



Community of Christ
Historic Sites Foundation

Remembering Emma **Emma Hale Smith Bidamon Hymn Festival**

PreludePianist/Participant One

Welcome.....Participant Two

Invocation.....Participant Three

Emma in Harmony.....Participant/Reader Four

Born 10 July 1804 in Harmony, Pennsylvania, Emma Hale was the seventh of nine children raised by Elizabeth and Isaac Hale. Elizabeth Lewis Hale encouraged Emma to obtain an education, beginning in a new log schoolhouse in Harmony and continuing at an all girls' school for an additional year. According to Valeen Tippetts Avery and Linda King Newell in their biography *Mormon Enigma*, Emma returned to Harmony to teach, probably in the "same log structure where she sat as a wiggly child."

"As a young woman, Emma was physically and emotionally strong, with a streak of independence. . .she attended the local Methodist Episcopal Church with her parents and sang the hymns in her lyric soprano voice." A visitor to the Hale home described Emma as "fine looking, smart, [and] a good singer."

WeddingParticipant/Reader Five

Newell and Avery write in their biography, "When Emma Hale awoke on a Thursday morning, January 18, 1827, she did not plan to be married by evening."

"Joseph. . . had asked for Emma's hand twice and had been rebuffed—not by Emma, but by her father." Emma and Joseph again discussed marriage while visiting the Stowell home that day. Later in life Emma relates, "Preferring to marry him to any other man I knew, I consented."

Before the day was over Joseph and Emma were married at South Bainbridge, New York.

We invite you to sing a lovely song from Emma’s 1835 hymnal to a well-known 17th century tune. This hymn is the only hymn on Marriage that she included in the first church hymnal.

[Congregation sings “When Earth was Dress’d in Beauty”]

Elect Lady Revelation.....Participant/Reader Six

A few weeks after Emma's baptism in June 1830, the following revelation was given through Joseph Smith at Harmony, Pennsylvania. It is the only revelation addressed solely to a woman.

. . . Behold, thy sins are forgiven thee, and thou art an elect lady, whom I have called. . . And thou shalt be ordained under his hand to expound scriptures, and to exhort the church. . . And it shall be given thee, also, to make a selection of sacred Hymns, as it shall be given thee, which is pleasing unto me, to be had in my church: For my soul delighteth in the song of the heart: Yea, the song of the righteous is a prayer unto me.

The revelation was first printed in the 1833 *Book of Commandments*.

Redeemer of Israel.....Participant/Reader Seven

On 1 May 1832 W. W. Phelps was given the task to "correct and print the Hymns which had been selected by Emma Smith, in fulfillment of the revelation." The first issue of *The Evening and the Morning Star* came off Phelps' press in June. "Redeemer of Israel" was among the six hymns printed in this issue.

Inspired by a hymn by Joseph Swain, Phelps rewrote the song capturing "both the excitement and struggles of the new movement," comparing the trials of the church to those of the ancient Hebrews.

“Redeemer of Israel” has since become the well-loved “song of the Saints.” May we listen to the choir as they sing the first three verses of “Redeemer of Israel.” We invite the audience to stand and share in the final verse.

[Choir sings verses one, two and three.

Congregation shares in the final verse]

Adam-on-di-Ahman..... Participant/Reader Eight

On 1 June 1833, God called the Saints in Kirtland through revelation to "build an house. . . dedicated unto me." The construction of the Temple became very much a part of the community life. Men and women gave much of their time and efforts in helping to build the Temple, and Emma took in workers as borders.

By September 1835, Emma was again working on a selection of hymns to be published. The new hymnal came off the press just in time for the dedication of the Temple, 27 March 1836. "Adam-ondi-Ahman" was sung at the dedication and quickly became "one of the most frequently sung. . . hymns in the early years." The song was included in all of Emma's subsequent hymnals.

We will sing "Adam-ondi-Ahman" using the melody and bass line in an unofficial hymnal published by J. C. Little and C. B. Gardner in 1844. It was the first hymnal to include actual music for any Latter Day Saint hymn. All other Latter Day Saint hymnals before 1889 were words only.

[Congregation sings "Adam-ondi-Ahman"]

Nauvoo.....Participant/Reader Nine and Ten

Reader Nine:

In 1838 church members were starting to move out of Kirtland, into Far West, Missouri and eventually to Nauvoo, Illinois. "On 9 May 1839 Emma moved her family into a small two-story log house" in Nauvoo. Emma would spend the last 40 years of her life in Nauvoo.

