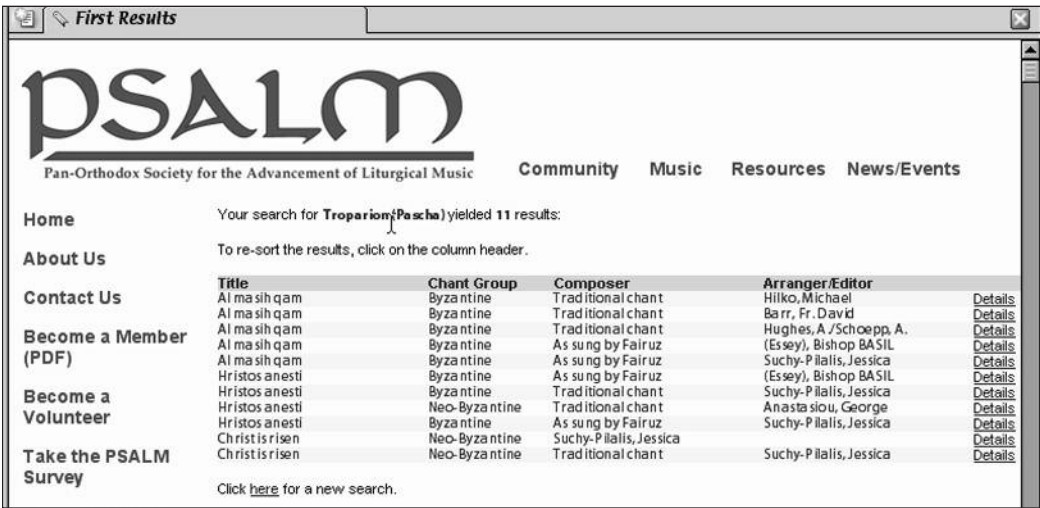


**A Sneak Preview of PSALM's Online Liturgical Music Resource**

A picture is worth a thousand words. To give our readers an idea of what the Resource will look like and what it will be able to do, here are some actual screen shots of the website, as it currently undergoes its final stages of development, thanks to generous funding by the Virginia H. Farah Foundation.

**From Search**

Search from over 2500 different liturgical categories.



**To Results**

Display the results of your search.



**To Details**

View the details of a specific musical setting.

**To Download**

Download a PDF of your selection.

# ✠ ✠ ✠ ✠ *PSALM Strategic Planning Survey* ✠ ✠ ✠ ✠

## **Dear PSALM Members,**

It is time for PSALM to create a strategic plan for the next 3–5 years. Our last plan was written in 1999, and enabled us to focus on web-site development, building an advisory council, forming the PSALM e-list, publishing through PSALM Music Press, and developing *PSALM Notes*. As we prioritize our goals for the coming years, we would appreciate your input through participation in this brief survey.

## **Parish information:**

How many singers are in your choir? \_\_\_\_\_ How often do you rehearse? \_\_\_\_\_

What type(s) of music do you typically use? \_\_\_\_\_

## **PSALM Website:**

Do you anticipate being able to use the online Liturgical Music Resource as described on page 12 or at ? Yes \_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_

If not, why? \_\_\_\_\_

## **PSALM Notes:**

Which types of articles have you found most applicable and helpful to your work in your parish? \_\_\_\_\_

Which types of articles have helped broaden your liturgical knowledge? \_\_\_\_\_

## **PSALM Events:**

What type of instruction would you find most helpful at a PSALM workshop? \_\_\_\_\_

How far would you travel to a workshop that matched your needs or interests? \_\_\_\_\_

Please mail this survey to PSALM, Inc., 343 Blair St., Felton, CA 95018 or respond by e-mail to XXXXX@XXXX, by May 30, 2004.

## *PSALM Annual Meeting 2004*

### *A chance to meet face to face, sing, pray, and plan for the future!*

Join PSALM Board members and Advisory Council members for a one-day meeting and workshop on Friday, June 25, 2004, from 2:00–9:30 P.M., at St. Vladimir's Orthodox Theological Seminary in Crestwood, NY. Registration is \$\_\_\_\_\_ and includes dinner on Friday evening. Liturgical Music Institute participants who are staying overnight on Friday will need to make arrangements with the seminary. To register, contact Anne Schoepp at schoepp6@cruzio.com or call \_\_\_\_\_. Visit [www.orthodoxpsalm.org](http://www.orthodoxpsalm.org) for more details.

#### **Agenda**

- 2:00 P.M. Committee Reports
- 3:30 P.M. Focus groups: Give us your ideas about Events, Publications, and Resources!
- 4:30 P.M. Vespers
- 5:15 P.M. Dinner
- 6:30 P.M. Demonstration/sneak preview of Online Liturgical Music Resource
- 7:30 P.M. Music reading session
- 9:30 P.M. Reception

# Koinonikon for the Ascension

Psalm 47

Gregory Ealy

$\text{♩} = 84 - 92$

God has gone up with a shout,

The first system of musical notation for the koinonikon, featuring a treble and bass clef with lyrics: "God has gone up with a shout,"

the Lord with the sound of the trumpet.

