

**Tips for Introductions,
Interludes, and
Free Accompaniments**

Getting Started

Be brave! If you want to try it, try it. It will get easier with experience.

Look for hymns with repetitive harmony. If you're bored, the congregation might be also.

Experiment and take notes (in pencil!) in your book. When there are too many notes scribbled into your hymnbook, that's when you write them out.

Try starting with alternative pedal lines and the harmonies they imply. Another good start is countermelodies.

Make Things Crystal Clear

Establish the key and tempo.

Include the initial melody somewhere.

Always finish introductions and interludes with the original last line of the hymn.

Interrupt the final note(s) of the previous verse for successful interludes.

Consider beginning free accompaniments with just the melody, played in octaves.

Try doubling the melody an octave lower if it's not the highest part.

Be careful about too much dissonance or too many 8th notes.

Voice Leading

No parallel 5ths or 8ths (unless you are doubling the melody)

Avoid long strings of parallel 3rds or 6ths

Limit broken chords (you are not a piano)

Contrary motion is best between soprano and bass

Resolve leading tones properly

Fill in the gaps if a leap seems awkward

Avoid making the soprano the 7th of the chord

Consider Your Congregation

Ask the person conducting to announce from the pulpit for the congregation to sing the melody. Warn the conductor.

Don't mess with Sacrament hymns except for registration changes, maybe a solo part.

Try some harmonizations that allow for 4-part singing, especially for Stake Conference.

Print at 80% and use paper tape to attach to your hymnal.