

VIII.
REPORT
OF THE
SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON PSALMODY

The Book of Psalms is part of the Word of God, given by inspiration of God, and has been given to us, not only for reading, but principally for use in our public worship. Thus in many places, such as Psalm 95:1, we are exhorted to lift our hearts in song, *O come, let us sing unto the Lord: let us make a joyful noise to the rock of our salvation.* As songs given to us by the Lord to sing, they have been provided for our edification and comfort, but above all to enable us to glorify Him in praise.

As a denomination it is imperative that we continue to use the 1650 edition of the Scottish Psalter. Nothing before or since has come nearer in English to expressing the mind of the Holy Spirit in the metrical form which is required to make participation in praise accessible to the ordinary person, whether in private, the family or in the public worship of God. It is also important to encourage all our people to learn and sing the Psalms, trusting in the Lord to enable us to sing with grace in our hearts.

The Committee would like to thank all who have helped in the past with the production of the *Worthy to be Praised* series of CDs which have been received so favourably by many within and outwith the denomination. The Committee thank Mrs Sohana McKenzie for her work in copying the *Worthy to be Praised* CDs as and when required. Special thanks, of course, are due to Rev. & Mrs William Scott, who were behind the whole project and who were willing for so long to go around our various congregations teaching a wide range of Psalm tunes.

It is the remit of the Committee to endeavour to extend the use of the Psalter as far as we can, and in that regard the Committee are pleased to report that the Presbytery of the United States of America intend to reprint the Staff Psalmody in the USA, through their own Publications Committee. This would be a huge saving in costs for them, rather than having to have bulk orders sent over from Scotland. Given that there are presently some errors in the existing Staff Psalmody, it has been agreed by the Committee to permit the United States Presbytery to look into the possibility of correcting them in future print runs.

The Committee would also be desirous of acquiring a number of the Sol-fa Psalmodies from the present publisher. However, as yet no formal approach has been made to them in regard to this.

The Committee are still considering the suggestion of compiling an index, preferably at the back of the Psalter, putting the tunes into groups that are appropriate for the particular Psalm being sung.

The Committee wish to express their thanks to Congregational Precentors for using their gifts in the service of the Lord throughout our congregations every Sabbath and weekday.

CALUM SMITH, *Acting Convener*

PROPOSED DELIVERANCE

1. The General Assembly receive and adopt the Report of the Special Committee on Psalmody and thank the Committee, with special thanks to the Clerk and to the Convener, Rev. William Scott;
2. The General Assembly encourage the Special Committee on Psalmody to promote the use of the Psalmody to organisations such as schools and other Church bodies, where there is a desire for it;

3. The General Assembly encourage communication between the Special Committee on Psalmody and the present publisher of the Sol-fa Psalmody, in order that they may obtain a number of copies at a reasonable price;
4. The General Assembly encourage Presbyteries to have Psalm-singing classes throughout their bounds;
5. The General Assembly encourage the Special Committee on Psalmody to group more tunes to particular psalms as an aid to Congregational Precentors;
6. The General Assembly thank Congregational Precentors for leading the praise throughout the denomination.

APPENDIX

2 took part in the 2023 Psalmody Test and gained awards as shown:

Portree

Grade 1: Benjamin Ross, Ruth Ross