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A Comparative Study of Selected Chorale Settings from Martin Luther to J.S. Bach

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A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF SELECTED CHORALE
SETTINGS FROM MARTIN LUTHER TO J. S. BACH
(TITLE)

BY

Emmanuel Mark Allen
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THESIS

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INTRODUCTION

Music literature written at the height of chorale usage covers the shift from modality to tonality. This transformation took place over a period of years. From 1523, the beginning of Martin Luther's creativity in church hymn settings, to the chorales of J. S. Bach, the shift from modal to tonal settings became clarified. This change was not one which involved the creation of an entirely new form, but one incorporating elements present in Luther's time with the elements of Bach. This paper will elaborate on these periods of music history and will present chorales representative of them. The comparative study will trace these chorales from Luther through Bach.

PART I. EARLY CHORALS TUNES

Chapter I. The Chorale

The term "chorale" is defined as a chorale song (cantus choralis) of ecclesiastical use, whether the term "song" is used in reference to the choral plainsong (cantus planus, cantus firmus) of the Roman office or the Protestant church hymn (Kirchenlied, Choralesong).¹ The history of the chorale is quite important to its definition.

The chorale is a metrical hymn tune associated with the Lutheran Church in Germany. In the unreformed church, the word had been used to distinguish that which was to be sung by many voices in unison from that which was to be sung by one voice in the liturgical plainsong. In German Catholic circles before the Reformation, the choral plainsong was known as the cantus concertus, as distinguished from the cantus accentus.

In twentieth-century speech the word carries with it the Reformed sense. According to E. R. Routley, "Martin Luther composed, or caused to be composed, many hymn tunes that were known at once as chorales because they were designed for congregational singing."² Unison singing was the manner

¹ Charles Sanford Terry, "Chorale," Grove's Dictionary of Music and Musicians, ed. by Eric Blom, II, 269.

² Erik Reginald Routley, "Chorale," Encyclopædia Britannica, 11th ed., V, 682.

in which the chorales were sung in the Reformed churches, both in Germany and in other countries. It was only gradually, however, that the melody shifted from the tenor to the treble line and that the organ was established as the harmonic base for congregational singing.

Charles Sanford Terry states the following in reference to the Protestant chorale:

As signifying a congregational hymn, the German word 'choral' came into general use in the second half of the sixteenth century, at a period 1) when, the principles of melodic symmetry and rhythm were being grasped and 2) when, too, steps were first taken to transfer the cantus planus from the tenor to the descant in the interests of congregational singing.³

The term "chorale", now restricted to melodies of German metrical hymns, really originated in a misunderstanding of what Johann Walther meant when he spoke of Luther as having called the "deutscher Choralgesang" into life. What both Luther and Walther meant by "Choralgesang" was the old cantus choralis or plainsong of the Latin Church, which Luther himself wished to retain. His purpose, to adapt the chief parts of the Latin hymns to German words, corresponded to Marbeck's purpose in his Book of Common Prayer Noted in England. All the older Lutheran Church musicians, such as Lucas, Lossius, and Michael Praetorius, used the words "Choral" and "Choralgesang" in the sense of the old plainsong melodies to the graduals, sequences, and antiphons,

³Terry, "Chorale," p. 270.

whether sung in Latin or adapted to German words. When German metrical hymns gradually replaced the other choral parts of the service, the name "Choral", in course of time, became restricted to the melodies of these hymns.

The Gregorian chorale represented the concentus, which was the melismatic section of the chant sung by the choir or soloist. The accentus was in distinct opposition to the concentus. The accentus was the intonation of the Collect, Epistle, or Gospel sung by the priest and was representative of syllabic and neumatic styles. The Choral was generally sung by more than one voice in proximity to the altar. The Choral is further described as a "Messegesang" treating usually a Biblical text from the tenth century Codex at Saint Gall of 630 A. D. The Gregorian chorale was in the same category as 1) Introitus, Offertorium, Communio which were sung by the choir; 2) the Tractus (cantus tractus), Gradualis (responsorium graduale or graduale), and Allusias which were sung by a voice or voices distinct from the choir between the Epistle and the Gospel; 3) Ordinarium Missae, i. e., the Kyrie, Gloria, Credo, Sanctus, Benedictus, Agnus Dei, and Sequences (prosa) which were sung by the choir.

Chapter II. The Text

The basic problem to the large body of Latin hymns and antiphons for church seasons and hours, sung by the clergy and the choir, was that these hymns and antiphons were not intelligible to the passive congregation. In Germany short vernacular hymns were admitted into public worship and were called Kirleison, Leisen, or Leichen. These earliest congregational hymns consisted of a stanza or stanzas prefixed to the Kyrie Eleison or Christe Eleison which had passed from the Greek into the Latin church, especially for festival work. The oldest of them dated from the end of the ninth century. Some rare examples of pre-Reformation popular hymnody are given in Appendix II.

These hymns demonstrate their abnormal liturgical use by the conjecture that while the hymn Nun bitten wir den heiligen Geist (Now pray we all God, the Comforter) was sung by the congregation, a wooden dove or a living bird was released from the roof of the church. Christmas mystery plays also invited vernacular hymns. For example, the old Latin chorale, In dulci jubilo (In sweet joy), became Ein Kind geboren zu Bethlehem (The child is born in Bethlehem) in German and Puer natus in Bethlehem

(The boy born in Bethlehem) in Latin. In addition to the preceding, the best Latin hymns were frequently translated, e. g., the Te Deum, Gloria in excelsis, Veni creator spiritus, Credo, Pater noster, and Sanctus. A large reservoir of hymns, therefore, had been created before the Reformation; in fact, between Otfrid of Weissenburg of the ninth century and 1518, more than 1440 German vernacular hymns had been written. Yet, throughout medieval centuries church music was almost exclusively the province of the choir and the clergy. In reference to these statements, Terry inserts the following:

Hence, when Luther set himself to provide the apparatus of congregational praise, he was able to draw upon a tradition of ecclesiastical song and a fund of popular hymnody.⁴

Terry considers Luther the first evangelical hymnist, "the Ambrose of the Reformation," who equipped the Protestant liturgy with the apparatus of the choral song.

⁴"Chorale," p. 270.

Chapter III. Luther's Philosophy of Music

Luther's viewpoints on music are important because of their influence upon his hymn writing. His viewpoints rest upon the intellectual heritage of the Middle Ages, uniting Christian and classical elements. His basis in viewing music as donum Dei, gift of God, which goes back to Saint Augustine of Hippo, is combined with his speculative, cosmological understanding of music. "Musica se extendit ad omnia (music relates itself to all things), and Nihil est sine numero o nota (nothing is without sound-giving number)."⁵ To the ontological and creative side of music belongs also the miracle of tone production in the position of man in relation to language.

