

Session: Artistic Hymn Playing

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Friday, June 18, 2021, 4:15-5:00PM

Washington State Music Teachers Association 2021 Virtual Conference

What's so special about hymns?

- What is the purpose of a hymn? Who is the hymn for?
- What makes a hymn an artistic masterpiece in miniature form?
- Why sing hymns at all?

The way many organists prepare hymns vs. artistic preparation of hymns

Why take the time to prepare a hymn artistically?

- What's in it for me?
- What's in it for the congregation?

A change of mind-set when preparing a hymn— it's not "just" a hymn!

Artistic preparation of hymns requires:

- Sensitivity to congregational needs
- Thoughtful examination of the text and the music
- Technical work (fingering, pedaling, metronome, etc...)
- Adjustments for acoustic realities
- A thorough knowledge of the stops on the organ
- Working within the parameters of your skill-set as an organist

Demonstration: step-by-step procedure for artistic hymn preparation—

Hymn: "Abide With Me"

- Consideration of the text
- Consideration of the music
- Articulation choices
- Hymn introductions
- Technical preparation—things to practice
  - Typical manner of playing hymn (S, A, T, - manuals; B-Pedal)
  - Pedaling
  - Soloing the melody
  - Creating simple descants
- Using published interludes, modulations, descants
- Choosing registrations

Q & A

# Abide with Me

1 A - bide with me: fast falls the ev - en - tide;  
 2 Swift to its close ebbs out life's lit - tle day;  
 3 I need your pres - ence ev - ery pass - ing hour.  
 4 I fear no foe with you at hand to bless,  
 5 Hold now your Word be - fore my clo - sing eyes.

the dark - ness deep - ens; Lord, with me a - bide.  
 earth's joys grow dim, its glo - ries pass a - way.  
 ▸ What but your grace can foil the tempt - er's power?  
 though ills have weight, and tears their bit - ter - ness.  
 Shine through the gloom and point me to the skies.

When o - ther help - ers fail and com - forts flee,  
 Change and de - cay in all a - round I see.  
 ▸ Who like your - self my guide and strength can be?  
 Where is death's sting? Where, grave, your vic - to - ry?  
 Heaven's morn - ing breaks and earth's vain shad - ows flee;

Help of the help - less, O a - bide with me.  
 O Lord who chang - es not, a - bide with me.  
 ▸ Through cloud and sun - shine, O a - bide with me.  
 I tri - umph still, if you a - bide with me.  
 in life, in death, O Lord, a - bide with me.

Text: Henry F. Lyte, 1847, alt.  
 Tune: William H. Monk, 1861



10 10 10 10  
 EVENTIDE

[www.hymnary.org/text/abide\\_with\\_me\\_fast\\_falls\\_the\\_eventide](http://www.hymnary.org/text/abide_with_me_fast_falls_the_eventide)

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