

Sing the Stories of God's People

Thirty More Songs
for the Youngest Singers

Words by Mary Nelson Keithahn

Music by John D. Horman

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Preface

Our many years of working with young children in the worship, music, and education ministries of the church have convinced us of the value of a “holistic” approach. The Bible stories told in the classroom illustrate concepts that are relevant to the faith development of children. Songs based on these stories, by adding melody and rhythm to poetic words, help the children enjoy and remember these concepts. Carefully-written tunes help the children develop musical skills that are the foundation for participating in congregational and choral song later in life. Songs like these, when coordinated with the lectionary readings, give children a chance to contribute meaningfully to congregational worship as leaders, not entertainers.

Our need for songs to use in this “holistic” approach to ministering to young children led us to write our first collection, *Sing the Stories of Jesus* (Augsburg Fortress 978-0-8006-7945-3). *Sing the Stories of God’s People* is our second collection.

- The thirty songs are based on stories of God’s people in the Hebrew scriptures that are commonly used in Bible story books and curriculum resources published by several denominations for ages 4 to 7. The stories are age appropriate and will encourage children to trust God and care for one another in loving, just ways.
- The lyrics are written in simple language and focus on a key idea in each story. They will also introduce the children to important biblical concepts such as “trust,” “covenant,” “laws,” “gleaning,” “sharing,” “the ark of the covenant,” “prophet,” and others.
- The tunes are short and memorable; they use the six to eight note range appropriate for children in this age group and contain repeated tones, scale-wise passages, and sequences for easy learning. There are opportunities in some of the songs for children to listen and echo what a leader sings, and two of the songs can be sung as canons. The accompaniments are interesting and complement the themes of the lyrics. Several contain fragments of African American spirituals related to the texts, and one uses a plainsong melody.
- Because all but one of the scriptures on which the songs are based are included in the Revised Common Lectionary (either complementary or semicontinuous series), 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 non-sale local use so that the children can sing at home, in the car, or in the classroom.

We hope that this new collection will help you continue to offer children a way to grow in their faith through the songs they sing.

Mary Nelson Keithahn and John D. Horman

It's Good

for unison voices with keyboard

Mary Nelson Keithahn

John D. Horman

Stately (♩ = 108) **Refrain**
mf

God made the world and

Keyboard *mf*

5

said, "It's good! It's good, it's good, it's good!"

8

God made the world and said, "It's good! It's good, it's good, it's good!"

God Told Noah

for unison voices with keyboard

Mary Nelson Keithahn

John D. Horman

Happily (♩ = 120) Unison voices *mf*

God told No - ah,

KeyboD. ard

p *mp* *mf*

4

"Build a boat. _ Build it well so it will float. _

7

When the rain comes fall - ing down, _ get on board or

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Abraham and Sarah

for unison voices with keyboard

Mary Nelson Keithahn

John D. Horman

With determination (♩ = 84)

Keyboard

mp

5 *mp*
A - bra - ham and Sar - ah heard God say one day,

9
“Go and find a new land. I’ll show you the way.

13
I will bless and keep you, I give you all you need.

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Sarah Laughed

for unison voices with keyboard

Mary Nelson Keithahn

John D. Horman

Happily (♩ = 108)
 Keyboard *mf*

4 Unison voices *mf*
 How Sar - ah laughed when an - gels said that

7 she would have a son! "It can - not be! I'm

10 old and gray and al - most nine - ty - one!"

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Jacob and the Ladder of Angels

Mary Nelson Keithahn

for unison voices with keyboard

John D. Horman

In a relaxed manner (♩ = 100)

Keyboard

mp

Red. * *Red.* *

5 *mp*

Ja - cob fell a - sleep that night, his head up - on a stone,

8

dream - ing of a fam - i - ly that he had

11 *mf*

left at home. _____ An - gels, in his dream, came

mf

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Jochebed's Lullaby

for unison voices with keyboard

Mary Nelson Keithahn

John D. Horman

Gently rocking (♩ = 96) Unison voices *mp*

Rock - ing on a riv - er

4
in a bas - ket, warm and dry,

7
with your sis - ter close at hand, should you a - wake and

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Moses and the Burning Bush

for unison voices with keyboard

Mary Nelson Keithahn

John D. Horman

Dramatically (♩ = 96)

Keyboard *mp*

4 *All mp* *mf*

He saw a bush that did not burn and yet it was a - flame. He

9 stopped to look at it and heard a voice call out his name. It called,

13 *Solo* *Small group*

"Mo - ses! Mo - ses!" "Here I am!"

tr

The musical score is written for unison voices and keyboard. It begins with a keyboard introduction in G major, 4/4 time, marked 'Dramatically' and 'mp'. The tempo is indicated as quarter note = 96. The vocal line starts at measure 4 with the lyrics 'He saw a bush that did not burn and yet it was a - flame. He'. The keyboard accompaniment continues throughout. At measure 9, the vocal line continues with 'stopped to look at it and heard a voice call out his name. It called,'. At measure 13, the vocal line is divided into a 'Solo' part and a 'Small group' part. The solo part has the lyrics 'Mo - ses! Mo - ses!' and the small group part has 'Here I am!'. The keyboard accompaniment includes a trill in the right hand at the end of the piece.

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Miriam's Song

for unison voices with keyboard

Mary Nelson Keithahn

John D. Horman

With excitement (♩ = 112)

Unison voices *mf*

Keyboard *mf*

Hur - ry, hur - ry, hur - ry!

Hur - ry, hur - ry, hur - ry!

Fol - low Mo - ses through the sea. Hur - ry, hur - ry, hur - ry!

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Boaz and Ruth

for unison voices with keyboard

Mary Nelson Keithahn

John D. Horman

With conviction (♩ = 92) Unison voices *mf*

Bo - az knew the laws of

Mo - ses so he told his men to share grain left o-ver in his

field that day when Ruth came glean - ing there. When Bo - az saw Ruth

Keyboard *mf*

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