Some of Luther's expressions, which testify to his understanding of music, are almost literally adopted medieval thought; for example, from J. Tinctoris' Complexus effectuum (complex of effects), "music is a domina et gubernatrix affectuum humanorum" (ruler and governess of human emotions.)⁶

Swalter Blankenburg, "Martin Luther," Die Musik in Geschichte und Gegenwart, 1960, VIII, (unpublished translation by Professor Otto Stahke, Concordia Lutheran Seminary, Springfield, Illinois, 1969), 1338.

⁵Ibid., col. 1339.

The characteristic element in Luther's understanding of music is discovered only in his theology. Next to it Luther gave the nearest place to music. His viewpoint of the inseparability of music from theology can be understood only in relation to his doctrine of justification. Since the grace of God requires a joyful faith, music belongs as a "nobilis, salutaris, laeta creatura" (noble, healthy, joyful creature) to the Christian life, and therefore it is opposed to the devil as the divine and most excellent gift.⁷ From this follows simultaneously Luther's idea as to the significance of applied music as the finest art. To the relation of applied music and human emotional life belong also the relation of music to speech. In his utterances on music Luther concerns himself with unison or multi-part singing in relation to music and Biblical word. Luther points out this relationship by saying that the notes bring the text to life.⁸

⁷Ibid.

⁸Ibid.

Chapter IV. Luther's Texts

Luther closely associated music with speech to such a degree that melismas were avoided in favor of exclusively syllabic songs. The Gregorian chant thereby became more song-like, which is evidenced especially in the translated New Testament canticles, which are to be sung according to Psalm tones. Thus because Luther thought of Christ as a friendly Lord whose speeches were lovely, he took the sixth tone for the Gospel, and because Luther thought of Saint Paul as an earnest apostle, he took the eighth tone for the Epistle. His theory "was based on the ancient analogy between music and rhetoric and elaborated it by figures in a peculiar manner."⁹ Luther preserved the chanting of the pastor and the choir, the latter not only for the unison liturgical song, but also for the multi-part song. He tolerated also the use of instruments in the divine service.

Luther himself took hold of the creation of the necessary church hymns apparently beginning in 1523, after his hope for hymns by other poets was not fulfilled. Luther's poems are basically designed for the worship service, which again related more or less to various prior examples.

⁹Manfred F. Bukofzer, Music in the Baroque Era (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, Inc., 1947), p. 388.

In principle Luther followed the Meistersinger manner in composing melodies by assuming the task of creating the desired melodies with a view to the worshipful purpose of his poems. For instance, Luther's activity as a creator of melodies is evident by J. Walther's report on Jesaja dem Propheten das geschah (These things the Seer Isaiah did befall), wherein the latter especially emphasized the close relation of word and tone.¹⁰ The creation of melodies in the sixteenth century did not signify the creation of new melodies, but it did signify the transformation of existing material. Luther's mastery revealed itself in the degree of this renovation. In individual cases the cooperation of his musical co-laborers should be assumed, especially J. Walther; but absolute certainty in individual cases would not be possible. That Luther was in position to create multi-voiced tone settings was quite possible. According to Walter Blankenburg the four-part tone setting Non Moriar, sed vivam (Not death, but life) which is preserved in the drama Lazarus by J. Greff (1545) is designated as the work of Luther.

¹⁰Blankenburg, "Martin Luther," col. 1343.

Chapter V. Luther's Hymns

In writing his hymns, Luther used 1) the official Latin hymnody, 2) pre-Reformation popular hymns, 3) secular folksongs, and 4) original hymns. The term "official Latin hymnody" refers to those Latin hymns with their adapted melodies which the Lutheran Church adopted. Several of these hymns are included as originals by Luther. Terry, in his book The Four-part Chorales of J. S. Bach, confirms the proposition that these particular hymns were adapted from the Latin.

Following is a list of hymns Terry considered as original with Luther. Christum wir sollen loben schon (Now praise we Christ, the Holy One), translated from a Coelius Sedulius' sequence, is written in eight four-line stanzas dating from 1524. The hymn appeared first in the Erfurt Enchiridion, 1524; in Olerarius, Wittenberg, 1525; Koch, 1524; and in Wiener, Winterfeld, and others. Der du bist drei in Einigkeit (Thou who art three in unity) is the translation of O lux beata trinitas, (O light, the blessed Trinity), which was written in three four-line stanzas dating from 1544; the melody of this hymn is an adaptation of the ancient tune which the Benedictine editors regarded as the work of Saint Ambrose. Luther translated

this hymn three years before his death and added the third stanza. This hymn appeared in Klug's book, Wittenberg, 1543; Babst, 1545; the Magdeburg edition of 1551; and other minor publications. Gelobet seist du, Jesu Christ (All praise, Lord Jesus Christ, to Thee) was written in 1524; when harmonized by J. S. Bach, the hymn was used as the basis of Cantata 91 employing two horns and tympani. This hymn is a version of the sequence Gratas nunc omnes reddamus (Blessings now we all restore), written in seven five-line stanzas as an adaptation of the Latin plainsong. Herr Gott, Dich loben wir (Lord God, thy Praise we sing) is the free version of Te Deum laudamus (We praise Thee God) in fifty-two lines for antiphonal singing. Written in 1529, the melody is a reconstruction of the Latin plainsong. Komm, Gott, Schöpfer, heiliger Geist (Come, God Creator, Holy Ghost) was written in seven four-line stanzas dating from 1524. Both melody and words are taken from the Latin Veni Creator Spiritus (Come Creator Spirit). Komm, heiliger Geist, Herre Gott (Come, Holy Spirit, Lord our God) is an expansion of the antiphon Veni Sancte Spiritus (Come Holy Spirit) in three nine-line stanzas; written in 1524, the melody is anonymous. Nun Komm, der Heiden Heiland (Savior of the heathen, known) is the translation of Saint Ambrose's Veni redemptor gentium (Come gentle Redeemer), written in eight four-line stanzas in 1524. The melody is an adaptation of the Latin hymn. Wir glauben All an einen Gott, Schöpfer is the free version of the Nicene

Credo. Written in three ten-line stanzas in 1524, it is translated We all believe in one true God. The melody is composed from the plainsong of the Credo.

Of the preceding hymns seven are from the eleven hymns Terry listed as originals by Luther. Four not described are Verleih' uns Frieden gnädiglich (In these our days so perilous); Was fürcht'et du, Feind Herodes, sehr (Why, Herod, unrelenting foe); Jesus Christus, unser Heiland, der von uns (Christ, who freed our souls from danger); and Erhalt uns, Herr, bei deinem Wort (Lord, keep us steadfast in Thy Word).

