# Sing the Stories of Jesus

Twenty-five Songs for the Youngest Singers

Words by Mary Nelson Keithahn Music by John D. Horman

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#### **Preface**

Over the years we have observed many trends in the music churches use in their ministry with children. There was a time when children were considered miniature adults and expected to sing the hymns adults sang in worship. Then church educators began to call for songs that were more relevant to the life experiences of children, especially young children, written in language they could understand and set to music they could actually sing. However, the subject matter of these "life experience" songs did not directly support the biblical content of the church school curriculum for this age group, or prepare them to participate in congregational worship. As a result, some church educators and musicians began teaching young children a phrase, refrain, or a stanza of carefully selected classical hymns. Others turned to contemporary popular songs or old favorites they had sung for fun as children.

With this collection, "Sing the Stories of Jesus," we hope to establish a new trend for using music with children, ages 4 to 7, in the church:

- The twenty-five songs grew out of stories from the life of Jesus that are common to Bible story books and curriculum resources published by several different denominations for ages 4 to 7. The biblical texts are age-appropriate and address important ideas about Jesus.
- The lyrics are written in simple language and focus on a key idea in each story. They also introduce the children to three worship words: "Gloria," "Hosanna," and "Alleluia."
- The tunes are short and memorable; they use the 6- to 8-note range of children in this age group and contain repeated tones, scale-wise passages, and sequences for easy learning. There are also opportunities in some of the songs for children to listen and echo what a leader sings. The accompaniments are interesting and complement the themes of the lyrics.
- Because all the scriptures on which the songs are based are included in the Revised Common Lectionary, the songs provide an opportunity for young children to provide music for congregational worship that is relevant and meaningful.
- For each song, we have provided creative suggestions for teaching the words and melodies.
- Also included is a CD recording with both the full-chorus and accompaniment-only versions. These
  recordings can be duplicated for local use so that the children can sing at home, in the car, or in the
  classroom.

As those who work with children in the church, we believe young children deserve our best efforts. We hope that this collection will help you offer them a way to grow in their faith through the songs they sing.

Mary Nelson Keithahn and John D. Horman

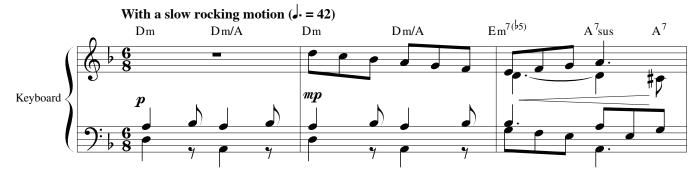
#### Simeon and Anna

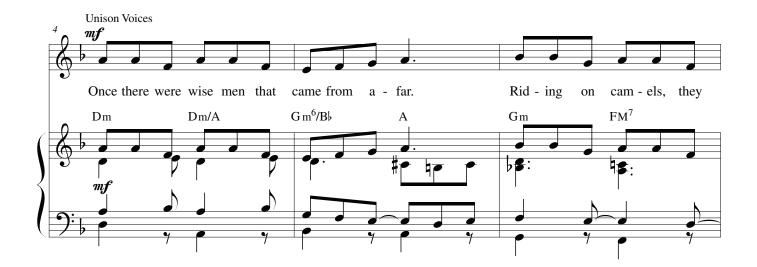


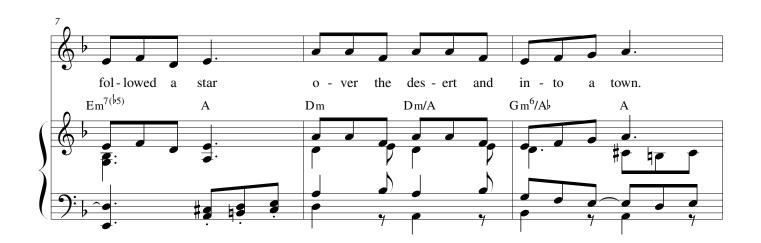
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# Finding Jesus

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#### Have You Seen Jesus?

Leader (spoken): Passover was a holy day to go to Jerusalem, feast and pray.

Jesus went with his mom and dad. Oh, what a good time they all had!

Then, at last, they left to go home again through Jericho.

But when they stopped to rest that night, Jesus wasn't anywhere in sight!



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# Jesus Is Baptized

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### Teach Us to Pray



### The Lost Sheep





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### The Lost Son's Sad Song



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### The Supper at Emmaus

