

# *Stop Winging It!*

## The Importance of Proper Preparation

As organists, we have the opportunity to invite people to:

- worship
- call upon the choirs of heaven, and
- join their voices in an experience of spiritual outpouring.

However, in order to accomplish these wonderful blessings, we are required to do more than just rely on some presets and a quick run-through of the hymns (if we even run through them before worship service begins).

We need to be prepared, or we can't help our congregations worship!

In the Doctrine and Covenants, the Lord has said, “The song of the righteous is a prayer unto me.” A saying often attributed to Saint Augustine, Bishop of Hippo is, “He who sings, prays twice.”

It is our responsibility, as organists, to inspire our congregations to sing, and facilitate this communion with Heaven.

Think of the potential blessings for our congregations if we were to make singing the hymns a new experience for them *every single Sunday*—a new experience every single time they sing a hymn.

The act of preparing for a specific Sunday can lead to wonderful insights and experiences for you as an organist, and for your congregation.

Proper preparation :

- allows you to play with confidence
- makes it possible for you to play the hymns at their proper tempo
- invites the Spirit
- teaches the congregation to trust in your abilities and to sing accordingly

By preparing well in advance, you can also begin to paint the hymn text for your congregation. Some different techniques you can utilize include:

Soloing out the soprano or tenor line

Encouraging singing through a creative introduction

Supporting unison singing with a free accompaniment

Finding the perfect registration for each verse

Adding suspensions or other harmonic interest

Using other ideas from <http://organlessons.blogspot.com/2013/04/how-to-beautify-hymn-accompaniment.html>

Proper preparation is the foundation that frees you to act on the promptings of the Spirit.

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