



## THE HYMN SOCIETY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
INDEPENDENCE, MISSOURI  
MAY 16, 2017

The Hymn Society in the United States and Canada is pleased to announce the release of *Singing Welcome: Hymns and Songs of Hospitality to Refugees and Immigrants*, a collection of 46 hymns and songs available for free download from The Hymn Society's website ([www.thehymnsociety.org](http://www.thehymnsociety.org)).

For nearly 100 years, the work of The Hymn Society has included the promotion and creation of new hymns that respond to contemporary circumstances, inviting communities of faith to respond through song. The current concerns surrounding refugees and immigrants have stimulated many such songs, and this collection brings together works in a variety of musical styles which address this important matter.

The *Singing Welcome* Working Group (David Bjorlin; Benjamin Brody; Hilary Seraph Donaldson; Delores Dufner, OSB, FHS; Paul A. Richardson, FHS; and Eric Sarwar) was formed in early February 2017 to develop the new resource. Criteria were established, and a call for submissions was released. Over 200 hymns and songs were submitted for consideration, and through a blind review process, the working group selected 46 items. Benjamin Brody, convener of the working group states, "We are thrilled to offer this collection in service to the church and in response to the current crisis. Our hope and prayer is that these hymns and songs will serve to form and deepen a commitment to hospitality and enable worshiping communities to sing that commitment and welcome in new and engaging ways."

The collection includes over a dozen songs originating in countries from which many current refugees and immigrants to the U.S. and Canada come. Hilary Donaldson, a member of the working group, notes that "singing a song shared by the church worldwide, in a language that is not our own, is a powerful act of hospitality. By making space in worship for music that might be unfamiliar, we are reminded that we are all guests at the welcoming table of God."

*Singing Welcome* was made possible by the generosity of the publishers, authors and composers who have graciously granted permission for use of any of the hymns and songs in the collection at no royalty cost for a period of two months. Beyond two months of usage, users must obtain copyright permission in the usual manner (via a copyright licensing service, or through other means).

Since 1922, The Hymn Society in the United States and Canada has lived out its mission to encourage, support, and enliven congregational singing. Its members are guided by the belief that the holy act of singing together shapes faith, heals brokenness, transforms lives, and renews peace. The Hymn Society will officially launch The Center for Congregational Song in Dallas,



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TX, October 15–16, 2017. This new endeavor will develop new resources and provide regional and local events to support those who lead congregational singing.

For additional information contact Benjamin Brody, convener of the *Singing Welcome* working group ([bbrody@whitworth.edu](mailto:bbrody@whitworth.edu) or 509-777-3214) or Jan Kraybill, Executive Director of The Hymn Society in the United States and Canada at [jan@thehymnsociety.org](mailto:jan@thehymnsociety.org) or 816-521-3014.

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