

Presbyterian Heritage Sunday

For most Protestants, singing praises to God has taken the form of psalms or hymns. Early Presbyterian governing bodies in America left the decision of what to sing up to individual congregations. As a result, Presbyterian churches across the young United States used a variety of psalters and hymnals in their worship.

Early Presbyterian governing bodies overturned all efforts to form a sanctioned hymnal committee, but in 1819 the PCUSA General Assembly finally granted approval. After much work and several revisions, *Psalms and Hymns Adapted to the Public Worship* became the first official American Presbyterian hymnal in 1831. Other Presbyterian denominations continued to sing only psalms; the United Presbyterian Church of North America, for example, published its first volume that included hymns in 1927. As musical tastes and worship practices changed, new hymnals and collections of sacred songs were compiled and used, providing Presbyterians with a rich heritage of ways to “sing to the Lord a new song.” (Psalms 96:1).

Cover Image:

Psalms and Hymns Adapted to the Public Worship and Approved by the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America. Philadelphia: Solomon Allen, 1830.

The Presbyterian Historical Society provides resources for Presbyterian Heritage Sunday, a day set aside by the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to celebrate and learn more about the rich history of Presbyterianism in America. Visit our web site for more information and for additional celebration resources.



www.history.pcusa.org
Presbyterian Historical Society
425 Lombard Street
Philadelphia, PA 19147-1516
215-627-1852

“Sing to the Lord a new song:”
Presbyterian hymnals