In using pre-Reformation popular hymns, Luther and his colleagues appropriated many popular medieval hymns, rewriting or expanding their words and adapting their melodies (called Verbesserung.) For example, Hans Sachs (1495-1575) took the pre-Reformation hymn Dich Frau Vom Himmel ruf' ich an' (Thy Mother from heaven of one true blood) and wrote the hymn Christum vom Himmel ruf' ich an' (Christ from heaven of one true blood). Sachs' final version was later rewritten as Christlich verändert und korrigiert (Changed and corrected to Christian use). Luther described his hymn Jesus Christus, unser Heiland, der von uns (Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior) as John Hus' hymn Jesus Christus, nostra solus (Jesus Christ ours alone).

Sacred folksong, our second category, provided many melodies for the service of the Lutheran Church. The

following hymns Terry noted as Luther's yet each one is pre-Reformation in origin. Gott der Vater wohn' uns bei (God, the Father with us stay) was written in three fourteen-line stanzas in 1524. Both the hymn and the melody are pre-Reformation in origin; the melody though anonymous is written for Whitsuntide. Gott sei gelobet und gebenedeist (May God be praised henceforth and blessed forever), dating from 1524, has three stanzas of ten lines each, and the melody of this hymn is anonymous. Dating from 1524, Mitten wir im leben sind (In the midst of Life are we) is an expansion of the antiphon Media vita in morte sumus (In the midst of life we are in death), written in three fourteen-line stanzas. Only two of the stanzas, the second and the third, are by Luther, and the melody is adapted from the pre-Reformation hymn. The final hymn by Luther is Nun bitten wir den Heiligen Geist (Now pray Thee to the Holy Ghost). Stanzas two, three, and four were written by Luther. Based on a pre-Reformation melody, there are four five-line stanzas.

The third category used by Luther was that of the secular folksong. Before Luther, Heinrich von Laufenberg wrote religious parodies of secular ditties. This use of the secular was not beyond Luther because he was sensitive to the value of popular art as a contributor to the apparatus of religion. As supported and sponsored by Calvin, the Dutch Reformed Church borrowed freely from the secular. The manner in which Lutheran compilers purified the popular

art was through substitution; for instance, the hymn Ach
Gott, thu' dich erbarmen (O God, have pity on us) received
its melody from an untranslated folksong, Frisch auf, ihr
Landsknecht alle.

Chapter VI. Luther's Original Hymns

The final category of original hymns appeared between 1523 and 1543. During this period two types appeared. The first type was that of Luther's original, or mainly original, hymns of which there are eight. The second type were those of Luther's which are still in German use; seventeen of these have received original tunes from the hymn books in which they first appeared.

The original hymns include both the hymns by Luther and the tunes by Luther. During this period thirty-eight pieces were composed, the majority being translations, revisions or enlargements of pre-Reformation material.

Christ lag in Todesbanden (Christ was laid in death's strong bands) was composed by Luther for the Easter season. This hymn was first published in Das Buch der Psalmen in Erfurt in 1524. It was entitled "The hymn, Christ ist erstanden, improved."¹¹ According to John Julian, "Only eight traces of the Christ ist erstanden are retained in Luther's hymn."¹² Terry calls the hymn "a free revision of Christ ist erstanden

¹¹ John Julian, Dictionary of Hymnology, 225. This hymn is translated Christ is risen.

¹² Ibid.

in seven eight-line stanzas."¹³ Stanzas four and five are based on the sequence Victimae paschali laude (Praise the paschal sacrifice) and the Surrexit Christus hodie (Christ arose today). Julian also states, "These German and Latin hymns, with the Scriptural notices of the passover lamb, furnished Luther with the materials of the beautiful poem, but the working out is entirely original. . . ."¹⁴

Julian continues his statement by making a subjective comparison of this hymn to Ein feste Burg ist unser Gott (A mighty fortress is our God).

Christ unser Herr, zum Jordan kam (To Jordan came our Lord, the Christ) was composed by Luther for Holy Baptism. The original title was A hymn on our Holy Baptism wherein is briefly embraced [sic] what it is? Who instituted it? What is its use? This hymn is a catechetical hymn setting forth the Lutheran doctrine of baptism and is based on Saint Matthew 3:13-7 and Saint Mark 16.

Ein' neus Lied wir heben an (By help of God I fain would tell) was composed by Luther as his first hymn dating from 1523. The history of this hymn involves the martyrdom of two Augustinian monks, Heinrich Voess and Johann Esch, at Antwerp on June 30, 1523. Both the monks had been condemned to death and burned at the stake in Brussels. The hymn

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ Charles Sanford Terry, The Four-part Chorales of J. S. Bach (London: Oxford University Press, 1929), p. 26.

first appeared in Eyn Enchiridion in 1524. The original title of the hymn was A new song of the two Martyrs for Christ, burnt at Brussels by the Sophists of Louvain.

This hymn produced a deep impression during the Reformation times and appeared in many of the early Lutheran hymn books, but being a rather historical ballad than a hymn, has not reappeared in recent collections.

Erhalt' uns, Herr, bei deinem Wort was composed by Luther in 1541. During this year a service of prayer against the Turks was held at Wittenberg for which Luther prepared a special office, in which most of the music was arranged for the boys of the choir. In Klug's Geistliche Lieder it was entitled A hymn for the children to sing against the two arch-enemies of Christ, and His Holy Church, the Pope and the Turks. Additional stanzas have often been appended to this hymn, the most popular being those by Justus Jonas, probably written in 1545, against the Council of Trent.

Jesus Christus unser Heiland, der den Tod überwand (Jesus Christ, who came to save) was composed by Luther during the Easter season. It was first published in Eyn Enchiridion in 1524. Each stanza of this hymn ends with Kyrie eleyson.

