

The Songbee Song Projection System

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Chapter 1. Introduction to Songbee

Songbee is an application designed to be used in churches for the projection of worship song lyrics. Instead of using hymn books, churches can use a data projector and a computer running Songbee to display the words to hymns and songs.

Songbee is particularly designed for the Japanese church. It handles Japanese text, and particularly the display of *furigana*, in ways that other similar applications (Easislides, openlp.org, Opensong and Lyricue) do not.

Requirements

In order to use Songbee, you will need to have a dual-monitor set up. That is to say, your computer must be able to send video to two different monitors: one will be your ordinary workstation, and the second will be a projector or closed-circuit television system to display the lyrics to your congregation.

If you have a laptop, you normally have the ability to plug in an external monitor - plug your projector into the monitor output. If you have a desktop PC, you may need to install a second video card. Once you have done this and plugged the projector into the second output, you will need to configure your operating system to display in multi-monitor mode.

Windows For Windows computers, follow these steps to turn on multiple monitor support:

1. Right-click on the desktop.
2. Click the **Settings** tab.
3. Click the **Display** list and select the second monitor.
4. Select **Extend my Windows desktop onto this monitor** and click **OK**.

Note that on some brands of laptop the above instructions do not work and you will need to use the software that comes with the laptop.

Mac OS X On a Macintosh:

1. Open System Preferences.
2. Click on the **Displays** icon.
3. Click the **Detect Displays** button
4. Turn off display mirroring.

Features

- Compilation of custom playlists
- Easy to set up, and available on many platforms
- Ability to create and edit songs
- Ability to import and export databases of songs

Future Features

While Songbee does not intend to compete with some of the more established projects mentioned above, the following features are anticipated in future releases:

- Ability to select alternative song databases
- Customization of the main worship display
- Export song lyrics as Microsoft Word document
- Drag-and-drop interface to adding songs to the playlist

It is unlikely that Songbee will support display of Powerpoint or multimedia files, but Powerpoint can be run at the same time as songbee, and if you start a powerpoint show it will open over the top of songbee's output.

Technical details

Songbee is implemented in XUL and Javascript using the Mozilla platform, the same platform used by Firefox and Thunderbird, and so would run on any operating system supported by Mozilla. The database of songs and playlists are stored in an SQLite database using the `storage` extension; once a user runs Songbee for the first time, Songbee creates a profile directory for them and copies in a SQLite database file. Individual songs are stored in a custom XML format.

Chapter 2. Managing Playlists

A *playlist* is a collection of songs to be played in a worship session. Songbee currently assumes that the list of songs is known before the worship begins. Using Songbee has two phases: creating and editing the playlist before worship, and moving between the songs during the worship time.

The playlist interface

When Songbee starts, you will see a window like this:

Figure 2.1. Playlist list



This shows all the playlists in your library, together with the songs in each playlist. At the top of the window are three toolbuttons:

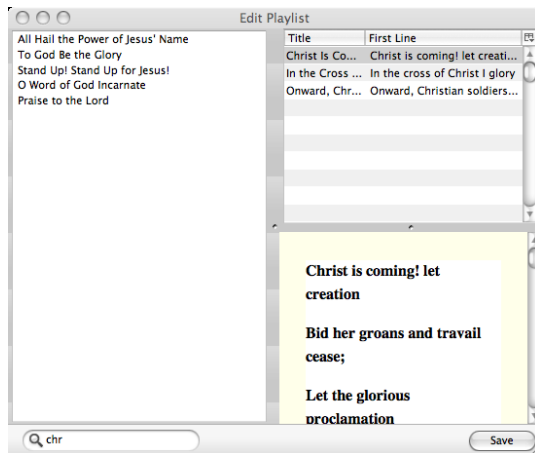
- | | |
|---------------------|---|
| Add Playlist | This creates a new playlist, prompts you for a name, and takes you to the playlist editor. |
| Add Song | This creates a new song, and takes you to the song editor. |
| Import songs | This allows you to import songs from a Songbee song library file; that is to say, if you have a file containing additional songs in Songbee format, this option will add them to your database. |

Alongside each playlist's title are three buttons: **Go** will take you to the main "live" screen; **Edit** will take you to the playlist editor for this playlist; **Delete** will delete the playlist from the system. It does not delete the songs from the database, just the running order for an occasion.