The second system of musical notation for the koinonikon, featuring a treble and bass clef with lyrics: "the Lord with the sound of the trumpet."

After the final refrain:

Al - le - lu - ia, Al - le - lu - ia,

The first system of musical notation for the Alleluia, featuring a treble and bass clef with lyrics: "Al - le - lu - ia, Al - le - lu - ia,"

Al - le - lu - ia.

The second system of musical notation for the Alleluia, featuring a treble and bass clef with lyrics: "Al - le - lu - ia."

**Composer's Note:** This koinonikon may be sung responsorially to the verses of Ps. 47:1-9 (skipping verse 5 to avoid redundancy). The reader may intone the koinonikon by chanting the soprano melody, followed by the choir singing the same thing in all four parts. After the final verse, the choir and congregation should sing the threefold "Alleluia."

# Courses of Study in Orthodox Liturgical Music

## **Hellenic College/Holy Cross Greek Orthodox Theological Seminary**

50 Goddard Avenue  
Brookline, MA 02445  
Phone: 617-731-3500  
Fax: 617-850-1460  
Website: [www.hchc.edu](http://www.hchc.edu)

**Courses of Study:** Master of Arts in Church Services

## **Holy Trinity Monastery and Seminary**

82 Robinson Rd.  
Jordanville, NY 13361-0036  
Phone: 315-858-0940  
Fax: 315-858-0505  
E-mail: [orthrus@telenet.net](mailto:orthrus@telenet.net)

**Contact:** Fr. Andre Papkov

54 Fourth St.  
Ilion, NY 13357

Phone: 315-894-6274

E-mail: [musicschool@msn.com](mailto:musicschool@msn.com)

**Description:** Annual Summer School of Liturgical Music accredited by the Univ. of the State of New York. Offers certification and academic credit.

**Courses of Study:**

1. History of Russian Church music
2. Music theory and musicianship
3. Choir conducting techniques and practicum
4. Voice class
5. Liturgical performance practice
6. Church Slavonic
7. Liturgics for choir directors

## **St. Herman's Orthodox Theological Seminary**

414 Mission Rd.  
Kodiak, AK 99615-9985  
Phone: 907-486-3524  
Fax: 907-486-5935

Website: [www.alaskanchurch.org/pages/diocese/Institutions/StHermans/index.htm](http://www.alaskanchurch.org/pages/diocese/Institutions/StHermans/index.htm)

**Courses of Study:** Four-year program of Orthodox studies leading to a diploma. Two-year program provides reader certification. One-year program for singers and readers, using Russian and Alaskan chants.

## **St. Romanos Chanter's Training Program**

Antiochian Archdiocese—Western Region

**Contact:** Father David Barr

P.O. Box 458

Ben Lomond, CA 95005

Phone: 831-336-2228

Fax: 831-336-2678

E-mail: [frbarr@bigfoot.com](mailto:frbarr@bigfoot.com)

**Course of Study:** Classes and correspondence lessons on chanting the tones include written lessons; workshops at Parish Life Conferences; deanery Chanter's Seminars offered throughout the year; use of cassette tapes; and training on the parish level where a qualified teacher exists.

## **St. Romanos the Melodist Society**

10707 Lombardy Road  
Silver Spring, MD 20901

Phone: 301-754-3741

Fax: 301-754-0056

E-mail: [SaintRomanos@aol.com](mailto:SaintRomanos@aol.com)

Website: [www.saintromanos.org](http://www.saintromanos.org)

**Contact:** Fr. George Johnson

**Courses of Study:** Annual music seminar

## **St. Tikhon's Orthodox Theological Seminary**

P.O. Box 130

South Canaan, PA 18459-0130

Phone: 570-937-4411

Fax: 570-937-3100

E-mail: [dies@stots.edu](mailto:dies@stots.edu)

Website: [www.stots.edu](http://www.stots.edu)

**Courses of Study:** Academic program includes extension courses in liturgical music. Distance learning (under development) and extension courses in liturgical music.

## **St. Vladimir's Orthodox Theological Seminary**

575 Scarsdale Rd.

Crestwood, NY 10707-1699

Phone: 914-961-8313

Fax: 914-961-4507

E-mail: [info@svots.edu](mailto:info@svots.edu)

Website: [www.svots.edu](http://www.svots.edu)

**Courses of Study:** Offers full-time MA Program in Liturgical Music (part-time with permission), an Annual Liturgical Institute of Music and Pastoral Practice (June), and Extension Courses in liturgical music.

See the  
calendar on the  
back page for  
details of some  
of this year's  
conferences.



# Tradition and Change

continued from page 4

indication of engagement and participation. Also, the way we sing, and the quality of our singing, can either grab hold of the faithful and draw them in, or it can push them away. Kavanagh therefore points out that change should never jeopardize the liturgical participation of the assembly:

*Ritual systems such as liturgy do change, of course, but the change which is appropriate to them is the result of extremely long-term processes generated within those systems by the people who create and use them. This sort of change enhances participation rather than jeopardizes it because it is generated among the participants themselves, and its course is so subtle that it is rarely remarked upon. The change which all ritual systems resist is external change prosecuted too rapidly and in too great quantity.<sup>10</sup>*

Liturgical or musical change should not, in other words, cause the assembly to go into shock, no matter how well justified the change may be in principle.

