

## Congregational Singing Tips

By David Ezell

Congregational songs work best when they are easy to sing. That means melodies and rhythms are easy to catch on to, vocal ranges are within reason, and the keys that are not too high.

Traditional hymnals are usually pitched so that sopranos can easily sing the melody, apparently with the assumption that members of the congregation are going to sight-read in four-part harmony. Since almost everyone actually sings the melody, editors of Unity's *Wings of Song* hymnal put most of the songs in lower keys, many times a third lower.

Current New Thought songwriters are also producing a large body of songs appropriate for congregational singing. They will usually give permission for their songs to be projected or duplicated for use in church services. Blanket permission to duplicate and project many of the best of these songs can be obtained with an emPower Music Rights License ([www.empowerma.com/musicrights](http://www.empowerma.com/musicrights).)

In accompanying congregational singing, it is good to emphasize the melody, unless it is a song the audience knows very well.

