

## Understanding Hymn Texts

Create a more meaningful singing experience for you and your congregation as you deepen your understanding of familiar hymn texts.

### *Understanding the Hymn Text*

1. Read all of the verses of the hymn.
2. Identify patterns in the verse (repeating/contrasting sentence structure, speakers, imagery).
3. Note any key phrases, speaking voices, and aural allusions in the hymn text.
4. Consider the emotional tone that the hymn conveys (ex. jubilant, reflective, confident).
5. Develop a registration plan that interprets the hymn text.
6. Write down your registration plan and practice it.
7. Invite your congregation to pay greater attention to the hymn text as you execute your plan.

### *Using Registration to Interpret the Hymn Text*

#### **Crescendo**

- Purpose: build congregational energy
  - o sing praise, bear testimony, open a meeting, celebrate a holiday
- Registration pattern (#6, 8, 9, 28, 41, 134, 147, 187)
  - o Increase sound by strategically adding stops before each verse.

#### **Decrescendo**

- Purpose: encourage communal meditation
  - o prepare for sacrament, conclude a meeting, bid farewell
- Registration pattern (#45, 135, 143)
  - o Decrease sound by strategically removing stops after each verse.

#### **Variation**

- Purpose: increase engagement with doctrinal message by varying aural texture.
  - o hymns with symmetrical or repeated syntax, speakers, or images.
- Registration pattern: vary contrasting sounds.
  - o alternating pattern (#99, 117, 190, 196)
  - o envelope pattern (#182, 194)

#### **Solo**

- Purpose: Focus attention on the key message/s of the hymn text.
  - o hymns with a verse containing distinctive syntax, speaker, or image.
- Registration pattern: use solo and accompaniment registration instead of chorus registration.
  - o Solo one of the voices on a different manual (don't forget the pedals) for part or all of one or more verses. (#108v2, 113v3, 129, 292v3-4)

#### **Ornamentation**

- Purpose: Complement aural references in the hymn text to create a tone.
  - o trumpet fanfare (#78), bird song (#26), imitate direct speech (#116, 191v4)
- Registration pattern: Choose stops that imitate the sound of the textual allusion.
  - o Use this technique in moderation to avoid distracting the congregation.

#### **Mood**

- Purpose: Match the colors of the stops with the mood of the hymn text.