One of the first enterprises the Saints established in Nauvoo was the *Times and Seasons* newspaper. Hymn scholar Richard Clothier states, "The 131 issues of the paper, from November 1839 to February 1846, contain an amazing outpouring of literature, scripture, poetry, and news." In November 1840, the *Times and Seasons* published this notice:

Reader Ten:

HYMNS!! HYMNS!! Having just returned from Cincinnati Ohio, with paper and other materials for publishing a new selection of Hymns which have so long been desired by the saints, we contemplate commencing the work immediately; and feeling desirous to have an extensive, and valuable book; it is requested that all those who have been endowed with a poetical genius, whose (muse) has not been altogether idle, will feel enough interest in a work of this kind, to immediately forward all (choice) others; we mean (all) who have good hymns that will cheer the heart of the righteous man, to send them as soon as practicable, directed to Mrs. Emma Smith, Nauvoo, Ill. POST PAID.

Reader Nine:

The next song we will sing is a poem from the *Times and Seasons* written by a visitor to Nauvoo named "Laura." We will sing it to the tune "Materna," commonly associated with "America the Beautiful." We invite you to remain seated in singing this beautifully descriptive song of Nauvoo.

[Congregation sings "Nauvoo"]

Relief Society.....Participant/Reader Eleven

On March 17th, 1842 Emma and nineteen other women met with Joseph on the second story of the red brick store in Nauvoo to form the Nauvoo Female Relief Society. Their objective "according to Joseph Smith was 'that the sisters might provoke the brethren to good works in looking to the wants of the poor, searching after objects of charity and in administering to their wants; to assist by correcting the virtues of the female community.'" The sisters in attendance would unanimously elect Emma as the president to "preside over the Society. . .just as the Presidency, preside over the church."

"In just two short years, membership [grew] from the original twenty to approximately 1,341 members." Today there are over 4 million women involved in the Relief Society in more than 160 different countries and provinces. The hymn, "Now Let Us Rejoice," was sung at the close of the first Relief Society meeting.

The minutes of the Kirtland Temple dedication indicate that "Now Let Us Rejoice" was sung to the tune "Hosannah," the same tune used for "The Spirit of God." Today we will use this tune to sing "Now Let Us Rejoice."

We invite the women here tonight, who like the members of the early Relief Society, have taken an active role in their congregations to please stand and sing the first verse. The entire audience will stand and share in the remaining verses.

[Females sing the first verse. Congregation joins in remaining verses]

Carthage Jail.....Participant/Reader Twelve

As Joseph left for the Carthage jail "Emma's eyes filled with tears. 'Oh Joseph,' she said. . . 'you are coming back!'" Joseph returned twice more before saying his final good-bye. On June 27th, 1844 inside a Carthage jail, Joseph and his companions languished in the afternoon heat. John Taylor later recorded,

"All of us felt. . .a remarkable depression of spirits. In consonance with those feelings I sang a song, that had lately been introduced into Nauvoo, entitled *A Poor Wayfaring Man of Grief*. . . After a lapse of some time, Brother Hyrum requested me again to sing that song. I replied, "Brother Hyrum, I do not feel like singing;" when he remarked, "Oh, never mind; commence singing, and you will get the spirit of it." At his request I did so."

Some time later, the mob stormed the jail and shot into a small room. When the fire and smoke subsided Joseph and Hyrum lay dead. Joseph's body was brought back to Nauvoo in a "rough pine casket" for a proper funeral. At the funeral Emma, the young widow ". . . sank upon [her husband's] body. Suddenly her grief found vent, and sighs and groans and lamentations filled the room."

We invite you to remain seated in singing the first verse of *A Poor Wayfaring Man of Grief*. We will remain silent for the remaining verses as we listen to our soloist sing this memorable hymn.

[“A Poor Wayfaring Man of Grief” Congregation sings first verse with piano

solo the second verse with piano accompaniment,

solo (a cappella) for the remaining verses]

Birth of David Hyrum.....Participant/Reader Thirteen

At nine o'clock on the morning of November 17th, 1844, five months after Joseph's death, Emma gave birth to David Hyrum. Eliza R. Snow visited and wrote a poem about the infant, born to a world without a father.

Sinless as celestial spirits—
Lovely as a morning flow'r
Comes the smiling infant stranger
In an evil-omen'd hour.

Not to share a father's fondness—
Not to know its father's worth—
By the arm of persecution
'Tis an orphan at its birth!

Smile, sweet babe! Thou art unconscious
Of thy great, untimely loss!
The broad stroke of thy bereavement,
Zion's pathway seem'd to cross!

Thou may'st draw from love and kindness
All a mother can bestow;
But alas! On earth, a father
You art destin'd not to know!

Lewis Bidamon.....Participant/Reader Fourteen

Following the death of her husband and birth of David Hyrum, Emma elected to remain in Nauvoo with her family while church leaders and their Latter Day Saint followers scattered throughout the country. Within a few years she found friendship and support in Lewis Bidamon, a local man whom she married on December 23rd, 1847. Lewis assisted Emma in raising her five children and he remained her companion until the end of her years.

