

E. Norman Greenwood

Note: Nearly all that follows, including all quotations, unless otherwise noted, are extracted from the 1933 *Hymnal Notes* (to the *Christian Science Hymnal*) by Maria Louise Baum.

E. Norman Greenwood (1902-1962) was a Christian Scientist who contributed 7 hymns (and one arrangement) to the *Christian Science Hymnal*. When the *Hymnal* was published in 1932, Greenwood was an accomplished young musician and composer, inclined to write music that was considered "modern" at the time. The sad thing is that "modern" doesn't imply singable, so most of his hymns are rarely sung. Let's start with his setting of one of Mrs. Eddy's poems.

Hymn 309 (1st verse)

All of Greenwood's hymns were written specifically for our *Hymnal*. And with our *Hymnal* having been around since 1932, many hymns written specifically for it have been adopted, usually just the melodies, by other denominations for their hymnals. In the case of E. Norman Greenwood, only one of his 7 hymns is used by any other denomination. Specifically Hymn 220 appears in *The Hymn Book of the Anglican Church of Canada and the United Church of Canada*. Let's sing a verse to try it out. You'll notice that it is not the setting we usually choose for these familiar lyrics.

Hymn 220 (1st verse)

In the "Hymnal Notes" this is described as "joyous music." However, here are the words that the Canadians use to sing this melody:

Lord, save thy world; in bitter need
Thy children lift their cry to thee;
We wait thy liberating deed
To signal hope and set us free.

Lord, save thy world; our souls are bound
In iron chains of fear and pride;
High walls of ignorance around
Our faces from each other hide

As I said, Greenwood composed all his hymns specifically for use in our *Hymnal*, and so he took special care to adapt his music to the texts, especially Mrs. Eddy's poems. Look at what he did with the transition between verses 4 and 5 in "Christmas Morn," which is fairly clumsy in other settings of this poem.

Hymn 28 (verses 3, 4 & 5, play all beforehand)

"O Daughter of Zion" is a hymn we sing frequently, and there's a story behind it. It's an old hymn, probably of American origin, and it's reported that Mrs. Eddy especially loved its message, though we don't know what music she heard it set to. So how do we know that Mrs. Eddy liked this hymn? Chapter 5 of *The First Church of Christ, Scientist and Miscellany* is completely devoted to the Christian Science Hall in Concord, NH. On one of the walls of this Hall was the first verse of this hymn. Also, the first two lines were on a plaque in Mrs. Eddy's room in the Concord church, and in *Miscellaneous Writings* (p. 126) she refers to her church as a "daughter of Zion." To top off all this evidence, the words of the hymn were sent by a member of Mrs. Eddy's former household to the

Hymnal Revision Committee suggesting that it be included in the new *Hymnal* because Mrs. Eddy had personally requested that the words of the hymn be used on that wall in the Christian Science Hall. Notably, Greenwood's setting is the only one for these words in our *Hymnal*.

Hymn 200 (all verses)

Greenwood began his boyhood musical career as a chorister at the Temple Church in London. He later won a scholarship to study organ, piano and composition at the Royal College of Music in London. While there he won a medal, presented only once every three years to the most distinguished student at the College. It was presented by the Worshipful Company of Musicians, a society founded in 1604. Later in his career Greenwood was organist at Second Church of Christ, Scientist in London. He also gave piano recitals which were broadcast on the BBC.

Here's what the Notes say about Hymn 302: "The harmonization is extremely modern, and requires study."

Hymn 302 (1st verse)

I pointed out earlier that Greenwood was a chorister at the Temple Church in London. He had a long-term connection with that church, serving frequently as organist and choirmaster. Here's a quotation from the "Hymnal Notes": "Several of the musicians represented in the *Hymnal* have been connected with the Temple Church, which still maintains its long reputation for upholding all that is fine in its musical services. The church is of unique historical interest, as dating from the Crusades. Through these musicians the *Christian Science Hymnal* touches those centuries of endeavor to place a Christian banner over Jerusalem, a hope which was fulfilled in 1917." What this is referring to is the capture of Jerusalem by the British in their successful campaign against the Ottoman Empire, which was at the time allied to Germany. This began 30 years of what was called a British "Mandate," which ended in the partition of Palestine and shortly thereafter to the creation of the state of Israel.

Let's sing another of Greenwood's hymns. This one is described in the "Hymnal Supplement" as follows: "an excellent expression in modern music of these familiar words.... The tune is melodious and simple."

Hymn 285 (1st verse)

Greenwood arranged Hymn 324 from Handel's oratorio, *Theodora*, where it is set to the words, "Angels ever bright and fair." It was included in the Hymnal because Mrs. Eddy liked the music. The aria is still popular today, though the oratorio itself is rarely staged, and performances of the aria are all over YouTube, and sheet music for solo and even choral arrangements is available. The lyrics are "Angels ever bright and fair, take, oh, take me to your care!" *Theodora*, an early Christian, sings this in the oratorio when Roman soldiers try to make her worship pagan gods. Our hymn, with Frances Havergal's words, isn't nearly so tragic and plaintive.

Hymn 324 (all verses)

Not used: Hymn 231