Nun freut euch, lieben Christen g'mein (Dear Christians, one and all rejoice) was composed as Luther's first congregational hymn, written in 1523. It is entitled in Etlich

cristisch lider as A Christian hymn of Dr. Martin Luther,
setting forth the unspeakable grace of God and the true
faith. In Klug's Geistliche Lieder and later books, it
 is titled A Hymn of Thanksgiving for the great blessings
which God has bestowed on us in Christ. Tileman Hesshusius
 in his preface to Johannes Magdeburg's Psalter of 1565
 speaks thus:

I do not doubt that through this one hymn
 of Luther many hundreds of Christians have
 been brought to the true faith, who before
 could not endure the name of Luther; but the
 noble, precious words of the hymn have won their
 hearts, so that they are constrained to em-
 brace the truth; so that in my opinion the
 hymns have helped the spread of the Gospel
 not a little.¹⁵

Vom Himmel hoch da komm ich her (From heaven above
to earth I come) was composed by Luther for the Christmas
 season in 1535. In Klug's Geistliche Lieder in 1543, it
 was titled A Children's Hymn for Christmas Eve on the child
Jesus taken from the second Chapter of the Gospel of Saint
Luke. Terry contends that the hymn is by Paul Gerhardt
 and the melody is by Luther. However, Lauxmann, in Kooh
 says, "Luther was accustomed every year to prepare for his
 family a happy Christmas Eve's entertainment. . . and for
 this festival of his children he wrote this Christmas hymn."¹⁶

Vom Himmel kam der Engel Schaar (To shepherds, as
they watched by night) was composed by Luther for Christmas

¹⁵Julian, Hymnology, p. 821.

¹⁶Ibid., p. 1227.

and was meant for use when his other Christmas hymn was too long. Based on Saint Luke 2:10-11 and Saint Matthew 2:6, it was written in 1543.

To the eight preceding original hymns, Terry would add a ninth Wo Gott, der Herr, nicht bei uns hält (Were God the Lord not on our side). This hymn appears in his The Four-part Chorales of J. S. Bach. The version is from Psalm 74 and is written in three seven-line stanzas.

All but two of Luther's hymns are still in German use. Seventeen of them received original tunes in the hymn book in which they first appeared. (See Appendix V.) One of these will be used later in comparison with Bach's development of the same hymn Vater unser im Himmelreich (Our Father, Thou in heaven above). What share Luther had in the musical composition of these hymns cannot be positively stated. Through Luther's influence a powerful movement of congregational singing in evangelical Germany developed. Luther at first tried to induce others to compose German hymns that could take the place of Latin singing. When his appeal did not find the response he had desired, he composed such hymns himself. The history of Luther's hymns materialized at first in small and then in somewhat more comprehensive collections of hymns. Book of Eight Hymns of 1524, Erfurt Manual of 1524, Johann Walther's Choral Hymnbook of 1524, and later the Leipzig Hymnbook and the Strassburg Hymnbook are examples.

PART II. LATER CHORALE TUNES

Chapter VII. Bach's Original Chorale Harmonizations

The number of originals by Luther was eight according to Grove and nine according to Terry. Johann Sebastian Bach also composed a total of eight original chorales. In reference to these, "Bach composed both the melody and the harmonization."¹⁷ Bach is, therefore, the harmonizer of the remaining chorales. "In the case of all the four-part chorales used by Bach in his cantatas, passions, and oratorios, he took the melody from the Lutheran hymnal and himself wrote only the lower parts."¹⁸ To the preceding statement is added the following footnote: "In but one case, Welt ade, No. 350, at the end of Cantata 27, does Bach adopt another's harmonization."¹⁹ No. 350 is titled Welt, ade! ich bin dein müde from Cantata 27 Wer Weiss sei nahe mir mein Ende. Both the melody and harmonization of this chorale are by Johann Rosenmüller, and the text is by Johann Georg Albinus in 1649.

The eight originals by Bach are the chorales which follow Drinker's No. 67 Dir, dir Jehova, will ich singen

¹⁷Henry S. Drinker, The 389 Chorales of Johann Sebastian Bach (Princeton, New Jersey: Association of American Choruses, 1944), p. xv.

¹⁸Ibid.

¹⁹Ibid.

(To Thee, Jehova, come I singing) was composed in 1725; the text was written in 1697 by Bartholomäus. No. 111 Gib dich zufrieden und sei stille (Fret not, my soul, on God relying) was also composed in 1725, and the text was written by Paul Gerhardt in 1666. No date is given for the composition of No. 113 Gott Lob! es geht nunmehr zu Ende (Thanks be to God, my end is near me), but the text was written by Christian Weise in 1682. No. 174 Ich bin ja, Herr, in deiner Macht (Tis well with me for by Thy Might) has no date given for its composition, and the author of the text was Simon Dach in 1648. In 1736 No. 191 Jesu, Jesu, du bist mein (Jesus, Jesus, Thou art mine) was composed and the words were taken from the Meiningen Gesangbuch in 1697. No. 222 Komm, Jesu, Komm (Come, Jesus, Come) has no date given for its composition, and the words for this chorale were taken from Wagner's Gesangbuch in 1697. No. 253 Nicht so traurig, nicht so sehr (Fret not, soul, that God gives thee) has no date given for its composition, and the text of this chorale was written by Paul Gerhardt in 1649. The final chorale mentioned here No. 284 O Herzensanget, O Bangigkeit und Zagen (Weary with woe, my heart is deep despairing) is not dated, and the text is by Gerhardt Müller von Königsberg.

Chapter VIII. Other Composers of Chorales

Although Luther and Bach were the major contributors during this period, other composers produced chorales of some importance. Arnoldus van Bruck wrote compositions which are scattered through collective volumes of sacred and secular music published in the sixteenth century, but no separate volume of works by van Bruck is known to exist. Sixtus Dieterick published the Epicedion Thomae Sporeri in five parts in 1534, a first book of Magnificats. He also published in 1535 thirty-six Antiphons and in 1545 Novum opus musicum. Five of Dieterick's compositions are in the Dodecachordon of Glareanus. Ludwig Senfl edited the Liber selectarum cantionum, one of the first music books printed in Germany in 1520. For purposes of comparison Thomas Steltzer will be included with regard to specific chorales.

Chapter IX. Significance of the Organ

The organ in the early evangelical service continued in use as had been the custom in the Roman service. In that service it had been used to play preludes and to give the tone to the priest or the choir, alternating with the latter in the liturgical songs and hymns--one verse being sung by the choir, followed by the same on the organ. The organ was not used to accompany the choir nor was it used to accompany the congregation. In fact accompaniment was not necessary, because harmonic structure had not been established and unison singing was customarily unaccompanied. Hence, the organ was used exclusively as an independent instrument.

Because of this independence, organists began playing running passages as they played preludes to the hymns. Before long, secular music became prevalent for the offertory and other parts of the service. In fact the practice even spread to the Roman church. "Pope Clement VIII in 1600 issued orders curtailing the use of the organ in Roman churches because such evil practices had crept in."²⁰ As a result, the transition of the organ from an independent to a supportive instrument was delayed.

²⁰ Edwin Liebhaf, The Chorale (Philadelphia: Muhlenberg Press, 1953), p. 48.

