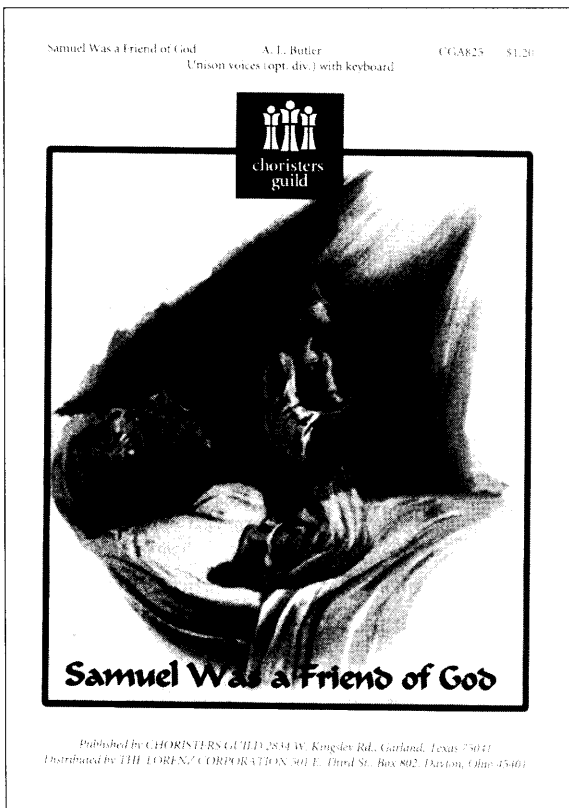


Samuel Was a Friend of God



Get ready for some exciting times with your choir as you learn this lovely anthem. Not only does it lend itself to good musicianship – rhythm study, tone production study, and terminology study – but it encourages warm moments of worship as the music beautifully enhances the meaning of this story about that dedicated child and friend of God, Samuel. This piece also lends itself to dramatization.

Allow parts of at least six rehearsals to bring this to performance level, allowing the children time to absorb it and feel comfortable sharing it. This plan outlines four rehearsals, plus five or more to review, memorize, and “polish”.

Three terms, which will indicate levels of learning, will be useful to teachers, hopefully beyond the study of this particular anthem. SUDsing an anthem relates to the sight reading stage, meaning Same, Up, Down – leading the children to observe if the notes go up, down, or stay the same. Have them use the eraser end of their pencils to point to the notes and to notice the *notes*, rather than the *words*.

POP means Put On Posters. If you will take time to prepare the posters illustrated, you will treat yourself to some rich teaching times, using this in-between step to memorizing.

MOP means Memorize Off Posters, and “polish” the music like your Mom makes a beautiful floor shine. Use half sheets of poster board except for the “sequence” posters which need to be smaller. This size will sit up easily on a music stand.

Divide the anthem into six sections:

- Section 1: Measures 1-10
- Section 2: Measures 12-19
- Section 3: Measures 25-31
- Section 4: Measures 34-44
- Section 5: Measures 45-66
- Section 6: Measures 67-End

1
2
3

Anthem by A. L. “Pete” Butler

REHEARSAL 1

Sing Section 1, allowing the children to be the “video” (moving their mouths) while the teacher is the “audio” (making the sounds). Then repeat the section, allowing the children to sing along. Use this method of singing all six sections, stopping to work briefly on the following spots:

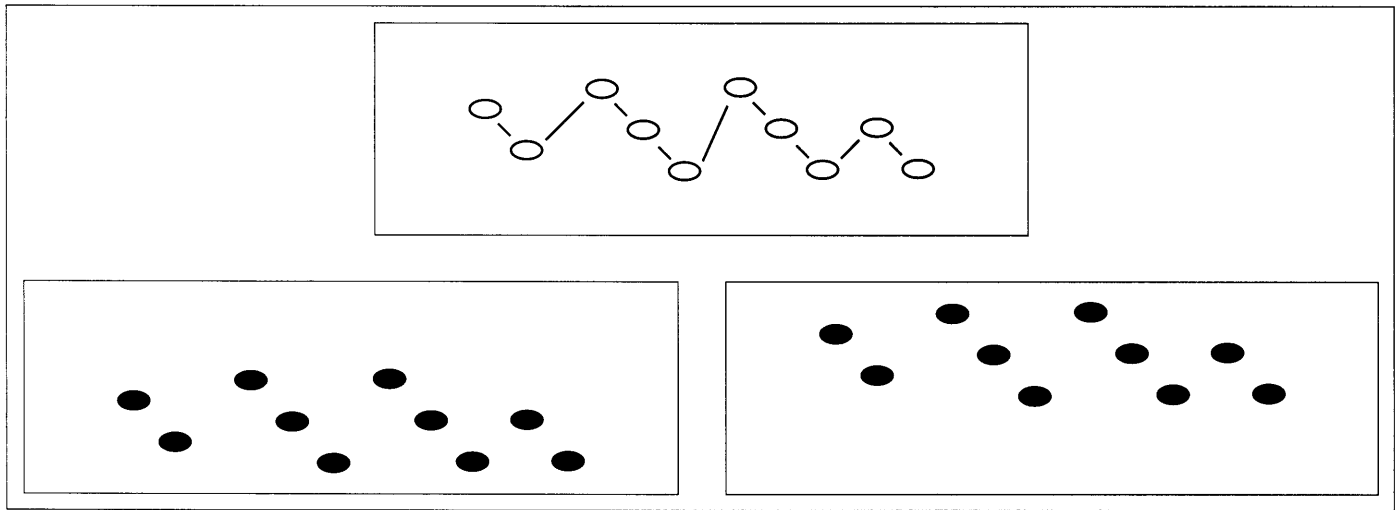
In Section 2, on the words “did not call”, emphasize the three accents.

