



**“WITH JOY AND SONGS;  
WITH TIMBREL AND LYRE”  
THE BIBLE AND MUSIC**

Quayle Bible Collection  
Open Saturdays & Sundays  
September 12, 2023 ~ May 12, 2024

# Make a Joyful Noise!

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As humans began to write ca. 2300 BCE, some of the first works were hymns and songs. Before writing, we know humans created artifacts for song and dance. It is easy to suggest that music is integral to humanity. For Jews and Christians, music is found throughout the Bible in a variety of ways. We find hymns, prose, musical instruments, and things labeled as songs that were not put to music. The most famous music found in the text is the Psalms. Biblical scholars have identified multiple authors for the Psalms with tradition saying that David was the main author. Scholars also note that some of the Psalms themselves may not have been sung in religious settings. Early worship contained Psalms and chanting of other text, especially in Jewish and Greek Orthodox traditions. As worship progressed, new hymns (and even new “Psalms”) were created to reflect common interpretations of the Bible. With contemporary Protestant-Evangelical praise music, some of the hymns either have little connection to the biblical text or no connection whatsoever. This seems a far leap from the texts featured in this exhibit, but it is the result of a theological evolution of Christianity that focuses on individual belief and a message of the text rather than a literal understanding of the Bible. To honor Kay Bradt, previous curator and musician herself, we used two cases on the Psalms formerly assembled by her. The 2023-2024 exhibit is in honor of Kay and her love of the Bible and Music.

Special thanks to those who contributed to the production of this exhibit including:

Arianna Gasper, Baker University Class of 2025

Savannah Bray, Baker University Class of 2024

Robin Liston, PhD, Baker University

Kay Bradt, Baker Librarian 1976-2015

A personal note in memory of Kay Bradt:

In 2015, Kay came to me and asked if I wanted to take over the Quayle Bible Collection. It was by far one of the easiest decisions I made at Baker. I frequently tell students and visitors that the Quayle is the best part of my job. To this day, I am indebted in what Kay did. I still use a lot of her research, her catalog, and even her guides on how to write case labels, which I give to museum studies students. And more importantly, I continue to tell the stories that she passed down to me, which I pass along to my students and colleagues. Thanks for everything, Kay!


Nick Pumphrey, PhD

Curator of the Quayle Bible Collection

## Music and the Hebrew Bible

The north wall contains additional examinations of music found in the Hebrew Bible and manuscripts of the Old Testament. Most of the musical references come from the Old Testament, especially considering the book of Psalms is the longest book in the Bible. The north wall also contains descriptions of musical instruments found in Hebrew and references to music in the Dead Sea Scrolls. It also contains texts that are described as songs but are not traditionally considered music.

## Cantillations: Hebrew

The writing of Hebrew did not contain marks or notations, as seen here in the Torah Scroll. Instead, the text only contained consonants, and readers would have to know the text well enough to understand it. At least by the 9<sup>th</sup> century, the Masoretes, a group of Hebrew scribes, added vowels and diacritical marks to the text, with the Aleppo Codex representing one of the oldest versions. The cantillation marks for singing are called the *ta'amei ha-mikra* or *te'amim*. The notations would be found above or below a consonant and would give directions of how it should be sung. For example, the *shalshelet*, noted as a squiggly line , represents a long string of notes. Given the diversity of sects/traditions in Judaism, the way in which some of the markers are sung varies.

## Cantillations: Ecclesiastical Latin

When the Early Church formed, we know that services contained songs. Most of which was chanting in a similar way to the Hebrew text from the previous case. The oldest Christian hymns, such as the Oxyrhynchus hymn, were in

Greek, and the text was also chanted, which continues in the Orthodox Church. Part of this chanting was the using specifically the Psalms called antiphony. As the Roman Church used Latin and continued to evolve, Pope Gregory I in the 9<sup>th</sup> century adapted the Latin Psalms for antiphonal chant. This would eventually become the system of chant for the “Roman Rite” or Catholic service. Gregorian melodies used neumes on a field of four or five-line staff. The chanting of the texts was mostly performed by choirs of men or boys in public settings but was allowed for women in religious orders.