Playlist Editor

The playlist editor is where you put together the list of songs that are going to be used in the worship time. The playlist editor shows the current songs in the playlist, and the available songs, like this:

Figure 2.2. Playlist editor



The playlist editor consists of the following features: the current playlist, on the left; the list of available songs, on the right; the preview pane, displaying the currently chosen song, below the song list; at the bottom, the search bar.

Creating a playlist

To construct the playlist, find the song you want in the song list. You'll see a preview of the currently selected song in the song list. To add the song to your playlist, double-click on the song in the song list.

You can re-order your playlist by dragging songs up and down the list. To remove a song from the playlist, click on it to select it, and press the **Delete** key.

Searching for a song

To find a song in the song list, you may either scroll through, or use the search interface at the bottom of the window. To use this, type in part of the song you are looking for, and SongBee will narrow down the song list to only include songs that match your search. SongBee uses the following strategies to find your song:

- First, it looks for songs with your search text in the title.
- If no songs match, then it looks for songs with your search text in the first line.
- Finally, it searches for songs which contain the search text anywhere in their lyrics

SongBee's search function generally does what you want, so if you cannot find the song you are looking for, keep typing in words until it appears in the song list.

Chapter 3. The Live Interface

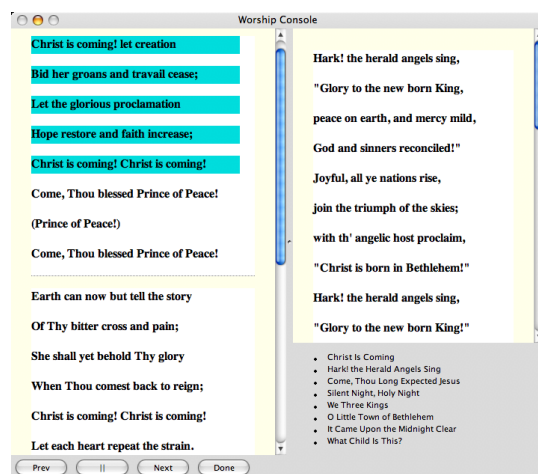
When you click **Go** on a playlist, you are taken to Songbee's "live" interface. This consists of two windows. The first window should appear on your projector.

Note

It *should* appear on your projector. At the moment, it won't, and you have to drag it there manually. We're working on this.

The second window is the *live console*. It looks like this:

Figure 3.1. The live console



On the left you see the current song. The portion in blue is currently visible on the projector. Usually this covers an entire verse, but when the verse is longer than one screenful, as in the example above, only the visible lines are highlighted.

The next song in the playlist is displayed on the right, and under that, the current playlist. At the bottom of the window are the buttons for controlling Songbee with the mouse.

Navigating with keystrokes

However, the recommended way of controlling Songbee is with the keyboard. Even if you are used to using your mouse to control your computer, you will find that using the keyboard allows you to move to the right portion of the right song much more quickly in reaction to things that your worship leader may unexpectedly do!

Here are the keys used to control Songbee:

- | | |
|---|--|
| # | Go to the previous song in the playlist. |
| # | Go to the next song in the playlist. |
| # | This will return to the previous verse, chorus or bridge within the current song. |
| # | If, as in the example above, only a portion of the lines of a verse can fit on the projector display, this key (cursor down) will scroll down the verse. Once the last |

	line is displayed, or if the entire verse can fit on the display at once, then this key will jump to the next portion of the song shown in the left-hand pane.
PgDn	Page down will jump, rather than scroll, to the next portion of the verse to be displayed.
1, 2, 3, etc.	Jump to the corresponding verse of the current song.
v, c, b	Jump to the next verse, chorus or bridge. A <i>chorus</i> is displayed in the console in a slightly narrower margins than a verse; a <i>bridge</i> is displayed in italics.
Esc	The escape key "pauses" the display, removing the text from the projector. The highlight in the current song pane turns from blue to yellow to remind you that the display is paused. Pressing escape again will unpause the display; you may change to a different verse or a different song while the display is paused.

