

INVITING THE SPIRIT WITH MUSIC

“In the Church, we need better music and more of it, and better speaking and less of it.”
(Elder Adam S. Bennion, Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, some time in the 1950s).

“We ought to have great music in the Church and more of it; great speaking in the Church and less of it.” (Elder Jeffrey R. Holland, Priesthood Department, 2006 Christmas Devotional).

Cultivating Better Music

The First Presidency has said: “Inspirational music is an essential part of our Church meetings. The hymns invite the Spirit of the Lord, create a feeling of reverence, unify us as members, and provide a way for us to offer praises to the Lord. Some of the greatest sermons are preached by the singing of hymn. Hymns move us to repentance and good works, build testimony and faith, comfort the weary, console the mourning, and inspire us to endure to the end” (*Hymns*, ix).

“Inspiring music may fill the soul with heavenly thoughts, move one to righteous actions, or speak peace to the soul.” (President Ezra Taft Benson, October 1974 General Conference)

Guidelines for Music in Worship Services

1. Music should be selected carefully and prayerfully.

“Prayerfully selected compositions and excellent performances are appropriate in our worship services when and if members feel a spirit of worship and of revelation.”
(Elder Russell M. Nelson, CES Fireside, BYU, 4 May 2008)

2. Music should be presented with appropriate harmony, tempo, and volume.

“Music that is carefully selected and properly presented can greatly enhance the spirit of worship. Music should be worshipful and fit the spirit of the meeting.” (Section 14.4)

3. Music should support the spoken word.

“Church music should be supportive of the Lord and His work.”
(Elder Russell M. Nelson, CES Fireside, BYU, 4 May 2008)

4. Music should provide spiritual nourishment.

“The Spirit does not ratify speech nor confirm music which lacks spiritual substance.”
(President Boyd K. Packer, October 1991 General Conference)

“Select music that will strengthen your spirit.”
(Elder Russell M. Nelson, October 1985 General Conference)

5. Music should contain a devotional quality and a reverential mood.

“The song of the righteous is a prayer unto me.” (D&C 25:12)

6. Musical texts should be sacred, dignified, and teach gospel principles.

“If we will listen, (the hymns) are teaching the gospel, for the hymns of the Restoration are, in fact, a course in doctrine!” (President Boyd K. Packer, October 1991 General Conference)

“The singing of hymns is one of the best ways . . . to learn the doctrine of the restored gospel. . . . Our sacred music is a powerful preparation for prayer and gospel teaching (and) . . . prepares us to be taught the truths of the gospel.” (Elder Dallin H. Oaks, October 1994 General Conference)

Inspirational Music Provides Spiritual Power and Protection

Inspirational and edifying music has power to reach much deeper into our hearts than the spoken word - and it usually will be remembered much longer than the spoken word.

“Worthy music is powerful. It has power to make us humble, prayerful, and grateful. . . . Worthy music also has the power to persuade. . . . Music has sweet power to promote unity and love in the family. . . . Music has power to provide spiritual nourishment. It has healing power. It has power to facilitate worship; it allows us to contemplate the Atonement and the Restoration of the gospel with its saving principles and exalting ordinances. Music provides power for us to express prayerful thoughts and bear testimony of sacred truths. Music has power to overcome language barriers.” (Elder Russell M. Nelson, CES Fireside, BYU, 4 May 2008)

Guidelines for Personal Preparation of Musician

1. Give strict obedience to instructions from leaders and handbooks.

“Priesthood leaders determine what is suitable.” (Handbook 2, section 14.4)

2. Approach each assignment humbly and prayerfully.

“We get nearer to the Lord through music than perhaps any other thing except prayer.” (President J. Reuben Clark, Jr., October 1936 General Conference)

3. Be spiritually sensitive to the music you provide.

“The spirit of the listener (is) moved most by melodies soft and simple, sung with sweet sincerity.” (Elder Russell M. Nelson, October 1991 General Conference)