For instance, many members of the Orthodox Church in America (OCA), as a result of a certain type of emphasis on eucharistic theology, now participate in weekly or frequent Communion, which reflects an ancient Christian discipline. This condition should prompt the consideration of revitalizing the Kiss of Peace among the assembly as well, which is not currently practiced in most OCA churches. For the assembly not to exchange the Kiss, in fact, is to ignore the liturgical imperative that they must first forgive and reconcile in order to commune. Without the rite of forgiveness and reconciliation, eucharistic participation can be misconstrued as a primarily individualistic, rather than corporate, rite—that is to say, something individuals do in the company of other individuals, rather than as one united body. (Not that the Kiss of Peace is entirely responsible for one perception versus the other, but it certainly leans toward corporate awareness.)

Yet, if the OCA were suddenly to reinstate the Kiss of Peace with little warning or explanation, the faithful would likely be flabbergasted and shaken, thus jeopardizing their overall liturgical participation. Even though the practice already exists in Orthodoxy's past and can be justified in theological terms, its sudden reintroduction might yield the opposite results of its intention. This does not suggest ignoring the need for this sort of change, but that somehow it should happen more judiciously and without

perceived threat to the worshipping community.

The same holds true for liturgical music. Consider hypothetically that a Slavic-oriented parish sings music primarily in four-part nineteenth-century Obikhod/Common Chant style. And perhaps the choir director wishes to introduce some ancient monophonic chant from the Byzantine repertoire in syllabic or neumatic style, which, in purely practical terms, will help when not all four vocal parts can be covered by those present, and will also encourage congregational singing at responsorial antiphons and other forms of liturgical dialogue through the presence of a distinguishable and singable melody. If the chant, however, confronts the ears of the worshippers with an intensity that is outside their musical and liturgical experience and current aesthetic capabilities, and if it in fact causes them to reject the liturgical component out of strong dislike for the music being sung, then the purpose for introducing the chant has been defeated.<sup>11</sup> Conceivably, there are many steps between Obikhod/Common Chant harmony and modal chant that need to and can be put into place to guide the assembly with a great deal of patience from one liturgical style toward the other, without diminishing the liturgical component the music is designed to express.

Therefore, to help avoid congregational shock and paralysis over elements that should otherwise reflect reasonable change, Kavanagh offers the following advice to parish priests, which applies equally well to parish musicians:

*Pastoral responsibility [in liturgical terms] rests upon two bodies of knowledge, the first being knowledge about the liturgy itself and the second being knowledge about the state of the assembly which worships. The two are in fact one knowledge in past and present tenses. . . . It is here that the demanding discipline of knowing with a clear-eyed and dispassionate objectivity how the church has worshipped in the past, and how it must worship now, becomes a crucial quality for liturgical ministers lest local particularity degenerate into idiosyncrasy.<sup>12</sup>*

This advice suggests, therefore, a necessary sensitivity toward liturgical and musical change at the local and universal levels, so that the way in which a particular parish worships might reflect rather than contradict the Church as a whole, and that a certain practice or manner of singing might relate to liturgical principle rather than communicate as liturgical oddity. All of this requires a great deal of patience and understanding.

**Liturgical or musical change should not cause the assembly to go into shock, no matter how well justified the change may be in principle.**

“**T**radition” is often used to mean a style, a practice, a custom, a law, a habit, a preference, a category, a genre, or simply the way a person has done something most often in his or her lifetime.

### **Tradition as a component of liturgy**

“Tradition” is an important word and concept in the Orthodox Church. The problem is that the Orthodox apply it so broadly and in such relative or even abstract terms that “tradition” can actually mean a style, a practice, a custom, a law, a habit, a preference, a category, a genre, or simply the way a person has done something most often in his or her lifetime. In other words, the broad use of “tradition” relies too heavily on context to determine what it actually means in each instance. As a result, many Orthodox have adopted a makeshift distinction between so-called “big T” and “small t” tradition, implying that the former can be justified by universally accepted liturgical principles and theories, while the latter relies more on local custom and habit. The difficulty lies in that small-t tradition fails to distinguish between those local practices that are well suited to liturgy, even if they are not universally known and accepted, and those that betray the spirit of liturgy through ignorance and bias. True, the use of small-t tradition suggests a betrayal of big-T tradition, but that need not be the case by definition. Therefore, greater specificity is still needed.

Jaroslav Pelikan’s well-known quote, which has deservedly earned the status of a maxim, comes much closer to the point. He says, “Tradition is the living faith of the dead; traditionalism is the dead faith of the living.”<sup>13</sup> In liturgical terms, the distinction that Pelikan draws between tradition and traditionalism raises the issue of active awareness as opposed to passive acceptance. This yields the following idea: that inherent in the concept of liturgical *tradition* is a conscious awareness and acceptance of the principles a particular tradition represents, while *traditionalism* is simply blind adherence to a repetitive act at the visceral or presumptive level. In other words, Pelikan’s maxim calls on the faithful, and especially the ministers among them, to understand specifically what a tradition means and which set of liturgical principles or precepts it represents in universal and enduring terms. Even more importantly, it requires anything we label as “tradition” to be axiomatic, so that one may locate somewhere in its repetitive act the authority and principled logic of an unwritten law that instructively serves liturgy in a concrete manner.