## Music in the Old Testament: Song of Moses/Miriam and Jephthah’s Daughter

In the early Modern period, the Bible became heavily illustrated in the actual subject matter represented by the text. In many cases, these illustrations were meant to depict the subject to the best of the knowledge of the artists. Did the artists get depictions incorrect? Most likely. However, an artist’s rendering operates in a similar vein to the translator’s work. Exodus 15 is a popular story that has a variety of illustrations. After the Hebrews cross the Red Sea, Moses sings a long song of the account. Then Miriam sings a smaller version, but the text describes her as taking up timbrels. Although Miriam’s text is smaller, biblical scholars believe it is the older of the two. In Judges 11, Jephthah’s unnamed daughter comes out of the tent dancing with timbrels, and while this story is not a happy one, it also gets frequent illustration. Arguably both get represented given that musical instruments are described. While both mention timbrels, we do not know exactly what an ancient Israelite timbrel would look like.

## Music in the New Testament: The Last Supper and Palm Sunday

Most of the New Testament does not contain music. However, many Christians will wrestle with the theological importance of the Hebrew Bible. Some will attempt to abandon it, only to include the Psalms in their work. Or others will adapt their worship to exclude things from the Hebrew text. However, the Psalms are quoted throughout the New Testament, not only as “scripture fulfillment” but also because Jesus was Jewish. When Jesus enters Jerusalem and people sing Hosanna, they sing Psalm 118. When Jesus is eating the Last Supper, they are singing traditional Jewish hymns. In some cases, the characters themselves do not recognize the Psalms, such as in Mark 15:34 and Matthew 27:46 where Jesus quotes Psalm 22 as he is being crucified. Although the musical direction is not found in the New Testament, the music is still there waiting to be found in the text.

## Standalone Case: Psalter Facsimiles

The two Psalms texts that have been reproduced here are considered major Psalters of the 1300s. Both were originally produced on parchment and illuminated. Psalters were popular texts to reproduce but cost a considerable amount to manufacture. Often, such as with Lord Luttrell, the owner of a Psalter like these would have to be a very wealthy aristocrat. Also, it should be noted that in many cases the person who ordered these texts often could not read.

## The Psalms and Psalm Genres

(Case Description by Kay Bradt, 2015)

The Psalms are associated with David, and many of the superscriptions (like the one above Psalm 7) refer to him or to events in his life. Although many psalters are titled *The Psalms of David*, there is no clear evidence that he authored

many or even any of them. The Psalms were used in both public and private worship. They were printed in breviaries (liturgical texts), books of hours (prayers and passages for the use of laypeople) and books used by priests as they visited the sick and gave comfort. Reformers like Luther and Calvin were keen on congregational singing as a way to teach the psalms. In addition, Calvin wrote that the emotional connection forged by singing the psalms was much stronger than merely reading or hearing them.

Looking at the contents of these psalms adapted for singing, it is also possible to see a number of different types of Psalm:

- Lamentations. Faced with grief, sickness, or enemies, the psalmist asks God for help, assuring God of his strong faith and extending his promise to render thanks and praise. Hymns of thanksgiving and praise.
- To be sung on a pilgrimage (or ascent) to the Temple.
- To celebrate royal events ~ marriages, coronations, births.

## Psalters and Hymns

(Case Description by Kay Bradt, 2015)

Faithful translations of the psalms rarely turned out to be sing-able and many writers and composers turned their attention to putting the psalms into poetic meter and providing tunes and harmonies. The tunes of Clement Marot, Louis Bourgeois, Isaac Watts and Charles Wesley survive today in most hymnals.

Isaac Watts and Charles Wesley both adapted the Psalms for use in Christian worship by inserting references to Christ and salvation.

## Protestant Music: Zell, Luther, and Calvin

When the Protestant Reformation begins, much of their emphasis is on the use of the Bible. It may be fair to say that they weaponized this through the power of hymns. Not only did the ministers want to revolutionize hymns by singing the Bible in their own language, but they created new hymns and songs changing the form of worship in the church. When many churches had male only choirs, the Protestants are going to give power of singing to people, especially women. Women were known for creating hymns before, such as Hildegard of Bingen. But like Hildegard, popularity usually meant condemnation. Katherina Zell was one of the first female Protestant Reformers to create music for the movement. Her intention was to give a voice to all people, and felt it was more instruction than songbook. “Ein feste Burg” or “A Mighty Fortress is Our God” is considered one of the most important hymns, even finding its place in non-Lutheran hymnals. The version Luther sings as he enters Worms, prior to being labeled a heretic, was from Heinrich Heine. The famous version today was put to music by J. S. Bach. Calvin’s belief that the Psalms were the most important because they “taught the right manner to worship God” became a major ideal for all the Protestant groups he would influence.

