

Giving Voice a Place in Song
Some additional comments by Sandra Chapin

As I looked forward to the day of dedication for the wheelchair accessible ambo, I turned to writing to express what was in my heart, a message for the community for which this special liturgical furnishing was created. This song was born of an impulse from the Holy Spirit, with words that came easily in a few hours, and then was pondered with precision over a period of six weeks as I consulted with Dr. Roy Carroll, Cantor and Director of Chapel Choir at Wartburg. An existing tune was thoughtfully selected and the lyrical poem became a hymn.

I offer the poem to the readers of the Persistent Voice. I ask that any public use of it reference Wartburg Theological Seminary, as the WTS Mission Support Office administers the copyright. The tune to which it was sung at Wartburg was "Ryburn" which is the property of Oxford University Press.

God, You Enable All to Praise

The lens of love needs not the eye to focus on the worth within.
Imprinted on the soul is Christ, with minds designed for seeing him.
God, you enable all to praise
in splendid, unexpected ways.

The deaf hear music in their hearts, a rhythm deep and senses stirred;
embraced by water, wind and friend -- the pulse of Incarnated Word.
God, you enable all to praise
in splendid, unexpected ways.

The voiceless raise their thoughts to God, a lifted liturgy of dreams.
With clouds of witnesses above come cascades of life-giving streams.
God, you enable all to praise
in splendid, unexpected ways.

And those who sit, whose spirits dance beyond the steps to sacred space,
find hands once nailed to clasp their own, and welcome wide on Jesus' face.
Let ears that hear and eyes that see:
Behold! The Lord is barrier-free.

Text: Sandra Chapin

Musical meter: 88 88 88

Sung at the dedication of the wheelchair accessible ambo for Loehe Chapel
Wartburg Theological Seminary -- April 4, 2006
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