### **Liturgical tradition and liturgical music**

Therefore, for liturgists and musicians to discuss the concept of tradition in a way that enables insight

into what we actually do in liturgy, how we do it, and why we do it, we must, in the context of this discussion, put aside the notion of tradition as a style or category—in other words its use in overly general terms such as “the Byzantine tradition” or “the Slavic tradition”—not because there is anything wrong with this terminology per se, but because its broad use brings us no closer to achieving clarity. Rather, as aforementioned, one should think of a tradition as a repetitive liturgical act and locate in that act an axiom, some sort of self-evident or universally recognized liturgical principle or instruction that grounds our corporate participation in that very act. This assists those who serve specific roles and functions in worship and who make critical decisions on behalf of the worshippers—priests and liturgical musicians chief among the decision-makers—affecting how the faithful experience and participate in the sacred gathering. As well, it honors rather than tinkers with the essential structural features of liturgy.

### **Tradition and practice**

Creating a distinction between a generalized idea of tradition and a more specific conception of axiomatic liturgical tradition allows church musicians to distinguish even further between tradition and practice. Indeed, in the context of this discussion, every liturgical tradition begins as a practice, but not every practice becomes a liturgical tradition. Ideally, a practice is created in response to a liturgical need or compulsion, such as assigning a certain hymn to accompany and even enable a certain sacred act. As the hymn is repeated in association with that act, the practice may reveal an axiom or a liturgical principle that fuses the hymn and the act together so that they are one, and that their oneness forms a universal liturgical precept. And thus a liturgical tradition is born.

For instance, liturgical tradition asks the faithful to sing “Holy God” repeatedly in a solemn, processional manner at funerals and on Holy Friday when the faithful move around the church. An instruction that results from the tradition is that the music and the way it is sung should compel the physical act of the procession and suggest the solemnity of the moment. In other words, the people should gently move step by step in the manner of the music, and the music should move and sing in the manner of the liturgical act. History indeed confirms that “Holy God” was the solemn musical selection of choice in ancient times as the Christian faithful moved

together in procession around Constantinople.

We may also express tradition in contrasting forms, as long as the central axiom remains intact. At the point of its liturgical inception, “Holy God” included psalm verses and was sung in antiphonal-responsorial style. An indication of this practice exists today when the bishop celebrates the Divine Liturgy and, at “Holy God,” he chants the verse, “Turn again, O God of Hosts. Look down from heaven, and see; have regard for this vine.”<sup>14</sup> In fact, our Christian ancestors very likely sang several verses of Psalm 79(80) to “Holy God” during the Divine Liturgy, although the verses have now been dropped in most places. Therefore, “Holy God” has endured change from its original form. Perhaps a better historical realization of the tradition in fact would be to restore the psalm verses (and such restoration is certainly a possibility for us today), but as long as the axiom remains apparent—that the faithful and/or clergy may move in solemn procession as “Holy God” is sung (and perhaps that they might sing it also as a hymn refrain)—then change has not jeopardized tradition. More to the point, this type of understanding should greatly influence the music chosen for “Holy God” and the way we sing it.<sup>15</sup>

Another example also serves the point. It is certainly the liturgical tradition of the Orthodox Church to sing “Gladsome Light” at the completion of the vespereal entrance that takes place during the lamplighting hymns (Psalm 140(141) et. al.). This was not always the case, however. Although this hymn is at least as old as St. Basil the Great and probably older than that, there is no concrete evidence that it was sung in Constantinople as a component of evening worship until several hundred years later. At some point, therefore, due to various influences, urban practice in Constantinople added the singing of “Gladsome Light” to the entrance as the clergy moved into the altar area. Therefore, to suggest that this act and the singing of this particular hymn have become liturgically cohesive is to acknowledge the axiom of tradition embedded in the hymn’s famous text, which happens to describe the very act it accompanies: “Now that we have come to the setting of the sun and behold the light of evening, we praise God . . .” In addition, the text’s opening proclamation, “Gladsome” or “Joyous Light,” and the phrases that unfold after it invoke one of Christianity’s most profound metaphors, that Christ is Light and without Him we are blinded by darkness, obviously linking the hymn to the liturgi-

cal moment at which it is sung—that is, sunset. Therefore, this liturgical act and liturgical song in repetitive practice have formed a profound coherence that leads to axiomatic revelation, allowing the faithful to sing the very act they are witnessing as it transforms them. This too is tradition at work.