## Puritan and Pilgrim Issues

As said above, Calvin’s influence with regards to the Psalms is what led the Pilgrims to struggle with the translation of the text. Translating Hebrew prose is a difficult task given the lack of a to-be verb as well as metaphor that is lost in time, and when you attempt to translate literally, meter is



completely lost. For the biblical literalists Puritans, this was a difficult task. Given that Sternhold and Hopkins used ballad music that was sung in bars, the meter had to be changed by the Puritans. However, by the late-1600s/early-1700s so many adaptations of the Psalms were produced that they could select from popular texts. Although he wrote hymns himself, Mather relied on the text of Isaac Watts, and was considered the first minister to use them in an American Church.

## The Wesleys and the Methodist Church

Much like the Pilgrims, the Wesleys also hated Sternhold and Hopkins, with John calling it “scandalous doggerel.” As a result, the Wesleys would “borrow” much of the meter and style of the Isaac Watts Psalms, with an addition of Jesus here and there. However, Charles Wesley will be known as one of the most influential hymnists of Protestant Christianity. With Methodism reaching its height in the mid-1800s, Wesley’s hymns would become ingrained in American Christianity and find their way into non-Methodist hymnals. Along with Watts, the works of Bayley in the bottom right were also influential on many people putting Psalms to music. Just before the revolution, Bayley’s music dominated two-thirds of all sacred music produced in America.

## American Protestant Musical Direction

The religious history of the United States is often marked through various periods described as the “Great Awakening.” These moments often related to events that were occurring, like the Revolutionary War, and resulted in a shift in religion. After the Revolution, many Americans began to think of the United States as the chosen land, which led to reform in the Protestant denominations. Singing in church services also developed with the denominations. The text on the left represents a classic

example of a music book that dictates how the people should literally posture themselves while singing, by lifting their head when speaking of God or Heaven. However, as the country becomes divided, the Shakers have a little less formal version of worship. As the Civil War approached, some denominations became heavily reliant on the New Testament and ignored the Old (in the same vein you had many groups like Latter Day Saints and Adventists do the opposite). In New England, the Shakers relied on a more charismatic form of worship. The small Bible here printed in Connecticut in 1939 was during the Shaker revival known as the “Era of Manifestations.” In this period, they relied on the teachings of Mother Ann Lee, which relied on spiritual gifts. During worship, Shakers would sing hymns, such as “Simple Gifts,” but many times they would dance and sing freely as the Spirit led. They would eventually move from New England to the Midwest and Kentucky. Much of their hymns were not known outside of the community until Aaron Copeland used them in “Appalachian Spring” in 1944. At the same time as the Shakers were going through a revival, Barton Stone and Thomas Campbell were leading the “Restoration Movement,” which relied on the New Testament as the core text for Protestants. As more and more churches began to use the pump organ, they felt as musical instruments had no basis in the New Testament and had to be removed, regardless of their use in the Old Testament. Although the Disciples of Christ is a Restoration Church, it would bring instruments back, which effectively caused a split between them and the Church of Christ.

## For Further Reading

**Bible & Music: Influences of the Old Testament on Western Music. Mark Stern. (2011)**

**The Book of Psalms. Robert Alter. (2009)**

**Seeing the Psalms: A Theology of Metaphor. William P. Brown. (2002)**

**The Music of Christendom: A History. Susan Treacy. (2021)**

**Martin Luther: The Man Who Rediscovered God and Changed the World. Eric Metaxas. (2017)**

**Assist Me to Proclaim: The Life and Hymns of Charles Wesley. John R. Tyson. (2008)**

**The Shaker Spiritual Narrative. Diane Sasson. (1983)**

**Yearning for the New Age: Laura Holloway-Langford and Late Victorian Spirituality. Diane Sasson. (2018)**

## To Visit:

Drop in for a visit between 1:00 pm and 4:00 pm any Saturday or Sunday. To arrange for a visit at another time or for a group tour, please call the number below.

You may want to consider visiting other sites in Baldwin City such as the Osborne Chapel, the Holt-Russell Gallery, the Old Castle Museum, or the Lumberyard Arts Center.

## Contact Information:

518 8<sup>th</sup> Street

Baldwin City, KS

Phone: 785.594.8414

Email: [quayle@bakeru.edu](mailto:quayle@bakeru.edu)

Web: [www.bakeru.edu/quayle](http://www.bakeru.edu/quayle)

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