

SURELY IT IS GOD WHO SAVES ME

—by **Ray W. Urwin**

Ray W. Urwin, Director of Music at the Cathedral Church of St. John in Wilmington, Delaware, has written a “hymn tune” named for Thomas Merton which has been included in the recently published HYMNAL 1982 of the Episcopal Church. The hymn tune was also one of those selected for inclusion in *Preview*, the preliminary study guide for workshop leaders in introducing the new book.

Ray Urwin is currently at work on an article dealing with Merton’s essays “Theology of Creativity” and “Notes on Art and Worship.” He writes: “I don’t know whether [Merton] would have liked the music, but like to think the text would have spoken deeply to him.” The following passage is from the study guide, *Preview*.

This hymn is a metrical version of Canticle 9, the First Song of Isaiah. *The text* was drawn into verse form by the Rev. Carl P. Daw, Jr., vicar-chaplain at St. Mark’s Chapel, Storrs, Connecticut, and a member of the Text Committee for the new hymnal.

The Prayer Book text has been recast into stanzas with regular patterns of unaccented syllables. The regularity of meter (pattern of accented and unaccented syllables) allows it to be sung to music with the same patterns of rhythmic accents.

The tune, “Thomas Merton,” is named to honor the great Trappist monk, writer and artist. It was written by Ray W. Urwin (b. 1950), director of music at the Cathedral Church of St. John, Wilmington, Delaware.

Teaching the hymn:

The final four notes in this setting, with their skip of a fourth down and then up again, may present some difficulty during the first sing-through unless this pattern is brought to the singers’ attention before they begin to sing... Mention that this setting will be useful in services of Morning or Evening Prayer and in the Holy Eucharist as a response to readings.

E B C#m E F#m A B
 1 Sure - ly it is God — who saves me; trust - ing him, I shall not
 2 Make his deeds known to the peo - ples; tell out his ex - alt - ed

E B7 E B C#m E F#m
 fear. For the Lord de - fends and shields me and his sav - ing
 Name. Praise the Lord, who has done great things; all his works, his

A B E B7sus4 E F#m E C#m
 help is near. So re - joice as you draw wa - ter from sal -
 might pro - claim. Zi - on, lift your voice in sing - ing; for with

A E A B E C#m
 va - tion's liv - ing spring; in the day of your de -
 you has come to dwell, in your ve - ry midst, the

C#m C#m F#m B7sus4 E
 liv - erance thank the Lord, his mer - cies sing;
 great and Ho - ly One of Is - ra - el.

*If guitar and keyboard do not sound together, then C#m may be played E;
F#m played A, and C#m played B.*

Words: Carl P. Daw (b. 1944); para. of *The First Song of Isaiah*
 Music: Thomas Merton, Ray Urwin (b. 1950)