Navigating with the mouse

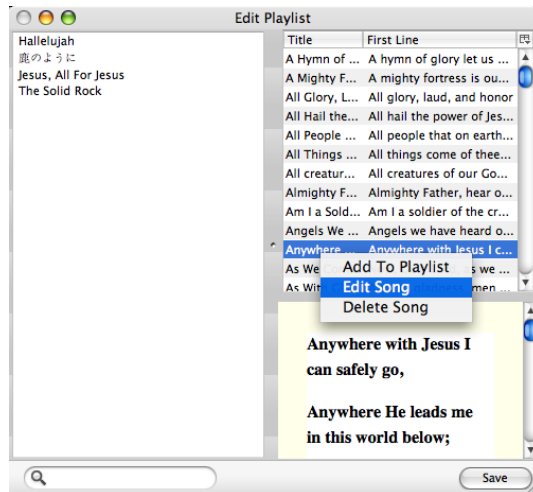
If you must navigate with the mouse, you can use the left and right buttons at the bottom of the screen to change songs; you may also click on a song in the song list to jump to that song directly. Clicking on a portion of a song in the left-hand window will cause Songbee to display that portion.

Chapter 4. Managing Song Databases

Adding and editing songs

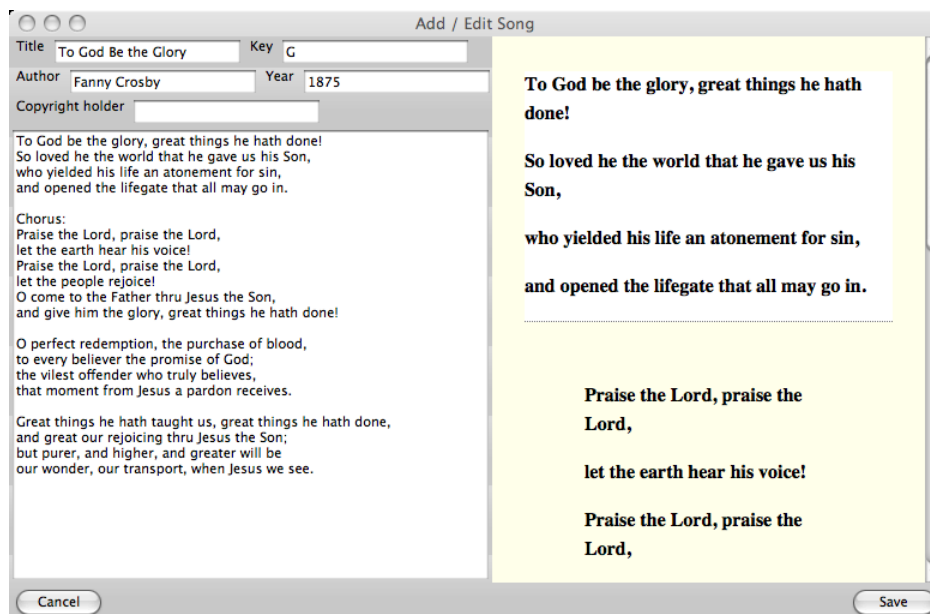
To add a new song, click on the "add song" toolbutton at the top of the main playlist window. You can edit an existing song by right-clicking¹ on the song name while editing a playlist:

Figure 4.1. Editing an existing song



Once you have selected a song to edit, or chosen "Add Song", you will be taken to the song editor window. The song editor window looks like this:

Figure 4.2. Editing an existing song



¹ (Mac: Ctrl-clicking.

This consists of two parts; the right hand part is an automatically-generated preview. The left part is where you enter all the details of the current song: its title, key, year, and so on. The box at the bottom is where you enter the lyrics. The lyrics are entered using a couple of conventions:

- Verses, choruses and bridges are entered as paragraphs, with a blank line separating them. Lines breaks are preserved inside a verse. To begin a chorus or bridge, the first line should be "**Chorus:**" or "**Bridge:**" respectively, with the text of the chorus/bridge immediately following and with no blank line in between.
- When entering Japanese furigana, do so like this: (**#|##**). That is to say, place the expression in brackets; put the main text first, then a pipe sign (**|**), and then the furigana. The furigana will be displayed above the main text. You should be able to see this on the preview.

Importing and exporting songs

This doesn't work yet, but when it does, I'll be sure to document it!