Emma’s Funeral.....Participant/Reader Fifteen

In the spring of 1879 Emma had a dream that “the prophet came and took her to a beautiful mansion. In one of the rooms was a baby. . . her child Don Carlos [who died as an infant]. She dreamed she caught the child up in her arms and wept. When she regained her composure, she asked Joseph where the rest of the children were. He assured her that if she would be patient, she would have them all.”

In her old age Emma continued to grow weaker. By April, all of Emma’s children found their way to the Mansion House in Nauvoo. Joseph III kept a “day-by-day account” of Emma’s declining health. During the night of April 29 Joseph III saw “his mother rise herself up and extend her left arm. ‘Joseph!’ [he] heard her say. ‘Yes, yes, I’m coming.’” Emma died at 4:20 a.m. on April 30, 1879.

Her memorial service was held on Friday May 2nd, 1879 in Nauvoo, Illinois. Today Emma lies in Nauvoo, next to Joseph and Hyrum.

The next hymn we will sing, *Asleep in Jesus! Blessed Sleep!* was among the hymns sung by the choir at Emma’s funeral. We invite you to remain seated in listening to *Asleep in Jesus! Blessed Sleep!*

[Soloist will sing a cappella or with soft accompaniment]

Emma’s Continuing Legacy.....Participant/Reader Sixteen and Seventeen

Reader Sixteen:

With Emma’s passing, she left behind a collection of hymns that continue to influence the Latter Day Saint hymnals of today. Emma’s love of song lives on and the Latter Day Saint movement continues to be a “singing people.”

Emma’s son, David Hyrum, would in turn greatly influence the hymnody of the early Reorganization. “It appears that he inherited his father’s ability to articulate language into a smooth, charismatic form, while also using his mother’s gifts and talents in the area of music.” His older brother, Joseph Smith III, born in the Whitney Store in 1832, also had a talent for hymn writing. Both brothers authored a number of hymns published in various hymnals over the last century.

Emma’s granddaughters, Vida E. Smith and Mary Audentia Smith Anderson continued her musical legacy in writing a beloved hymn known as “There’s an Old, Old Path.” Vida, the hymn’s author was born in 1865 at Nauvoo, the daughter of Alexander Hale and Elizabeth Kendall Smith. Like her uncles, Vida was inspired to write the hymn during an experience of worship. She tells the story:

Reader Seventeen:

“It was after a tedious Sunday school session one Sabbath, a glorious summer day ... I came up from the primary rooms in the Brick Church in Lamoni and seated myself in the usual place on the north side of the church. A slight breeze moved the branches of the trees near the window; birds flitted about and called or sat on some swaying branch, singing in the Sabbath softness; the choir sang and someone prayed – all as usual. The minister read his text, that old favorite... about finding the old paths and walking therein. He soon faded from my realization as my eyes rested on the swaying branches of the trees and the soft clouds against the blue sky, and I felt the nearness of congenial friends. I felt at home in the house of God, and I felt at ease before his mercy seat. The glory of the message of the ancient prophet flooded my soul and, opening my quarterly, I wrote on the flyleaf the words of the song exactly as they appear in the hymnal.”

Reader Sixteen:

With the encouragement of a friend, Vida showed the lines to her cousin, Mary Audentia, daughter of Joseph III and Bertha Madison Smith. Mary Audentia quickly composed the tune to a hymn that continues to inspire.

Let us remain seated in singing this evening a hymn created by Emma’s granddaughters.

[Congregation sings: There’s an Old, Old Path]

The Spirit of God Like a Fire is Burning.....Reader/Participant Eighteen

It is fitting that we bring our experience to a close this evening with a hymn that is dear to the hearts of every Latter Day Saint —a hymn that grew out of the Pentecostal experiences here in Kirtland prior to the completion and dedication of the Temple.

Tongues, visions, and prophecies were enjoyed on several occasions; in one particular quorum session, those attending reported “a great flow of the Holy Spirit... like fire in their bones, so that they could not hold their peace, but were constrained to cry hosanna to God and the Lamb. . .”

With his poetic gifts, W. W. Phelps formulated the words of a hymn that captured the powerful spirit of this remarkable period. Immediately after its publication in *The*

Messenger and Advocate, the new hymn was printed as the last entry in Emma’s hymnal, which actually came off the presses only a few weeks before the Temple dedication.

Set to a stirring English tune, *The Spirit of God, Like a Fire is Burning* was sung at the Temple dedication by a large choir situated in all four corners of this sanctuary. This evening, let us stand and sing this powerful hymn with the same enthusiasm and energy as Emma Smith and the early Saints at the dedication over 170 years ago.

[Congregation stands and sings the closing hymn]

Benediction Participant Nineteen

Postlude