

Songs for Sunday June 14th, 2020

Materials prepared by Jenn Swanson

History of this Hymn: (source: Wikipedia)

"Up Above My Head" is a gospel song of traditional origin, first recorded in 1941 (as "Above My Head I Hear Music In The Air") by The Southern Sons, a vocal group formed by William Langford of the Golden Gate Quartet. In the version that is now the best-known, it was recorded in 1947 by Sister Rosetta Tharpe and Marie Knight as a duo.

The spiritual "Over My Head", apparently dating from the 19th century but of unknown authorship, contains many of the same lines as "Up Above My Head" – "Over my head / I hear music in the air.. / There must be a God somewhere" – and may be presumed to be its origin. Civil rights leader Bernice Johnson Reagon changed the traditional words of the song in 1961, to **"Over my head / I see freedom in the air..."**. In 1995, the National Association for Music Education (then known as the Music Educators National Conference) published a list of songs that "every American should know", which included "Over My Head". (**Over My Head is in our More Voices hymnbook, #88**)

Opening Hymn: Up Above my Head

Up above my head
(Up above my head)
I hear music in the air
(I hear music in the air)
Up above my head
(Up above my head)
I hear music in the air
(I hear music in the air)
Up above my head
(Up above my head)
I hear music in the air
(I hear music in the air)
And I really do believe
(Yeah) I really do believe
There's a Heaven somewhere
(There's a Heaven somewhere)

History of this Hymn: (source: Wikipedia)

"Leaning on the Everlasting Arms" is a hymn published in 1887 with music by Anthony J. Showalter and lyrics by Showalter and Elisha Hoffman. Showalter said that he received letters from two of his former pupils saying that their wives had died. When writing letters of consolation, Showalter was inspired by the phrase in the Book of Deuteronomy 33:27, "The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms".

Hymn: Leaning on the Everlasting Arms

What a fellowship, what a joy divine,
Leaning on the everlasting arms;
What a blessedness, what a peace is mine,
Leaning on the everlasting arms.

Refrain:

Leaning, leaning, safe and secure from all alarms;
Leaning, leaning, leaning on the everlasting arms.
O how sweet to walk, In this pilgrim way,
Leaning on the everlasting arms;
O how bright the path grows from day to day,
Leaning on the everlasting arms.

Refrain

What have I to dread, what have I to fear,
Leaning on the everlasting arms;
I have blessed peace with my Lord so near,
Leaning on the everlasting arms. *Refrain.*

History of this Hymn: (source: NPR Music)

“Don't Ever Let Nobody Drag Your Spirit Down” is a vigorous mash-up of big-city blues, church spirit and modern jazz. A chugging guitar and honking harmonica set a march-like pace at the get-go, and vocalist Junior Mack begins a lyrical sermon in his warm-hearted tenor: You might slip, slide, stumble, fall by the roadside, "but don't you let nobody drag your spirit down." Four horns — tenor sax, two trumpets and trombone — add unexpected harmonies, rising and slithering like a conjurer's snake, negotiating a maze of bluesy flattened thirds and sevenths. For good measure, Mack shows off his B.B. King-like guitar chops in a solo.

The song is featured on *And Still I Rise*, the debut album from the Heritage Blues Orchestra, whose ambitious name reflects its intention to make up-to-the-minute music that draws upon the glorious past of African-American genres. As the title suggests, the group rises to the occasion. "Don't Ever Let Nobody Drag Your Spirit Down" walks right on up to heaven's gates.

Don't Ever Let Nobody

You might slip, you might slide, you might
Stumble and fall by the road side
But don't you ever let nobody drag your spirit down

Remember you're walking up to heaven

Don't let nobody turn you around
Walk with the rich, walk with the poor
Learn from everyone, that's what life is for
And don't you let nobody drag your spirit down
Remember you're walking up to heaven

Don't let nobody turn you around
Well I might say things that sound strange to you
And I might preach the gospel, I believe it's true
I won't let nobody drag my spirit down
Yes, I'm walking up to heaven
Won't let nobody turn me around

You might slip, you might slide, you might
Stumble and fall by the road side
But don't you ever let nobody drag your spirit down
Remember you're walking up to heaven
Don't let nobody turn you around

History of this Hymn: (source: Wikipedia)

At My Table - Jennifer Judy "JJ" Heller (born October 19, 1980, née Kellner) is an American Christian folk singer. After releasing multiple albums, she had two songs that charted. "Your Hands" from her 2008 album Painted Red and "What Love Really Means" from the album When I'm with You both peaked at number 13. "At My Table" was released in 2017.

At My Table

At My Table

[Verse 1]

This is for the powerless, the wounded and the weak
This is for the immigrant, and those who cannot speak
If the ground beneath your feet feels unstable
There's a place, there's a place for you
At my table

[Chorus]

If you're broken, you are welcome
If you're outside looking in
If you have no place of your own
My door is open, it's always open

[Verse 2]

To anyone wondering if you belong
To anyone who feels afraid and not that strong
If you wanted to be confident but you weren't able
There's a place, there's a place for you
At my table

[Chorus]

If you're broken, you are welcome
If you're outside looking in
If you have no place of your own
My door is open, it's always open

[Bridge]

Listen every pilgrim, when the road ahead is long
It doesn't matter where you go, you're never too far gone
Even if you've lost your way or been unfaithful
There's a place, there's a place for you
At my table
There's a place, there's a place for you
At my table

[Chorus]

If you're broken, you are welcome
If you're outside looking in
If you have no place of your own
My door is open, it's always open
My door is open, it's always open

History of this Hymn: (source: Wikipedia)

"**Without a Song**" is a popular song composed by Vincent Youmans with lyrics later added by Billy Rose and Edward Eliscu, published in 1929. It was included in the musical play, Great Day. The play only ran for 36 performances but contained two songs which became famous, "Without a Song" and "Great Day".

Without a Song

Without a song the day would never end
Without a song the road would never bend
When things go wrong a man ain't got a friend
Without a song

That field of corn would never see a plow

That field of corn would be deserted now
A man is born but he's no good no how
Without a song

I got my trouble and woe but, sure as I know, the Jordan will roll
And I'll get along as long as a song, strong in my soul
I'll never know what makes the rain to fall
I'll never know what makes that grass so tall
I only know there ain't no love at all
Without a song

I've-a got my trouble and woe and, sure as I know, the Jordan will roll
And I'll get along as long as a song, strong in my soul
I'll-a never know what makes that rain to fall
I'll never know what makes the grass so tall
I only know there ain't no love at all
Without a song