# The PSALMS

Instrumental accompaniment for unison congregational singing of the 150 Psalms on Genevan Tunes from the Book of Praise - Anglo-Genevan Psalter of the Canadian Reformed Churches

2nd EDITION

DENNIS TEITSMA

## These harmonizations of the 150 Psalms are available in PDF format as a **free** download from www.bookofpraise.ca

Professionally printed copies of a spiral-bound book including all 150 Psalms and 85 Hymns with laminated covers are available for the cost of printing (\$12) plus shipping.

Note that shipping charges vary by location. Sending multiple copies to one address significantly reduces the shipping cost per book.

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#### **PREFACE**

Instrumental music is not required in reformed worship services and neither are animal offerings. The Bible clearly shows that God requires our heart-felt offerings in our worship services, that is the *fruit of lips* (Heb 13:15; Hosea 14:1,2; Psalm 19:14; etc.). Such offerings are brought with the God given instrument, namely the human voice-box (see appendix for an article on "Music in Reformed Liturgy"). **Congregational singing** in reformed liturgy is the *orderly reaction* of believers presenting song-offerings that were born by the Spirit, welling up from the heart and responding to the redemptive acts of God (S. Greydanus, Korte Verklaring).

#### **Singing in Unison**

During the Great Reformation, John Calvin in Geneva acknowledged that versification of Bible songs would best enable **all** believers to actively participate in the public worship services. Under his guidance and encouragement the divinely inspired songs in the Book of Psalms as well as other Bible songs were versified. One melody for multiple verses of each song were composed during the mid 1500's to reflect the content and character of each entire song. These melodies enabled **all** believers to join-in and make the orderly song-offerings possible during the worship services. Their unique, flowing melodies for congregational **singing in unison**, require no musical training. Moreover they encourage and stimulate believers to participate in this responsive nature of the reformed public worship services.

#### **Tunes**

The melodies are characterized not only by their suitability for congregational use. They are written in nine of the age-old twelve 'church modes' that had developed in the Western world since the fifth century. These gave birth to the two popular keys of today, the major and minor. Overall, these **modes** generally show an **absence of tension** that is so prevalent in major and minor keys. Moreover, the Genevan tunes use only two note values as well as one note for each syllable (half and quarter notes). The melodies never start on an upbeat, but always with one or more long notes (half notes). They never show intervals greater than a fifth except for an occasional octave interval between sentences. For more information on 'modes' please refer to my paper on <u>Tunes of the Anglo- Genevan Psalter</u> 2005, ISBN 0-9737275-1–9, or the Notes in my <u>The Hymns</u> 1990 and <u>Organ Offertories</u> 1990 (Inheritance Publications, Neerlandia, AB TOG 1R0).

The tunes also reflect the free-flowing rhythm of the Hebrew language of these poetic songs. Their musical style appears timeless as well as linked to the early christian churches and likely even to the music used in the synagogues of earlier times [Fulfil Your Ministry, Dr.K.Deddens, Premier Publ. p.105; for more detailed information see also my booklet, Genevan Tunes, an updated version (2013) of the first part of my paper under the title "Tunes of the Anglo-Genevan Psalter" (2005)].

#### **Tempo and Rhythm**

The melodies are not metrical (no bars), but rhythmic. They have a natural, flowing **pulse rhythm** with the beat on the longer of the two note values. In summary, the tunes are simple but not simplistic, unique but not difficult, easy but not repetitive, comforting but not boring, mood reflective but not sentimental, uplifting but not frenzied, rhythmic but not metric.

Chorales are usually composed for four-voice choirs, but this keyboard collection of the 150 Psalms is particularly written to accompany congregational singing in **unison.** The harmonies are simple and easy to play. The distance between voices is kept to less than an octave. The base line represents the ongoing beat or pulse which is between 40-70 per minute depending on the content of the song, the culture and the customs of the congregation.

