

# What Music is Appropriate for a Funeral or Memorial Service?

by Dean McIntyre

*I need suggestions for music to play on the organ for a memorial service. The family has requested music that is not sad and depressing. I am not a professional musician, although I play for the church services. I will appreciate any help you can offer.*

My counsel would be to stay with hymns that celebrate resurrection, witness, hope, and eternal life. All of these may be found in *The United Methodist Hymnal* and *The Faith We Sing*. A great many of these would be familiar to people, which is always a source of comfort. They would also allow you to contribute a spirit of hope, joy, and positive remembrance rather than dwelling on the sorrowful and sense of loss. I'm glad to hear the family has this attitude. It tells me a lot about them and the deceased. You should also consider including congregational singing of any of these as part of the service. This allows the people present to contribute to and participate in worship more actively than as merely spectators or hearers. It provides a way for them to enter into the celebration of the deceased's life rather than to simply mourn, and it also gives the family strength and encouragement to hear the people singing the praises of God at this time. Here are some suggestions. Others are included in the Topical Indexes under such topics as Funerals and Memorial Services, Hope, Comfort, Eternal Life, and Christian Year/Easter.

## **Titles From *The United Methodist Hymnal***

- 110, "A Mighty Fortress Is Our God"
- 62, "All Creatures of Our God and King"
- 154, "All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name"
- 155, "All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name"
- 166, "All Praise to Thee, for Thou, O King Divine"
- 364, "Because He Lives"
- 517, "By Gracious Powers"
- 734, Canticle of Hope
- 516, Canticle of Redemption
- 652, Canticle of Remembrance
- 684, "Christ, Mighty Savior"
- 302, "Christ the Lord Is Risen Today"
- 653, "Christ the Victorious"
- 313, "Christo Vive"
- 158, "Come, Christians, Join to Sing"
- 304, "Easter People, Raise Your Voices"
- 655, "Fix Me, Jesus"
- 711, "For All the Saints"
- 731, "Glorious Things of Thee Are Spoken"
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- 577, "God of Grace and God of Glory"
- 127, "Guide Me, O Thou Great Jehovah"
- 128, "He Leadeth Me"
- 316, "He Rose"
- 654, "How Blest Are They Who Trust"
- 707, "Hymn of Promise"
- 142, "If Thou but Suffer God to Guide Thee"
- 60, "I'll Praise My Maker While I've Breath"
- 169, "In Thee Is Gladness"
- 89, "Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee"
- 384, "Love Divine, All Loves Excelling"
- 452, "My Faith Looks Up to Thee"
- 117, "O God, Our Help in Ages Past"
- 727, "O What Their Joy"
- 66, "Praise, My Soul, the King of Heaven"
- 160, "Rejoice, Ye Pure in Heart"
- 161, "Rejoice, Ye Pure in Heart"
- 706, "Soon and Very Soon"
- 545, "The Church's One Foundation"
- 546, "The Church's One Foundation"
- 303, "The Day of Resurrection"
- 138, "The King of Love My Shepherd Is"
- 136, "The Lord's My Shepherd, I'll Not Want"
- 306, "The Strife Is O'er"
- 308, "Thine Be the Glory"
- 525, "We'll Understand It Better By and By"

### **Titles From *The Faith We Sing***

- 2219, "Goodness Is Stronger than Evil"
- 2213, "Healer of Our Every Ill"
- 2042, "How Lovely, Lord, How Lovely"
- 2282, "I'll Fly Away"
- 2210, "Joy Comes with the Dawn"
- 2212, "My Life Flows On"
- 2076, "O Blessed Spring"
- 2284, "There'll Be Joy in the Morning"

<http://www.umcdiscipleship.org/resources/what-music-is-appropriate-for-a-funeral-or-memorial-service>