

A piano and a hymnbook have brought my family lasting joy.

By Lola Riley Scalley Yale

Music has been an important part of my life since childhood. Many evenings, after our farm chores were completed, we gathered as a family around the piano. With Mother at the piano, the seven of us children either sang along with our father or joined in with our instruments. At age eight, I had been given a trumpet, a B-flat instrument, and I had learned how to transpose music. We were not members of the Church, but we regularly had our own version of family nights together.

We'd sing and play all the songs of the late 1800s up to the current tunes, and we'd sing *every* hymn under the sun. Beginning at age 13, I faithfully went with my father to Thursday evening church choir rehearsals. While I was in college, I was in a trumpet trio and played the fanfare measures of "God of Our Fathers, Whose Almighty Hand" while the Methodist church choir marched into the chapel singing. Thus began my great love of the hymns.

A New Church, and a New Home for My Parents' Piano

I was first introduced to the Church shortly after I married. My husband suggested that we attend the church he had gone to for Boy Scouts (the LDS Church), and then the following Sunday we could attend the church of my youth. That first Sunday I recognized the Spirit and the gospel plan; I felt I had returned home. We never attended another church.

At the birth of my third child, my parents surprised me by giving me their piano, which they had purchased shortly after their marriage in 1929. They had loaded this heavy instrument into their station wagon and made the long drive from Walla Walla, Washington, to where I lived in Garland, Utah. They knew I had a music calling in the new church I had joined.

As the years passed, hymns of joy resounded through my home as I taught my seven children the songs that had made an impression on me. Words from the great hymn "Lead, Kindly Light" and beautiful phrases from "Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing" were forever locked in my soul. And in powerful visual hymns like "Jesus, Savior, Pilot Me" were unforgettable lyrics that spoke of "life's tempestuous sea."¹

Widowhood and cancer came early in my life as a young mother, and it was music, mainly the hymns,

JOY WITH MY PARENTS' PIANO



that lifted my spirits and kept my heart rejoicing. On our eighth wedding anniversary, my second husband's surprise gift to me was to clean the inside of the piano. Decades of accumulated treasures were found that had deadened the sounding board and keys—old photos of my youth, coins of varied amounts, and assorted objects that tiny fingers had stuck inside. Later, even after the piano had been moved 14 times, the piano tuner commented that it had held its tone beautifully.

Gratitude for the Restored Gospel

Not long ago, while recovering from surgery, I was listening to *Music and the Spoken Word* and joined in singing a familiar hymn with the Tabernacle Choir. I could almost hear my father's booming bass voice from childhood singing the triumphant ending. I soon realized the words I was singing were not the same as those sung by the choir but were words recalled from my youth. Searching my LDS hymnbook, I could not locate the hymn by the name I knew. Then I turned to the section at the back listing hymns alphabetically. When I reached the letter *J*, there it was: "Jehovah, Lord of Heaven and Earth." The old hymn name and lyrics

were completely different; only the *tune* was the same. I remembered, with a smile, that this common hymn tune could be used for singing 26 different hymns in the book.

As I compared the lyrics, gratitude filled my heart for the restored gospel. I am thankful that the 90-plus hymns in our hymnbook that are also found in other church hymnals have been arranged for us to sing with words of correct doctrine from the Restoration. What a joy to sing hymns based on our scriptures and our testimonies!

The old piano's next move will be to the home of my fifth daughter. From one family to another, I pray the piano and the beautiful hymns of the Lord will continue to bless our family for generations.

*One general chorus then shall rise
From men of ev'ry tongue,
And songs of joy salute the skies,
By ev'ry nation sung.² ■*

The author lived in Washington, USA, but passed away before this issue was completed.

NOTES

1. "Jesus, Savior, Pilot Me," *Hymns*, no. 104.
2. "Jehovah, Lord of Heaven and Earth," *Hymns*, no. 269.