Furthermore, it is also the liturgical tradition of the Orthodox Church to sing “Gladsome Light” in a solemn, though not sad, processional manner that invites all the faithful to join in the actual singing. Here the traditional aspect of musical procession is the same as aforementioned concerning “Holy God.” The traditional aspect of “Gladsome Light” that entices all to sing, however, is also apparent in the text of the hymn. The words, which are rendered in first person plural whenever referring to the faithful gathered, focus directly on the voice and actions of the assembly in response to the evening light and its metaphorical connection to Christ: “Now that *we* have come to the setting of the sun, and *we* behold the light of evening, *we* praise God.” In other words, the text clearly shows that the faithful are not the intended *audience* of the hymn but its intended *voice*. And history also confirms this tradition. There are, for instance, at least two ancient Sinai manuscripts, reflecting a sort of fusion of monastic and sung practices, stating that the people, not just the chanters, sing “Gladsome Light” at the appropriate time. Since this hymn was repeated verbatim at all vespereal gatherings, and since we can assume standardized musical settings of it, there were no practical impediments to full assembly participation.

One may debate, however, whether certain particular ways of singing “Gladsome Light” represent liturgical tradition or simply liturgical custom or practice. For example, the Transfiguration Cathedral Typikon of Khelm reveals that the deacon would intone the opening proclamation “Gladsome Light,” and then each subsequent line would be sung in one of the eight tones, progressing in Slavic order.<sup>16</sup> To call this “tradition,” one would have to observe whether some self-evident precept or truth exists in this practice to illuminate the act in a quintessential manner, perhaps even in a way superior to



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—Jaroslav Pelikan

**To understand liturgical tradition is to understand which musical settings to sing and how to sing them, so that they truly form a principled coherence with the sacred act to which they are assigned.**

other practices. This is especially important in practical terms, since it may not even be feasible to sing “Gladsome Light” in this style today, depending on the musical repertoire of a particular church.

For instance, if a church’s musical practice embraces ancient Slavic chant, which deals with a series of melodic kernels assigned within a particular tonal scheme, then it is conceivable that certain compatible kernels from the eight tones could be sewn together to create a unique, elaborate, and cohesive setting of “Gladsome Light”—as if to travel through the tones more as a technicality rather than as an audible realization. If on the other hand a choir and congregation were to try this method using Slavic Obikhod/Common Chant—which would be anachronistic—by reintoning and changing chords and keys for each line of text, a disjointed and even bizarre musical conglomeration would result. The Common Chant system simply is not designed to support this type of patchwork. Therefore, if there is a compelling reason to sing each line in a different tone for the axiom it may represent and enact, then perhaps it is worth the effort. If, on the other hand, this is a more or less self-contained practice or style of a certain time and region, then opting for an alternate style—as long as other fundamental elements of liturgical tradition are not in jeopardy—is a perfectly reasonable solution.

Sometimes the distinction between liturgical tradition and practice can legitimately question things otherwise taken for granted. As mentioned, the actual evening entrance at Vespers, or more precisely Great Vespers (the service of ancient urban or cathedral practice), now takes place as the Dogmatikon is sung, a hymn that may combine Old Testament imagery with the incarnation of Christ and the virginity of Mary. As a result, there exists a tradition of composing and singing elongated melodic Dogmatika settings, which are drawn out and made more elaborate to accompany the evening procession with solemnity. In the daily office of Vespers, however, when an entrance no longer takes place, some sing the elongated processional Dogmatika nevertheless. This introduces a liturgical incongruity, where tradition has been taken out of context and is no longer linked to the specific characteristic of the act it is meant to illuminate. Liturgical tradition, in other words, can and should be logical: if there is an entrance, sing entrance music; if there is no entrance, sing something else in terms of a more conventional compositional style.

## **Confronting complex issues argued as tradition**

To understand liturgical tradition, therefore, is to understand which musical settings to sing and how to sing them, so that they truly form a principled coherence with the sacred act to which they are assigned. This sort of understanding, when achieved objectively and reasonably, can also help shed light on problematic practices held in place by sentimentality and ignorance. For example, there are those who would contend that it is liturgically traditional for Orthodox churches, especially those of Slavic affiliation, to use choir lofts for their singers. Without doubt, the use of choir lofts has become a common practice, but it certainly is not Orthodox liturgical tradition in the context of this discussion.

Choir lofts resulted from the Orthodox brotherhoods that were created in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries in cities such as Lviv, Kiev, and Lutsk. These brotherhoods, which served “to unite the members of the Orthodox Church into a ‘sworn bond and union of indissoluble brotherly love,’”<sup>17</sup> helped to preserve Orthodoxy in the face of Polish and Lithuanian pressures to convert their areas of political control and influence to Roman Catholicism. The brotherhoods were centers for learning, charitable endeavors, and cultural activity, especially music and the training of young boys for church singing. One should note that many of the musical styles of Western Christianity had become popular among the Orthodox of those regions as well. The brotherhoods, therefore, cleverly strategized in many cases to capitalize on this condition by using well-known melodies from the West, but substituting the texts of these hymns with Orthodox doctrine in poetic form. The brotherhoods also sponsored the composition of new paraliturgical melodies. These tuneful part songs were conceived strophically with matching musical patterns; they were easy to sing and to remember.