With the curtailment of the use of the organ, Lukas Osiander developed a type of musical structure which made it possible for the choir to accompany the congregation in the hymns; however, this did not solve the problem. The small proportion of voices in the choir could not adequately support the greater number of voices in the congregation. Osiander's harmonic technique brought forth a type of music which would now make it possible for the organ to accompany congregational singing.

The use of the organ for accompanying congregational singing developed gradually as the number of harmonic musical compositions grew. One of the early publications written for the organist was Johann Hermann Schein's Cantional published in 1627. This work contained melodies and figured bass and was used to accompany the choir. The first organ book for accompanying congregational singing was published in 1650 by Samuel Scheidt. The work contained 112 settings of 100 melodies in use at that time. Soon after the publication the organ replaced the choir as the leader of congregational singing.

PART III. THE COMPARISON

Chapter X. Elements of Comparison

In comparing the works of the composers of chorales from Martin Luther to J. S. Bach, various styles must be analyzed. Style itself refers to the methods of treating elements of composition: form, melody, rhythm, notation. In approaching the comparison it is these elements that we shall consider.

The aspect of form is the pattern or scheme through which the notes are placed. Ordinarily the term "form" refers to the arrangement of sections. Chorales are usually short in duration, and thus form is not sufficiently involved to be considered of prime importance.

With reference to the chorale, Luther placed the significance in the melodic line. The music in this period of reformation was of two types: monodic, being the congregational hymn, sung in unison; and polyphonic, a more elaborate setting for choir. The position of the choir in the church service was not appreciably altered as compared with its function in the Roman church. The transition from singing by a professional choir to congregational singing was not effected in a short time. In fact, this transition became the main stimulus for the change of polyphony to homophony.

During the Reformation the composer had conceived musical compositions on a horizontal plane with the musical material being set to several melodies performed concurrently. This type of music, polyphony, did not serve the purpose of the Lutheran congregation. This practice only slowed down the progress of harmony. Edwin Lisemohn states, "The close of the sixteenth century discarded this technique [polyphony] and adopted a homophonic style, consisting of a melody with a sketchy harmonic accompaniment, the figured bass."²¹

Luther's main innovation was in converting the Latin chants to a form to be used in the Protestant service. In doing this, he was concerned with changing the text from Latin to German. In his German Mass of 1526 he replaced the Latin chants with German hymns. This mass was written in a four-line staff using the C clef as the only clef throughout the mass.

German church musicians recognized that with polyphony there was no uniformity in rhythmic movement. The choir, the organ, and the congregation functioned as three separate entities. The realization that the congregation needed the support of both the choir and the organ would need further development. To accomplish this change, the form of music had to be simple and uniform in rhythmic movement. It could not be polyphonic. In Appendix VII

²¹The Chorale, p. 48.

Senfl's arrangement of Christ ist erstanden presents the tune in the first alto part, but the sections of the tune are separated with other material not necessarily pertaining to the tune. The tune enters briefly in the mezzo soprano voice in the ninth measure, but this entrance is deceptive. For this reason, the chorales demonstrate a technical problem which only the professional performer can ascertain.

The development of harmony was again associated to the strengthening of the vocal participation of the congregation within the German service. Osiander, pastor in the Frauenkirche in Nürnberg, published in 1586 his Funfsig geistliche Lieder. This book was of fifty chorales for four voices. This was the first publication designed to unite the choir and congregation in the singing of hymns. In reference to this publication, Liechow states, "The intricate and devious weavings of polyphony were now replaced by a single, clean-cut, vertical musical structure of chords."²² The melody was now taken from the tenor and given to the soprano as another aid in congregational singing.

Osiander's innovation was a step forward for congregational singing, and this in turn influenced other composers. Michael Praetorius issued a church music publication Musae Sioniae in 1605. This work contains 1244 settings of chorale melodies arranged for groups from two-part choirs to quadruple four-voice choirs. The introduction of harmonic technique

²²Ibid.

from Osiander to Prätorius did not preclude the continuation of the polyphonic practices because Prätorius continued to write polyphonic settings for the choir. In fact, between Osiander and Prätorius there were composers whose chief interest lay in writing music for the choir. Johann Eccard in his Geistliche Lieder auff den Choral, 1597; Gesius in his Geistliche deutsche Lieder, 1601; Hans Leo Hassler in his Kirchengesänge, 1608; nor Melchior Vulpius in his Gesangbuch of 1609 did not materially aid congregational singing.

Just as changes in form, melody, and rhythm were slow in occurring so was the modernizing of notation. European music was in its early stages of development at the time of the Reformation. While the present system of notation had its beginnings in the tenth century, with the use of the four-line staff becoming common by the middle of the eleventh century, the present system of notation using the five-line staff came in the fifteenth century. This staff was used only for vocal music.

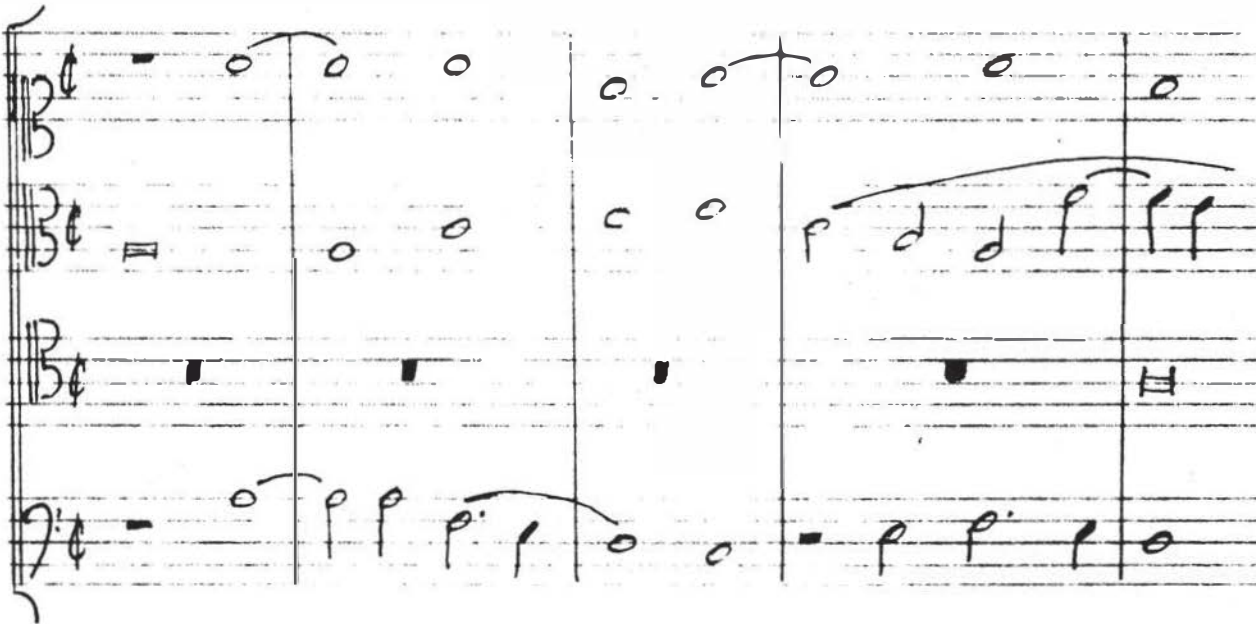
The systematic use of more modern devices, such as bar lines, was not universal until the eighteenth century. Bar lines as used during the Reformation, indicated breathing places in singing and did not indicate the end of a measure. The Freylinghausen hymnal of 1741 is the first original work to employ the bar line in its modern usage.