The proclamation of God's Word on the sabbath redirects our lives to observe God's day, to rest from our evil works and so to make a beginning of the eternal sabbath. The responsive singing is not only the **required** offering, but it also helps to slow down the believers' average heart beat, which is between 60 and 70 beats per minute for a person at rest. 'Concertizing' these melodies, and their use in the past with only long notes, has possibly contributed to feeling the **beat** on every syllable instead of on the long notes only.

#### Instrumental accompaniment

The sole purpose of instrumental music in a reformed worship service is to **serve** the peoples' offering of the 'fruit of lips'. Short preludes are added to properly **identify** the song, its rhythm and its pitch. These ensure that every member of the congregation starts at the same time, especially when a rest, equal to a full-pulse-beat, is observed. This allows everyone to inhale before starting. Short postludes allow a musical closure. Any other music was added to simply fill a page.

**Repeated notes** in the melodies are never to be tied. Other repeated notes may be tied at the player's discretion. This depends on the song, the tempo and the need of the congregation. Therefore, ties are not shown in chorales. On a large keyboard instrument, of course, the melody can be played with a solo voice and the bass-line on a clear, strong pedal. Tying melody notes displays a lack of respect and sloppiness.

This collection would not have been possible without the computer know-how of my son James. I owe him my thanks for allowing me, a computer-illiterate eighty-two year old, to be productive, for he set up the program and helped me out. Whenever I was at my wit's end, he managed to get me back on track.

The purpose of making these harmonizations available is to encourage the **unison** singing of the Genevan tunes. These accompaniments may appear simple, but when they promote and improve the intended rhythm, pulse and tempo of these long-lasting melodies for congregational singing, their goal has been reached. When congregations catch on to the correct rhythm and speed, with the pulsating beat on the long notes, the unison singing will also feel more flowing, lighter, quicker and more natural.







#### Psalm 4 on e



#### Psalm 4 on f#



### **Psalm 5** (64)



















#### **Psalm 14** (53)







#### **Psalm 17** (63, 70)



#### **Psalm 18** (144)













## Psalm 24 (62,98,111)









#### Psalm 28 (109)





#### **Psalm 30** (76,139)



## **Psalm 31** (71)



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#### **Psalm 33** (67)







#### **Psalm 36** (68) on C



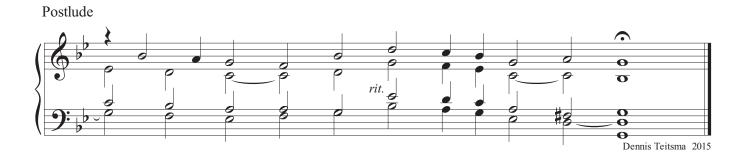
#### Psalm 36 (68) on D





























## **Psalm 46** (82)











## Psalm 51 (69)





#### **Psalm 53** (14)













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## Psalm 60 (108)





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#### Psalm 62 (24, 95, 111)



# **Psalm 63** (17, 70)



## **Psalm 64** (5)



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## **Psalm 65** (72)



# Psalm 66 (98, 118)



## **Psalm 67** (33)



## **Psalm 68** (36 on C or on D)



#### **Psalm 69** (51)



## **Psalm 70** (17, 63)



# **Psalm 71** (31)



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# **Psalm 72** (65)





## **Psalm 74** (116)





# **Psalm 76** (30, 139)



## **Psalm 77** (86)













## **Psalm 82** (46)









# **Psalm 86** (77)









## **Psalm 90** (78)











# **Psalm 95** (24, 62, 111)









#### **Psalm 98** (66, 118)





#### **Psalm 100** (131, 142)

















#### Psalm 108 (60)



## Psalm 109 (28)





## **Psalm 111** (24, 62, 95)











## **Psalm 116** (74)



## **Psalm 117** (127)



# Psalm 118 (66, 98)



















## **Psalm 127** (117)









(100, 142)

















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# Psalm 142 (100, 131)











## Psalm 144 (18)













