

Preface

The Reformed Churches of New Zealand are committed by general consensus as well as by their Church Order to the singing of Psalms and hymns in the public worship of God. Since their inception in the early 1950s they have used the *Psalter Hymnal* of the Christian Reformed Church of North America as their approved collection. In the late 1980s and through the '90s synodical committees studied, in particular, the wholly new 1987 edition of the CRCNA *Psalter Hymnal* and also the Christian Reformed Churches of Australia's *Book of Worship*. While both these books had much to commend them, neither was eventually accepted by Synod as a permanent replacement. Consequently, the 2002 Synod appointed a committee with the following mandate:

1. *Select Psalm versions that are as faithful as possible in content and form of expression to Scripture, granting proper room for poetical necessity.*
2. *Psalm and Bible song selections are to be evaluated for the soundness of their paraphrasing against the relevant sections in the synodically approved Bible versions (NIV and NASB).*
3. *Provide a reasonably large selection of hymns and songs....*

The mandate was confirmed in 2005 at which point the committee was about two-thirds through its work on the Psalms. We now have the pleasure of presenting to the Churches the following selection of metrical Psalms as a Provisional Psalter. We present it in the sincere hope that it may enable the Lord's people better to sing his praises as he has commanded us and as it is man's highest honour and pleasure. It is provisional in the sense that the whole project (Psalms and hymns) will require final synodical approval upon completion. It is provisional also in that, while we continue to work on the hymn section, the Churches may use the Psalter, critique it and pass that critique back to the committee for consideration for the final publication.

We have followed the standard translational device of capitalising LORD and GOD where they stand for God's covenant name, Jahweh/Jehovah. Elsewhere, Lord translates the Hebrew Adonai and God Elohim.

It remains for me, as convener, to thank very sincerely the members of the committee for their dedication to many hours of hard work, all completely voluntary. A good number of other people have similarly done wonderful work behind the scenes in transcription and proofreading, for which our sincere thanks is also due.

Those having served on the committee since 2002 (or for part of that time):

Andrea Benfell, Lieda Brooks, John Goris, John Haverland,
Berwyn Hoyt, Lois Hoyt, John Rogers (convener), Bill Wiersma.

Soli Deo Gloria