

LIVING HOPE

A MUSICAL FOR EASTER

REHEARSAL GUIDE

by Dennis Allen

“Living Hope”

This great song has a powerful message, so the choir’s main task is to “paint” the words with dynamic contrast and emotional communication. The design of the text allows for breaths quite frequently, so there are no phrasing issues. Spend rehearsal time getting the choir to combine both soft and loud portions to create the best presentation of the song’s story.

“Hope Medley”

includes “Cornerstone,” “In Christ Alone (My Hope Is Found),” and “Come Behold the Wondrous Mystery”

In the Let’s Sing musicals, we always strive to include times for congregational participation. This medley is a perfect opportunity. “Cornerstone” and “In Christ Alone (My Hope Is Found)” have become standards in the musical life of today’s church. The third song, “Come Behold the Wondrous Mystery,” is a bit less known, but it is easy to learn. Teach it to your congregation in the weeks prior to your Easter presentation, so they will be ready to sing.

“O Praise the Name (Anástasis)”

The individual men’s and women’s sections are featured in this arrangement. These two sections could also be sung as duets (two men, then two women). Dynamic contrast is critical to the communication of this wonderful message. When you get to the final chorus, you could invite the congregation to join in singing.

“Christ Is Risen, He Is Risen Indeed”

The festive 6/8 meter of this Easter piece makes it fun to sing and hear. The tempo is rather quick, so work on crisp enunciation of the lyrics. It is quite a disappointment to hear a choir sing about the resurrection with a lackluster sound. This piece needs to be sung with all of the excitement your choir can muster from the opening lines to the climax chorus of “He’s alive!”

“He Will Hold Me Fast”

This wonderful song has such a great message. The use of mixed meter does not have to be a problem. You will find that it offers natural-feeling opportunities for breaths, so focus rehearsal time on working through time signature changes. The most important rehearsal element is dynamics. Without a sensitive use of quiet versus loud, the power of the lyrics will be diminished.