The brotherhoods also built choir lofts in the churches, borrowing the practice from Western Europe. A few experienced chanters remaining on the kliros could sing the eight tones, the model pattern melodies (and so forth), and oversee the musical and rubrical complexities of the services, while a choral ensemble was added to a loft over the western doors to sing some of the standard unchanging hymns. The motivation for this move seems not to have been to serve worship in a more compelling manner, but rather to show off the excellent vocal and choral training that was taking place in the

brotherhoods among talented young choral singers who lacked the knowledge and experience to serve on the kliros. One can imagine, as well, that these excellent choral ensembles were intended to be heard and not covered by congregational singing. Therefore, the well-intentioned brotherhoods inserted a new level of musical participation between the kliros and the congregation that caused an inauspicious liturgical condition. Vladimir Morosan sums this up in the following words:

*The change in the positioning of the singers was an important departure from the traditional Orthodox understanding of the function of church singing. As long as the singers remained on the kliros at the front of the church, they functioned as coparticipants with the celebrating clergy in the performance of the liturgy. However, when the ensemble was removed to a choir loft, their role changed to that of musicians who merely accompanied or embellished the service. This important change of perspective, which first came into the Orthodox Church in southwestern Russia [or Ukraine] under the influence of Roman Catholicism, was later destined to change the entire character of Russian liturgical singing.*<sup>18</sup>

Indeed, the axiom that checks and argues against choir lofts is that the appointed singers, as a matter of ministry, should function in a way that is spiritually and consciously linked to the activity of the altar, so that they become a means of expressing that activity. The singers also should serve the faithful gathered by delivering to them the sacred liturgical texts in elevated sung manner and by leading them in the singing of responses and standard hymns. This logically implies physical proximity to the altar and to the people, whereas distance (that is, having singers tucked away in a choir loft) implies embellishment or liturgical ornamentation—a liturgical add-on of sorts. Even if the more experienced singers were to remain on the kliros and the choir singers were designated a few standard hymns from the loft, such as “Gladsome Light,” St. Simeon’s Prayer, the Lord’s Prayer, or even the troparia of the great feasts, this conceivably would diminish the liturgical tradition of congregational singing, which, on these very hymns and others like them, is led much more effectively from the kliros. And this is to say nothing of litanies and psalm antiphons that are designed specifically for audible congregational participation, not for miniature concerts by the choir from the rear of the church. Choir lofts, in the end, certainly represent what has become an Orthodox

custom, but one is hard pressed to locate an axiomatic truth on liturgy’s behalf that would qualify their existence as liturgical tradition.

One could continue this sort of discussion in regards to numerous liturgical and musical issues that confront the Church today. The caveat exists, however, that not all aspects of worship can be distinguished into neatly packaged ideas of practice versus tradition, with every tradition articulating an eloquent and immediately recognizable universal truth or instruction about our standards of worship. Sometimes one has to dig deeply before achieving even a basic idea of what a tradition truly represents. Seeking the truth behind that representation, nevertheless, is ultimately beneficial for the reasons so far discussed, and because it allows for liturgical reconciliation between tradition and change.



### **Conclusion: Three contentions**

Three contentions result from this discussion. First, change is an element of tradition. In response to a liturgical need or a particular condition, a practice is initiated—which represents change—and if that practice acquires axiomatic instruction, it will likely become a tradition over time. As well, traditions can change in the manner in which they are further realized and practiced in any number of churches and regions under any number of conditions. A responsorial psalm, for example, may be sung in all sorts of ways in all kinds of musical styles, as long as the traditional quality of verse-refrain dialogue remains intact.

Second, tradition needs to be an element of change. This discussion began by acknowledging in the theological realm the concept of the new world that is enabled each time the faithful gather in worship. But there is in more practical terms another type of new world that liturgical musicians now deal with, especially in the United States. Various contrasting Orthodox styles and manners of realizing liturgical tradition co-exist with greater awareness among the faithful, and the Orthodox representing these contrasting communities are interacting with greater frequency in the spirit of a unified faith. Suddenly, a lot more is Orthodox than most

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**The axiom is alive. And allowing the axiom to resonate in any manner or style of the act's realization is what makes a tradition a living tradition.**

worshippers ever realized. And suddenly, those who had only worshipped, say, through four-part harmonized choral settings now may experience Byzantine modal chant in the same liturgical locations, as something of course legitimately Orthodox and conducive to worship.

This exciting condition, unprecedented in certain ways, can be confusing as well. Is every piece of liturgical music from every Orthodox ethnic style from every historical period sung in every conceivable way equally valid for the Church today, just because it was sung in the Church yesterday? What criteria exist to help us select new styles and practices that are liturgically appropriate for a community right now? One would hope, therefore, that when a church is considering any sort of change, even to its musical repertoire by adding a different style of music in contrast to the existing style, that the church would consult tradition in search of concrete principles to guide the process and to inform not only what music to choose, but the manner in which to sing it.

