

Free Accompaniments on Latter-Day Saint Hymns

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A free accompaniment (reharmonization) is usually played on the last verse of an occasional congregational hymn as the congregation sings in unison. In order to contribute to the spirit of the meeting, the organist (especially), conductor, and congregation must be very well prepared.

Using a free accompaniment in church:

1. Choose a hymn that is very familiar to the congregation
2. Find its tune name (use "Titles, Tunes, and Meters" index, p. 392)
3. Find the tune name in the table of contents of a collection, or
--find tune name in a resource guide, find the collection, then locate the free accompaniment
4. Match the nature of the free accompaniment with:
--the text (are the LDS text and tune, and the free accompaniment of the same mood?)
--music (are the LDS hymn and the free accompaniment in the same key?)
5. Prepare
--interlude? introduction in octaves?
--registration
--tempo change?
--layout of the music on the music rack
--notes
--plan an alternate route in case congregation gets lost (octaves, revert to hymn, etc.)
6. Execute
--prepare the congregation
--confidence--no apology
--LISTEN--assume leadership, and adapt where needed
--DON'T STOP!
7. Follow-up
--what went particularly well? Make notes and repeat it!
--what could have been done to improve? Make notes and improve it!
--don't give up. Do it again in a few weeks.

Published Free Accompaniments

Bush, Douglas and Gerald Dick. *Hymn Harmonizations*. Sonos, n.d., now Jackman Music digital download

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Goode, Jack C., arr. *Thirty-Four Changes on Hymn Tunes*. Belwin-Mills, 1978.

Jacques, Reginald and Willcocks, David, eds. *Carols for Choirs I*. Oxford Univ. Press, 1961.

Keene, Karen. *Ten Hymn Elaborations for Congregational Singing*. Harold Flammer, Inc., 1980.

Noble, T. Tertius. *Free Organ Accompaniments to One Hundred Well-Known Hymn Tunes*. Belwin-Mills, 1946.

Rawsthorne, Noel. *200 Last Verses*. Kevin Mayhew Ltd, 1991.

Rutter, John. *O Holy Night: Thirteen Sacred Carols & Christmas Hymns for Choir SATB*. Hinshaw, 1981.

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