Sing the Stories of God's NEW People

Twenty-Five More Songs for the Youngest Singers

Words by Mary Nelson Keithahn Music by John D. Horman

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Preface

After completing our first two collections of songs for young children, *Sing the Stories of Jesus* (Augsburg Fortress, 978-0-8006-7945-3) and *Sing the Stories of God's People* (Augsburg Fortress, 978-0-8066-9839-7), we decided a third group of songs based on stories and writings in Acts, the Epistles, and Revelation was needed. Many of these stories are told in church school to illustrate concepts and faith practices that are important in faith development. Poetic texts based on these stories, set to rhythmic melodies, help children enjoy and remember these concepts. Carefully written tunes provide opportunities for children to develop musical skills that prepare them for active participation in congregational and choral song in later life. When the story-songs are coordinated with the Revised Common Lectionary, they offer children a chance to contribute meaningfully to worship, as leaders rather than entertainers.

Sing the Stories of God's NEW People reflects the holistic approach we have each used in working with young children through worship, music, and education. In choosing the stories for the songs, we consulted Bible storybooks and church school curriculum resources published by several denominations for ages 4 to 7. Although Bible storybooks for younger children have often focused on the Hebrew scriptures and the Gospels, newer books are including more stories from the rest of the New Testament. Examples cited in the teaching plans are the Spark Story Bible, published by Augsburg Fortress in 2009 (ISBN 978-9-8066-7049-2); the Children of God Storybook Bible, retold by Archbishop Desmond Tutu, published by Zondervan in 2010 (ISBN 978-0-31071912-0); and The Children's Illustrated Bible, stories retold by Selina Hastings, published in 1994 by Dorling Kindersley Ltd., London (ISBN 1-56458-472-0).

The twenty-five songs in this collection will introduce children to members of the early Christian community, important events in their lives, and issues they faced as Christians. As the children learn about these persons through these songs, you may want to add their names to a list of "God's New People" as a visual reminder of how important each one was in telling the good news about Jesus. Also, note that several stories offer opportunities to talk with the children about the meaning of baptism.

The lyrics of the songs are simple in language and focus on a key idea in each story. Although not all of the songs are based on stories found in the Revised Common Lectionary, they may still be useful in worship as an introduction to a related story or support for a theme in a lectionary reading.

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, step-by-step intervals, and sequences for easy learning. There are opportunities for the children to listen and echo what a leader sings, and to add rhythm instruments to the accompaniments. Some of the songs work well as anthems for a primary choir. Others can be dramatized "live" or with puppets.

For each song, we provide 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 may be duplicated for non-sale, local use so that children can sing along at home, in the car, or in the classroom. We hope that this third collection will help you continue to offer children a way to grow in their faith through the songs they sing.

The Day of Pentecost



^{*} This tune can be sung a cappella as a canon, with each part repeating the final phrase until all four parts are singing it in unison.

God's New People



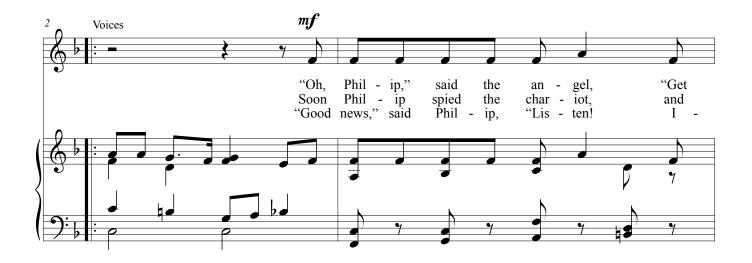
Peter and John Heal a Man

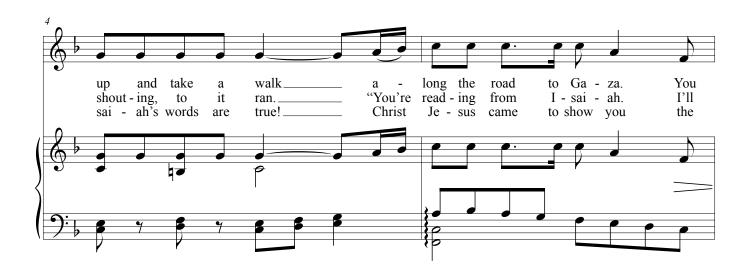
Mary Nelson Keithahn



Philip and the Man in the Chariot









Saved By a Basket



Dorcas, a Good Neighbor

Mary Nelson Keithahn John D. Horman Proudly (J = 72)Piano mpVoices mf good deeds. Dor - cas fol - lowed Je sus and was known for her She sewed clothes and gave them to her friends who were in need. We who fol - low Je good neigh - bors, sus now can be too.

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Paul and Silas in Jail



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Paul Writes Letters