Chapter XI. The Chorale Tunes,
Christ ist erstanden and
Vater unser im Himmelreich

The two chorale tunes chosen for comparative purposes are Christ ist erstanden and Vater unser im Himmelreich. These two chorales were chosen because the tunes used are similar to the original tunes used by Luther. Although several settings of these chorale titles occur within the Denkmäler deutscher Tonkunst, the ones presented here employ the same or similar chorale tune used by Luther.

The composers of the various examples are Martin Luther, Thomas Stoltzer, Ludwig Senfl, Arnoldus van Bruck, and J. S. Bach. These composers play an important part in demonstrating the changes made in the chorale from 1524 to 1750.

The settings of these chorale tunes by Stoltzer, Senfl, and van Bruck are found in the form that was employed at the time; that is, they are not under the standard twentieth-century clef arrangement of G and F clefs. Instead, usually four clefs are used which position the range according to the voice singing the part. For example, the soprano, alto, tenor, and bass clefs are used in these tunes. Van Bruck's original setting of Vater unser im Himmelreich shows this standard clef arrangement.



In comparing the arrangements of Christ ist erstanden, examples by Luther, Stoltzer, Senfl and Bach are used. These examples can be found in Appendix VII with the cantus firmus shown in red.

A comparison of clef arrangements is noteworthy. Luther probably used the C clef.²³ However, Luther's Geistliche Lieder showed all his tunes in the G clef. Therefore the possibility exists that either clef could have been employed. Stoltzer used a four-voice setting: soprano, alto, tenor, and bass maintaining, the C and F clefs. Senfl used a six-voiced setting: treble, mezzo soprano, alto, alto, alto, and baritone, using the G, C, and F clefs. Finally, Bach employed the treble and bass or G and F clefs.

²³This conjecture is based on Luther's handwriting from his Deutsche Messe 1526.

Harmonic development is easily traced from Luther's tune through the arrangement by Bach. Luther's arrangement of the tune is solely monophonic and modal. Luther used the dorian mode with a finalis of d, and an ambitus of d-d', and a dominant of a. This melody stays within the traditional appearance of a Gregorian chant.

Stoltzer's polyphonic arrangement begins like a canon at the octave with the voices entering at different times. The tune is not completely established until it enters in the tenor voice where it remains throughout the composition. Parts of the tune appear in the soprano voice from measure twenty-three through measure thirty-two. The deceptive quality of entries such as this, makes the composition one for a choir of trained voices rather than one for the congregation.

The Senfl arrangement is also polyphonic. His setting is complicated by the number of voices present. Composed for six voices, the tune does not enter until measure seventeen in the first alto part with a deceptive entry at the ninth measure in the mezzo soprano part, lasting only four measures. Senfl's arrangement is also complicated by the text. Although the title of the chorale is Christ ist erstanden, the words used are Christ der ist erstanden. This one word deviation in text, changed the tune appreciably. The text does not become Christ ist erstanden, or the text of the original tune, until the cantus firmus appears.

Using harmony as the basis for the chordal accompaniment, the Bach arrangement is homophonic in structure. The tune has been taken from the tenor and given to the soprano. Bach's development of the tune is in adding non-harmonic tones in the form of accented and unaccented passing tones to exemplify the harmonic content. For example, in measure one a b natural used as a nonaccented passing tone points up a leading tone feeling.

In comparing the arrangement of the chorale tune Vater unser im Himmelreich, examples by Luther, van Bruck, and Bach are used. These are found in Appendix VIII. The complete change from Luther's church mode style to Bach's homophonic style is as clearly seen in this chorale tune as in Christ ist erstanden.

Whether or not Martin Luther harmonized his own chorale tunes is open to conjecture. In the first preface to the Geistliche Gesangbuchlin, Luther states, "These songs have been set in four parts, for no other reason than because I wished to provide our young people. . .with something whereby they might rid themselves of amorous and carnal song. . . ."24 He does not, however, state he himself was the composer of these parts.

The significance of the Gregorian chant and the church mode is seen in the tune of Vater unser im Himmelreich. The mode is the protus authenticus, primus tonus.

²⁴ Leonard Woolsey Bacon, ed., The Hymns of Martin Luther (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1883), p. xxi.

or the authentic dorian mode. The ambitus is from the d-f' having extended the range of the dorian mode two steps. The finalis is d and the dominant is a.

Van Bruck's chorale setting places the tune in the tenor with only fragmentary deviations from the original tune. For instance, measures fourteen through sixteen, twenty-one, twenty-seven through twenty-nine, and thirty-five through thirty-seven are examples of deviations from the original tune. Due to its polyphonic setting, it is an arrangement suitable for the choir rather than the congregation.

Bach's Vater unser im Himmelreich is a homophonic setting using the I, I $\frac{6}{4}$, V, I progression as the harmonic structure of the chorale. The soprano maintains the tune, and this tune involves the use of nonharmonic tones.

Chapter XII. Conclusions

The chorale tune underwent a major change in structure from the time of Luther's writing to that of Bach. The early chorale tune showed a vagueness of style which was typical of the Gregorian chant. The structure of the chorale after Luther was basically polyphonic. The significant changes from these chorales to those of Bach were in the change from polyphony to homophony. The vertical aspects of composition were established firmly in the later chorale tunes.

The tune also underwent changes. These changes proceeded from Luther's modal style to Bach's increasing tonality. Gustave Reese in Music in the Renaissance states, ". . .the system of church modes was to remain valid solely for monophony and that, as soon as polyphony began to develop, harmonic relations began to develop also, and were to lead gradually to a new tonal system--that of major and minor."²⁵ The transition from polyphony to homophony established the harmonic relations which were the basis of Bach's chorales.

