

HYMN TUNE INTERPRETATION

SALLY ANN MORRIS

All Who Hunger, Gather Gladly

Text: "All Who Hunger, Gather Gladly"
by Sylvia G. Dunstan
Tune: "SHALLOWFORD" 8.7.8.7.D

In July 1990, I attended my first Hymn Society annual conference, held that year in Charleston, SC. I shall never forget my first hymn festival when I sank to my pew after the first phrase of the opening hymn, "Come, We That Love the Lord," too overcome and overwhelmed to continue singing. That conference contained many "firsts" and highlights for me. One in particular was an afternoon plenary session of new hymns presented by Sylvia G. Dunstan. I had only recently grasped that living, breathing individuals were writing hymns today. And here was one of them in the flesh!

The Charleston conference had an apparent impact on Sylvia as well. It led directly to the publication of her hymns and inspired her to write new ones. In her notes about the text in this column, she tells us that it was there that she first became acquainted with the tunes of the *Southern Harmony*. She writes: "After the conference, some of us vacationed at Folly Beach outside Charleston, where I worked out this text, wandering up and down the beach singing HOLY MANNA."

"All Who Hunger, Gather Gladly" is an exquisite text of invitation which entwines first and second testament references of manna in the wilderness and strong eucharistic imagery, and then urges the singer/reader/hearer to experience firsthand the ultimate sensation: "Taste and see that God is good." (Psalm 34)

1. All who hun - ger, gath - er glad - ly; ho - ly man - na is our
2. All who hun - ger, nev - er stran - gers, seek - er be a wel - come
3. All who hun - ger, sing to - geth - er; Je - sus Christ is liv - ing

bread. Come from wild - er - ness and wand - 'ring. Here, in
guest. Come from rest - less - ness and roam - ing. Here, in
bread. Come from lone - li - ness and long - ing. Here, in

truth, we will be fed. You that yearn for days of
joy, we keep the feast. We that once were lost and
peace, we have been led. Blest are those who from this

full - ness, all a - round us is our food. Taste and
scat - tered in com - mun - ion's love have stood. Taste and
ta - ble live their days in grat - i - tude. Taste and

see the grace e - ter - nal. Taste and see that God is good.
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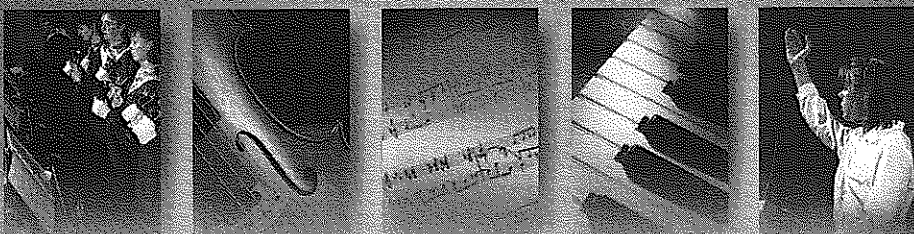
The hymn writing world still mourns the loss of this wonderful writer who died just three years later at the age of 38. I deeply regret that I never actually met her.

On a day in 1996 I had set about to compose a tune for another text. The tune you see here began to emerge in response to that text, but it soon became apparent as it unfolded that it was not befitting the poem's introspective, contemplative nature. This tune, rather, built on rising fourths (and one fifth), pushed its way so wide open and strong that it begged for words of invitation, openness, and joy. Although my tune is a far cry from Sylvia's inspiration, HOLY MANNA, I knew when I rediscovered her text, that, if only in my own mind, I had found a match.

This hymn should be performed within the range of $\text{♩} = 70-78$, with my preference for the upper end, and always with a sense of a broad, legato melodic line. The accompaniment, however, should be buoyant. Although it is a unison tune, surely the last four and a half bars, beginning "Taste and see the grace eternal," can be sung in parts if desired, with tenor and alto divisi.

I call this tune SHALLOWFORD in honor of Shallowford Presbyterian Church in Lewisville, NC, where I have been a member for 11 years. Since its writing, it has become a part of this congregation's repertoire of communion hymns.

Sally Ann Morris is a hymn tune composer who lives and works in Lewisville, NC. Her tune collection, Giving Thanks in Song and Prayer, was published in 1998 by GIA Publications.



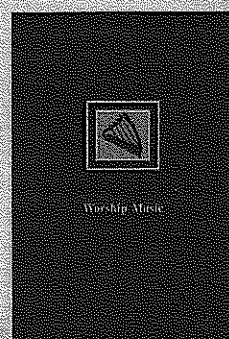
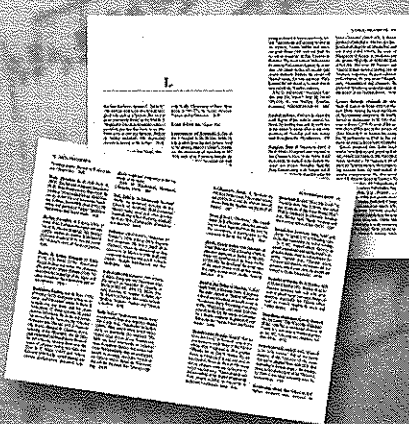
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