

Congregational Singing

Lesson 4 – None Other Lamb

October 30, 2016

15 minutes

Participants: Rob Rayburn, Ron Bechtel, Margaret Eby, Congregation
Review what has been taught/learned so far

Purpose: Introduce new musical techniques and words: Intervals, repetition, sequence, meter.

Desired Outcome Congregation can sing None Other Lamb in 4-part harmony with increase musical skill.

3 minutes	Introduction	Rob Rayburn
4 minutes	Principles of Congregational Singing <ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Review: Unison verses part-singing, dynamics, listening to the moving parts, resolution, sing the punctuation✓ Introduce Intervals	Margaret Eby
10 minutes	Exercise / Applying the Principles <ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Congregations explores range of volume by singing a chord <i>mf</i>, crescendo to <i>ff</i>, then diminuendo to <i>pp</i> then crescendo to <i>mp</i>.✓ Explanation of intervals – as harmony and melody✓	Margaret Eby
1 minute	Conclusion <ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Sing verse 2 of None Other Lamb✓ Next lesson: Tempo and Major / Minor key signatures	Margaret Eby

Resources/Handout:

None Other Lamb (same version as lesson 3)

Definitions: dynamics, staff showing lines and spaces,

Margaret's comments:

In that past three lessons, we've learned quite a bit about music and hymn singing. We learned that some hymns are meant to be sung in unison (all voices on the melody) and some hymns should be sung in harmony. We learned that the bass is the foundation of a hymn's harmonic structure. We sang harmony together— some of us for the first time. We learned that a thoughtful singer does more than just sing the melody. We are aware of what the other parts are singing and sometimes have to change our singing to accommodate what others are singing.

We heard that we not only sing notes or pitches but also sing the punctuation. And we are starting to understand that the hardest part of that is continuing to sing (without a breath) where there is no punctuation. Finally, last week we began to explore dynamics – loud and soft. Let's do a little more work with dynamics.

1. Sing this chord at a mezzo-forte. That's about a 6 on the volume knob. Remember what the dynamic level felt like and sounded like. I'm going to ask you to replicate it in a moment.
2. Now sing this chord at mezzo-piano. That's about a 4 on the volume knob. Remember what this felt like.
3. OK. I have a challenge for you. Sing the chord at a mezzo-forte. Crescendo (gradually get louder) to a fortissimo (volume 9), stay at volume 9 for a brief moment, then de-crescendo or diminuendo (gradually getting softer) to a pianissimo (volume 3). Stay there briefly and crescendo to mezzo-piano to finish the exercise. This exercise will probably require you to take more than one breath – so take a breath when you need to. Let's try this.
4. You have at your disposal, a range of dynamics that you can and should use when you're singing hymns in worship. Start looking for the dynamic markings on the hymns printed in the bulletin.

This evening we're going to learn about intervals. An interval is the difference between two pitches. When we sing unison we are singing the same pitch. There is no distance between what the person next to me is singing and what I'm singing. The musical score printed in the hymnal helps us sing the notes of the hymn even if we don't know it.

Let's look at the bass cleff (the bass and tenor lines) of first measure of None Other Lamb. I want you to look at those 2 notes vertically – they are stacked on top of each other. Notice that the notes for the bass and tenor lines start touching each other? But the next notes are a little farther part and the third notes are even farther part. The first interval is smaller than the second and the second interval is smaller than the third.

These intervals between the tenor and bass line are identified by how far the distance is between the notes. Take a look at the first tenor and bass notes on the hymn. Both notes are on a different line. To determine the distance, start by count the number of lines and spaces between the notes. Count the note on the bass line as 1, the space between the bass and tenor line as 2, and the tenor note on a line as 3. This interval is called a third – because the notes are 3 steps apart. Let's hear that interval. Basses and tenors sing your notes and listen to what the interval of a 3rd feels like.

So, using the counting technique you just learned, how far apart are the bass and tenor voices in the second beat of this hymn? They are a fifth apart. Let's hear that interval – basses and tenors sing that 5th.

And the third beat? They are a 10th apart. Basses and tenors, sing the interval of a 10th.

We can apply our new understanding of intervals to a melodic line (horizontally). Take a look at the melody, the soprano line only. The melody starts on a note that is in a space. The second note is on a line that is lower than the previous space note. The 3rd note is the same note as the 2nd note. I know that because it's on the same line as the note before it. And the ½ note (the one that isn't blacked out), is on a space lower than the 2 line notes previous. The melody is going down, slowly – not by jumps or leaps.

Why is this important? When you're asked to sing a hymn that you don't know very well - you can at the least, know whether the tune goes up or down – and whether the tune goes up and down by a little or a lot. Learning to sing intervals and getting better at singing those intervals accurately – whether it's a 3rd or 5th or 10th – is challenging to be sure but a skill well worth improving and even mastering. Regardless the level of your mastery of this (which is called sight singing), your hymn singing will improve because you understand that music is made when we sing intervals.

Let's sing the 2nd verse of None Other Lamb. Don't forget to listen for the resolution that we hear twice in the alto voice on the first line of the hymn – we hear it in the tenor voice in the 2nd line of the hymn, and then again in the alto voice in the last line of the hymn. AND be sure I don't hear any breath (no difference in the singing) when you sing the phrase "only my heart's desire cries out in me by the deep thunder of its want and woe."