

Notes from the Music Director (No. 3)

Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church, Rochester, Pennsylvania

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August 2, 2015—10th Sunday after Pentecost



The Israelites Gather Manna from the Wilderness, illustration from "Bible Pictures and What They Teach Us," Charles Foster (1897).

Today's scripture readings refer to manna from heaven. Exodus describes the hunger of the Israelites 2½ months after their escape from Egypt and the miraculous appearance in the Sinai wilderness of enormous flocks of quail by night and manna by day. The Psalmist also recalled the food of the Israelites, "he rained down on them manna to eat and gave them the grain of heaven. . . he rained flesh upon them like dust, winged birds like the sand of the seas." On the other hand, John quotes Jesus who admonishes the 5,000 who earlier had eaten the loaves and fish, "Do not work for the food that

perishes, but for the food that endures for eternal life."

Our gathering hymn, "All Who Hunger, Gather Gladly" with lyrics by Sylvia G. Dunstan and music by W. Moore, recommends, "Taste and see the grace eternal. Taste and see that God is good." Hymn-writer Sylvia G. Dunstan (1955-1993), earned her bachelor degree from York University in Toronto, and she received graduate degrees in theology and divinity from Emmanuel College, also in Toronto.

In 1980, Dunstan was ordained by the Hamilton Conference of the United Church of Canada. During her career she served as a minister, a prison chaplain, and editor of a Canadian worship resource journal, *Gathering*. By 1980 her hymn-writing skills were well known and she was invited to lead the annual conference of the Hymn Society in the

United States and Canada in a session exploring her hymnody. She wrote at least 39 hymn texts before she died of liver cancer in 1993.

Dunstan set her text of “All Who Hunger, Gather Gladly” to a hymn tune (Holy Manna) attributed to William Moore, the author of the shape-note hymnal “Columbian Harmony” which was published in 1825 in Cincinnati. Little is known about Moore except that he was from Wilson County, Tennessee.

You can hear the choir and congregation of the First Plymouth Church of Lincoln, Nebraska, sing “All Who Hunger, Gather Gladly” with lyrics by Sylvia G. Dunstan and music by W. Moore on YouTube at <https://youtu.be/PKXm7TqaGzs?t=35s>.

Sources

Holy Bible, New Revised Standard Version (Zonderfan: 1989)

LBW: Lutheran Book of Worship (Augsburg Publishing House: 1978)

WOV: With One Voice (Augsburg Fortress: 1995)

W&P: Worship & Praise Songbook (Augsburg Fortress: 1999)

ELW: Evangelical Lutheran Worship (Augsburg Fortress: 2006)

Wikipedia: <https://en.wikipedia.org>

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

GIA Publications: <http://www.giamusic.com>

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http://henrydoktorski.com/Music_Director_Notes.html.