The importance that Luther placed on the congregation as an active agent in the service explained the innovation

²⁵Gustave Reese, Music in the Renaissance (New York: W. W. Norton & Co., 1954), p. 141.

of homophony. The simple melodies were easily sung as they existed. However, composers maintained the separation of congregation, choir, and organ. When composers began producing simple harmonic progression and eliminating the elaborate interweaving of voices in the polyphonic technique, the choir began to support the voices of the untrained congregation.

Gradually homophonic material published for the organ increased its use, and the organ replaced the need for the choir to act as the supportive aid to congregational singing. Herein, approximately two hundred years later, Luther's goal of having the congregation take an active part in the church service through the singing of vernacular chorales was realized.

APPENDIXES

I. Examples from Official Latin
Hymnody Used by Luther

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1. <u>Christum wir sollen loben
schon</u> | <u>O solus ortus cardine</u> |
| 2. <u>Der du bist drei in
Einigkeit</u> | <u>O lux beata trinitas</u> |
| 3. <u>Erhalt' uns, Herr, bei
deinem Wort</u> | <u>Sit laus, honor et gloria</u> |
| 4. <u>Gelobet seist du, Jesu Christ</u> | <u>In dulci jubilo</u> |
| 5. <u>Herr Gott, dich loben wir alle</u> | <u>Te Deum laudamus</u> |
| 6. <u>Jesus Christus, unser
Heiland, der von uns</u> | <u>Jesus Christus,
nostra solus</u> |
| 7. <u>Komm, Gott, Schöpfer,
heiliger Geist</u> | <u>Veni Creator Spiritus</u> |
| 8. <u>Komm, heiliger Geist,
Herre Gott</u> | <u>Veni sancti Spiritus</u> |
| 9. <u>Nun komm, der Heiden
Heiland</u> | <u>Veni redemptor
gentium</u> |
| 10. <u>Verleih' uns, Frieden
gnädiglich</u> | <u>Da pacem, Domine</u> |
| 11. <u>Was fürcht'st du, Feind
Herodes, schr</u> | <u>Hostis Herodes impie</u> |
| 12. <u>Wir glauben all' an
einen Gott</u> | <u>Credo in Deum patrem
omnipotentem</u> |

II. Examples of Pre-Reformation
Popular Hymody

- | | |
|----------------------|--|
| 1. The Passover tide | <u>Da Jesus an dem Kreuze stund</u>
<u>O du armen Judas</u> |
| 2. The Easter | <u>Christ ist erstanden</u>
<u>Christ lag in Todesbanden</u>
<u>Freu' dich, du werthe Christenkeit</u> |
| 3. The Trinity | <u>Christ führ gen Himmel</u> |
| 4. The Whitsuntide | <u>Nun bitten wir den heiligen Geist</u>
<u>Dies sind die heiligen zehn Gebot</u>
<u>Gott der Vater wohn uns bei</u>
<u>Gott sei gelobet und gebenedeiet</u>
<u>Mitten wir im Leben sind</u> |

III. Examples of Substitution Through Secular Folksong

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1. <u>Ach Gott, thu' dich</u>
<u>erbarmen</u> | <u>from Frisch auf, ihr Land-</u>
<u>sknecht alle</u> |
| 2. <u>Durch Adams Fall ist</u>
<u>ganz verderbt</u> | Pavia song |
| 3. <u>Freut euch, freut euch</u>
<u>in dieser Zeit</u> | <u>So weiss ich eins, das</u>
<u>mich erfreut</u> |
| 4. <u>Helft mir Gotts Güte preisen</u> | <u>Ich ging einmal spazieren</u> |
| 5. <u>Von Gott will ich nicht</u>
<u>lassen</u> | <u>Ich ging einmal spazieren</u> |
| 6. <u>Herr Christ, der einig Gotts</u>
<u>Sohn</u> | <u>Ich hört' ein Fräulein</u>
<u>klagen</u> |
| 7. <u>Hilf Gott, dass mir's</u>
<u>gelingen</u> | <u>Könnt' ich von Herzen singen</u> |
| 8. <u>Ich dank' dir, lieber Herre</u> | <u>Entlaubt ist uns der Walde</u> |
| 9. <u>Ich hab' mein' Sach' Gott</u>
<u>beigestellt</u> | <u>Ich weiss mir ein Röslein</u>
<u>hübsch und fein</u> |
| 10. <u>In dir ist Freude</u> | <u>A lieta vita</u> |
| 11. <u>Nun freut euch, lieben</u>
<u>Christen g'mein</u> | <u>Wach auf, Wach auf, du schöne</u> |
| 12. <u>Nun höret zu, ihr</u>
<u>Christenleut</u> | <u>Und wollt ihr hören neue Mär</u> |
| 13. <u>O Christe Morgensterne</u> | <u>Er ist der Morgensterne</u> |
| 14. <u>O Haupt voll Blut</u> | <u>Mein G'müt ist mer verwirret</u> |
| 15. <u>Herzlich thut mich verlangen</u> | <u>Mein G'müt ist mer verwirret</u> |
| 16. <u>O Welt, ich muss dich lassen</u> | <u>Inspruch ich muss dich lassen</u> |

17. Vom Himmel hoch da komm ich Aus fremden Landen komm ich her
her
18. Vom Himmel kam der Engel Aus fremden Landen komm ich her
Schaar
19. Wacht auf, ihr Christen alle Waer is mijn alder liefste
20. Warum betrübst du dich, Dein g'sund mein Freud'
mein Herz
21. Was mein Gott will', Il me souffit de tous mes mauix
das g'sehen' allseit
22. Wenn wir in höchsten a French folksong
Nöthen sein

IV. Luther's Original Hymns

- | | | |
|----|---|------|
| 1. | <u>Christ lag in Todesbanden</u> | 1524 |
| 2. | <u>Christ, unser Herr, zum Jordan kam</u> | 1543 |
| 3. | <u>Ein' neues Lied wir heben an</u> | 1524 |
| 4. | <u>Erhalt' uns, Herr, bei deinem Wort</u> | 1542 |
| 5. | <u>Jesus Christus unser Heiland, der den Tod überwand</u> | 1524 |
| 6. | <u>Nun freut euch, lieben Christen g'mein</u> | 1523 |
| 7. | <u>Vom Himmel hoch da komm ich her</u> | 1535 |
| 8. | <u>Vom Himmel kam der Engel Schaar</u> | 1543 |
| 9. | <u>Wo Gott, der Herr, nicht bei uns hält</u> | 1535 |

