

Brethren, We Have Met to Worship

attributed to William Moore

arranged by Douglas Mears

Instrumentation

SATB Choir

Clarinet in B^b (or Clarinet in A, or C Instrument)

Harp

Organ

Notes

"Brethren, We Have Met to Worship" is one of the oldest surviving American folk hymns. Its inspiring text, first published in 1819, is attributed to the Irish immigrant George Askins. A Methodist who became an itinerant preacher for the Baltimore Conference in 1801, Askins was later appointed to other circuits as well, mostly in Maryland, Virginia, and Kentucky. He died in Frederick, Maryland in 1816.

Like the writer of this hymn text, the composer of the tune most often associated with it has never been confirmed. Most hymnologists believe that it was William Moore, a composer thought to have been born in Tennessee in 1790. In addition to contributing hymn tunes to Wyeth's Repository" (1810) and William Walker's "Southern Harmony" (1835), Moore published this hymn tune, entitled "Holy Manna", in his shape-note tune book, "Columbian Harmony" (1829).

Since its first appearance, "Brethren, We Have Met to Worship" has become one of the most popular hymns still sung today. The opening stanza of this call to worship invites Christians to pray for the Holy Spirit's presence as the service begins. The final stanza urges believers to live in the love of God in anticipation of the full redemption of creation when Christ returns.