Third, this discussion has proposed and emphasized that an axiomatic presence is a necessary quality of what we are calling liturgical tradition. The discussion in fact stipulates that a tradition should convey some sort of self-evident and perhaps even universally recognized principle that actually guides how that tradition is to be enacted and practiced repeatedly, and how it should shape and express worship. The axiom is *alive*. And allowing the axiom to resonate in any manner or style of the act's realization is what makes a tradition a *living* tradition. The liturgical tradition of responsorial singing, as mentioned, when it is called for, may be rendered in any number of musical styles and vocal configurations, depending on the ethos and inclinations of the worshipping community. As long as the faithful are engaged in active dialogue through verses and refrains, which of course is the design of responsorial singing, then the faithful are able to express this act as a living dimension of worship. If, however, the faithful are singing a musical setting that concertizes the refrain in such a way that barely anyone can sing along, or if it obscures the clarity of the verses through overly decorative musical elements, then the axiom or living element is lost, unless it responds to, and has been replaced by, an equally valid and compelling principle of liturgical instruction. And one must make that discovery to ensure against idiosyncrasy and meaningless liturgical and musical customs.

In the end, tradition, if understood in terms of

liturgy, should ensure that music serves as an essential and indispensable element of worship, actually bonding the faithful in audible song to the very liturgical act of their manifestation of faith. Furthermore, liturgical tradition insists, through the illumination of enduring and universal principles, that worship should come to life through the acts and rites intended to give it breath and expression. Not only should liturgy be sung, but liturgy's song should compel a new world. And tradition, principled and objectively rendered, makes this new world a life-altering place to be.

## Notes

- 1 This article is based on a talk delivered on June 26, 2003, at the St. Vladimir's Liturgical Institute of Music and Pastoral Practice, St. Vladimir's Orthodox Theological Seminary, Crestwood, NY.
- 2 Johann von Gardner, *Orthodox Worship and Hymnography*, vol. 1 of *Russian Church Singing*, trans. Vladimir Morosan (Crestwood: SVS Press, 1980), 13.
- 3 Nicholas Uspensky, *Evening Worship in the Orthodox Church*, tr. Paul Lazor (Crestwood, NY: SVS Press, 1985), 27–30.
- 4 *Ibid.*, 19–26.
- 5 The entrance currently is sung during the Dogmatikon at “Lord, I call” followed by “Gladsome Light.”
- 6 Anton Baumstark, “Comparative Liturgy,” in Robert Taft, *Beyond East and West: Problems in Liturgical Understanding* (Washington: Pastoral Press, 1984), 168.
- 7 Migne, *Patrologia Latina* 31, in Taft, *Beyond East and West*, 134.
- 8 Jean Chrysostome, *Huit catéchèses baptismales inédites*, ed. A. Wenger, in Taft, *Beyond East and West*, 134.
- 9 Aidan Kavanagh, *On Liturgical Theology* (New York: Pueblo Publishing Company), 87–88.
- 10 Aidan Kavanagh, *Elements of Rite: A Handbook of Liturgical Style* (Collegeville: The Liturgical Press, 1990), 35.
- 11 The same hypothesis, of course, could be proposed in the opposite direction with the rejection of Slavic chant and choral music.
- 12 Kavanagh, *Elements of Rite*, 9.
- 13 The author has heard Jaroslav Pelikan articulate this on several occasions, including at Pelikan's dedication speech for the St. Vladimir's Seminary library inside the John G. Rangos Family Foundation Building, May 11, 2002.
- 14 Psalm 78(80):14.
- 15 When “Holy God” is sung during the Divine Liturgy, the bishop or chief priest moves to the high place for the readings that will follow. In most churches, the distance traveled is only several feet, hardly what we would consider a procession (and no longer are we waiting for all the faithful to finish filtering into church at this point), whereas these conditions would have been much different in Constantinople. Nevertheless, during funerals and at Holy Friday, the procession remains elongated.
- 16 As opposed to Byzantine order: tone one/plagal tone one, which is the equivalent to Slavic tone one/tone five.
- 17 Vladimir Morosan, *Choral Performance in Pre-revolutionary Russia* (Madison, CT: Musica Russica), 41.
- 18 *Ibid.*, 41.

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# A Children's Choir? Certainly!

By John D. Sutko

Pertaining to the involvement and to the singing of the children in the church, Father Vladimir Soroka wrote a wonderful article in an Orthodox Church publication a number of years ago. He stated that "the children's choir provides an outstanding opportunity for Christian education of the children through the medium of music."

There is much that can be said about the participation of our children singing in the church, and this pertains to the present church worship and prayer as well as for the future.

At St. Peter and St. Paul Orthodox Church in Burr Ridge, Illinois, we began with ten children in September of 2002. In 2003 the number of members grew to eighteen. It is our hope that we will reach and even go beyond a thirty-plus potential as we continue through 2004, 2005, and 2006.

The children's choir was organized by contacting the parents of the parish children. We did this by letters, church bulletins, church announcements, and even invitational posters. We asked that the children be at least in the third grade and extended this to the age of the high school students. The final decision, however, was to be made by the parents and the choir director.

The rehearsals were planned out and scheduled to be held twice monthly on one designated Wednesday evening and also on one Saturday evening on the day prior to the children's Liturgy. The rehearsals were to be sixty to eighty minutes in length. They would begin with a light vocalization, which would cover the range and the intervals or scale patterns that the children would experience in the hymns that were to be rehearsed. Our first rehearsal was in September of 2002, and the hymns that were learned and prepared were: "Bless the Lord, O My Soul," the Beatitudes (antiphonally sung with the senior choir), "Holy God," "Alleluia," and "Receive the Body of Christ."