V. Hymns which Received Original
Tunes in Hymnbook

1.	<u>Ach Gott vom Himmel sieh'darein</u>	1524
2.	<u>Aus tiefer Noth schrei ich zu dir</u>	1524
3.	<u>Ein' neues Lied wir heben an</u>	1524
4.	<u>Ein' feste Burg ist unser Gott</u>	1535
5.	<u>Es spricht der Unweisen Mund wohl</u>	1524
6.	<u>Es wollt uns Gott genädig sein</u>	1524
7.	<u>Jesaia, dem Propheten, das geschah</u>	1526
8.	<u>Jesus Christus, unser Heiland, der den Tod</u>	1524 and 1535
9.	<u>Jesus Christus, unser Heiland, der von un</u>	1524 and 1535
10.	<u>Mensch, willst du leben seliglich</u>	1524
11.	<u>Mit Fried' und Freud' ich fahr dahin</u>	1524
12.	<u>Nun freut euch, lieben Christen g'mein</u>	1524 and 1535
13.	<u>Wie ist mir lieb die werthe Magd</u>	1545
14.	<u>Vater unser im Himmelreich</u>	1539
15.	<u>Vom Himmel hoch da komm ich her</u> (not the secular melody previously referred to--1535)	1539
16.	<u>Wär' Gott nicht mit uns diese Zeit</u>	1524
17.	<u>Wohl dem der in Gottes Furcht steht</u>	1524

VI. J. S. Bach's Eight Original Chorale Tunes

- | | | |
|----|---|------|
| 1. | <u>Dir, dir, Jehova, will ich singen</u> | 1725 |
| 2. | <u>Gib dich zufrieden und sei stille</u> | 1725 |
| 3. | <u>Gott Lob! es geht nunmehr zu Ende</u> | ? |
| 4. | <u>Ich bin ja, Herr, in deiner Macht</u> | ? |
| 5. | <u>Jesu, Jesu, da bist mein</u> | 1736 |
| 6. | <u>Komm, Jesu, komm</u> | ? |
| 7. | <u>Nicht so traurig, nicht so sehr</u> | ? |
| 8. | <u>O Herzensangst, O Bangigkeit und Zagen</u> | ? |

VII.
Luther's Christ ist erstanden



Source: Friedrick Layriz, 335 Melodien Deutscher Kirchengesänge, 1837, p. 14.

Stoltzer's Christ ist erstanden

Handwritten musical notation for the first system, featuring a treble and bass clef, a 4/4 time signature, and a key signature of one sharp (F#). The notation includes a vocal line with lyrics and a piano accompaniment.

Handwritten musical notation for the second system, continuing the vocal and piano parts from the first system.

Handwritten musical notation for the third system, showing further development of the musical themes.

Handwritten musical notation for the fourth system, including a key signature change to two sharps (F# and C#).

Handwritten musical notation for the fifth system, concluding the piece with a final cadence.

Senfl's Christ ist erstanden

Handwritten musical score for the first system. It consists of two staves: a treble clef staff on top and a bass clef staff on the bottom. The time signature is 4/4. The music features a melody in the treble staff with various note values and rests, and a bass line in the bass staff with chords and single notes.

Handwritten musical score for the second system. It consists of two staves: a treble clef staff on top and a bass clef staff on the bottom. The music continues with a melody in the treble staff and a bass line in the bass staff, showing some complex rhythmic patterns.

Handwritten musical score for the third system. It consists of two staves: a treble clef staff on top and a bass clef staff on the bottom. The melody in the treble staff is more active, with many eighth and sixteenth notes.

Handwritten musical score for the fourth system. It consists of two staves: a treble clef staff on top and a bass clef staff on the bottom. The music features a complex texture with many notes in both staves.

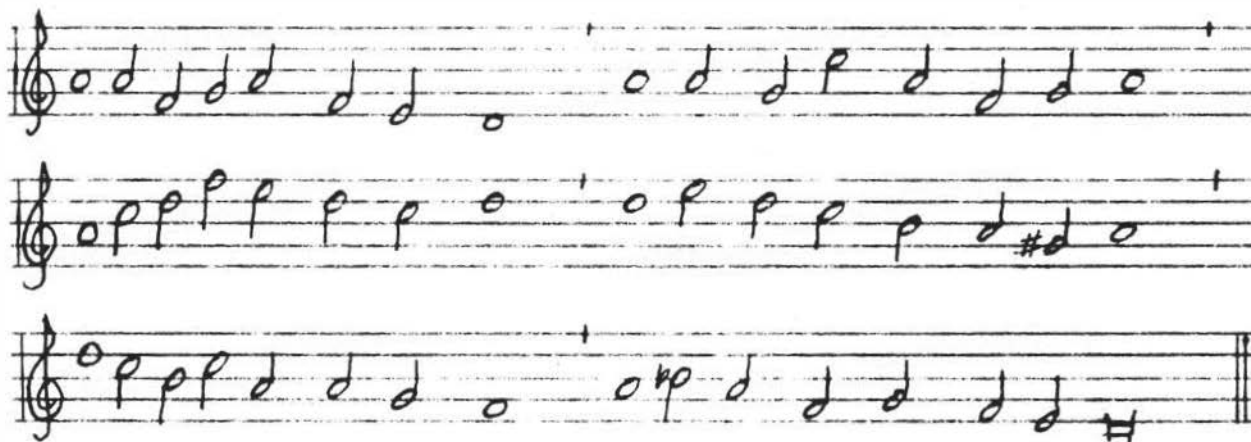
Handwritten musical score for the fifth system. It consists of two staves: a treble clef staff on top and a bass clef staff on the bottom. The music concludes with a final cadence in both staves.

Bach's Christ ist erstanden

The image displays a handwritten musical score for the chorale 'Christ ist erstanden' by Johann Sebastian Bach. The score is arranged in five systems, each consisting of a treble and bass staff. The music is written in a clear, legible hand, featuring various musical notations such as notes, rests, accidentals, and phrasing slurs. The key signature is one sharp (F#), and the time signature is common time (C). The score concludes with a double bar line and repeat dots.

Source: Henry S. Drinker, The 389 Chorales of Johann Sebastian Bach, 1944, p. 24.

VIII.
Luther's Vater unser im Himmelreich



Van Bruck's Vater unser im Himmelreich

Bach's Water unser im Himmelreich

The image displays a handwritten musical score for the chorale 'Water unser im Himmelreich' by J.S. Bach. The score is arranged in three systems, each consisting of a treble and bass staff joined by a brace. The music is written in a single system with a common time signature (C) and a key signature of one sharp (F#). The notation includes various rhythmic values such as eighth and sixteenth notes, as well as rests and accidentals. The handwriting is clear and legible, typical of a manuscript or a well-preserved printed score.

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