It was an immediate success. The wonderful feeling and the spirituality of the feeling that was experienced by the children, the parents, the congregation, and, certainly, by the priest and the choir

director was something that added a new dimension to our Sunday Liturgy. The children sing at one Liturgy during the month. They sit in the front rows of the church and sing from the front of the church facing the congregation.

In addition to learning the music of the Liturgy and selected hymns from Vespers, the children are taught the importance and the prominence of what they are singing. Terms that they hear in church that are connected with the music, such as *troparions*, *litany*, *Theotokos*, *Trisagion* (which the children read aloud at services), *prokeimenon*, *Presanctified Liturgy*, *alleluia*, and many more are explained to the children. At the same time, what they are singing is related to what is happening in the service at that particular moment. During the first part of our choir season, which is before the Nativity of our Lord, Christmas carols are learned and sung in English and in their original languages. These are then presented at the end of the Liturgy during the recessional and also at the children's "Yolka." During the Paschal season the children will sing the Paschal antiphons and the Paschal Troparion in English, Church Slavonic, and Greek.

With the ages and ranges of the voices in the choir, the children sing in two and three parts during the services. All children learn the melodies of the hymns and litanies first, and then they are placed in their proper voice parts. All of the hymns and materials are based upon and taken from our choir repertoire and are rewritten, adapted, or even transposed for the children's voices and ranges.

As we continue to progress through 2004, the children have already learned "O Lord, Save Thy People," "O Heavenly King," and several psalms. At Divine Liturgy, a typical selection of hymns will include: "Bless the Lord, O My Soul," the Beatitudes (antiphonally with the adults), "Holy God" (sung in English and Slavonic), "Alleluia," the Cherubic Hymn (antiphonally), the Creed, the Lord's Prayer, the litany after the Lord's Prayer, "One is Holy," "Praise the Lord," "Receive the Body of Christ" (antiphonally), and "God Grant





You Many Years” (both in English and Church Slavonic).

In addition to the children singing and rehearsing for the services, choir activities are also planned during the choir season. During Choir Month in November the children are guests of the senior choir at the annual Choir Month banquet. After the Nativity of Our Lord, a children’s choir Christmas pizza bash is prepared for them along with

singing of the traditional carols and the popular carols of the season. When the choir season ends in June, a choir picnic is held during the summer months to climax the year.

Close contact and communication with the parents and the children has been the keynote of the success of this choir, and it remains constant throughout the year. Choir schedules, announcements of rehearsals and services, activities, and invitations to prospective members continue to be an important aspect of keeping the choir active, informed, and progressive. Nothing and no one is taken for granted. Everyone must encourage and take an interest in keeping our children as an important part of our church as singers and also as our future.

As Father Vladimir Soroka also pointed out in his article, “We should not deny the young children of our church the opportunity of singing in this ‘special choir.’ It is true that it takes a little extra effort on everyone’s part, but the end result is most rewarding”—and, I will add, most gratifying.

I also submit that the children’s choir is a plan and an insurance for the future of our church.

*John D. Sutko is the choir director of St. Peter and St. Paul Orthodox Church in Burr Ridge, Illinois, and also the director of the Orthodox Concert Choir of Greater Chicago.*





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### Music Database Update

Efforts are currently underway to make sheet music available for downloading through the PSALM website. Music will be available in the following liturgical categories:

Daily Cycle (Horologion)	Lenten Triodion
Weekly Cycle	Pentecostarion
General Menaion	Festal Menaion
Octoechos	Special Needs

If you have computerized music files that you would like to submit for consideration, please contact Vladimir Morosan at PMP@musicarussica.com for a set of submission guidelines. Or call 203-421-3132 for more information.

Download subscription packages will be available to PSALM members. Watch *PSALM Notes* and the website ([www.orthodoxpsalm.org](http://www.orthodoxpsalm.org)) for updated information. (See pages 12–13 of this issue.)



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CALENDAR



#### June 2–7, 2004

**St. Romanos the Melodist Society presents  
"Tradition in Service to Mission: Russian  
Orthodox Chant in the English Language"**

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For further information contact:

Father John or Matushka Alexandra Moses  
540-887-8280

[mosesj@ntelos.net](mailto:mosesj@ntelos.net)

#### June 17–20, 2004

**Antiochian Archdiocese 2004 Sacred Music  
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**West Coast Conference**

**"Developing Spirituality through Music"**

La Casa de Maria, Santa Barbara, CA

For more information, go to:

<http://www.antiochian.org/Music/sacredmusicinstitute.asp>

#### June 20–25, 2004

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**"Does Christian Marriage Have a Future?"**

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practice.

For more information, go to:

[http://www.svots.edu/Events/Summer-  
Institute/2004/index.html](http://www.svots.edu/Events/Summer-Institute/2004/index.html)

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For information, contact:

Rev. Andre Papkov

54 Fourth Street, Ilion, NY 13357

315-894-6274

e-mail: [musicsschool@msn.com](mailto:musicsschool@msn.com)

<http://sslm.hts.edu>

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