Emphasize the rhythm on “Go back to bed.” Insist on a quick silent spot between those two short phrases.

In Section 4, work on the three occurrences of “this time.” Save the “s” on the third “this” and put it onto “time.” Write it on the board this way: “Thi~~~~stime.” Then work on achieving a beautiful forte tone on the last word in the section “Lord”, putting a tiny “d” on the *same* pitch at the end of the word.

In Section 5, hold the last word, “speak”, a long time, then work to put the “k” (with breath after it) on all together.

In section 6, sing only the high part, saying you’ll learn the other two parts later. Hold your copy of the music up, running your finger along the top line of the bracketed lines, showing part one. Similarly, show the second part then the third. Point out the bracket and explain this is called



“open score”, where each part has its own staff. At the end of Section 6, whisper the last “Samuel.”

Just before leaving this piece, give some attention to the pronunciation of the word “Samuel”. It needs to have only two syllables, and the vowel in the second syllable will need some attention. Experiment with several shadings, probably settling on “yool”, but not too extremely.

REHEARSAL 2

Play this rhythm game: Slap your knee three times and jerk your hand into position in front of your shoulder with the palm toward the children. Call out several numbers, allowing the children to respond with that number of claps and jerks. Then point out that the word “friend” at the end of score 1, top of page 8, gets “three slaps on the leg-beats.” In the second part, “friend” gets only one slap and goes right ahead. Learn the two parts and put them together. Point out that Part 3 is “stretched out” (augmented), and is sung twice as slowly. Put all three parts together, exchanging parts with the groups. Work on the “I’m ready”

segment of Section 5, emphasizing a determined sound to help convey the message of being “ready” for what God wants us to do. Work on putting energy into “and the next time...” segment, telling the story excitedly.

Teach the term “sequence” – the same *motion* of notes, but on *other pitches*. Make three short Pattern Posters, one with holes cut out showing the *motion* of the notes; the other two identical, except the notes on one are higher on its poster than the other.

Hold the “pattern” over each, singing measures 45 to 48, then measures 49 to 52. The teacher needs to observe that there are several words for each hole. Make your “pattern” poster first so the holes will fit over the notes in the other two posters. (See Pattern Posters)

Review the whole song. Now you’ve completed SUDsing the song.

REHEARSALS 3 AND 4

POP the song. Use the following posters:

Poster #1


<p>There once who lived he helped of helping)</p>	<p>But the voice BACK to Eli to bedHim ~~~~~</p>
<p>Now S. and ran but Eli I did not)</p>	<p>But the voice back to Eli But this time (2) Thi~~~~~ stime</p>

**Then Eli & S. ~ talk
 about the voice
 And they talked ~ way God speaks
 When ~ listen ~ obey
 & the next time S. ~ awakened
 He said O
 I'm ready ~ do // I want ~ life ~
 always to honor you ~~~~~~
 Spea**k****

Poster 1 teaches the Sections 1 through 4, featuring the first words of each phrase. The curved marks mean “don’t breathe between these two phrases”. “Now” is circled in red so they’ll enter on the pickup note. “Back” is written large because it begins two phrases. The jiggled marks after Him indicate holding the note a long time. The “2” indicates singing that phrase twice, and you have your reminder on “thi~~~~~stine”. (See Poster #1)

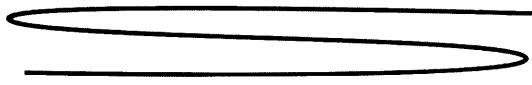
Poster 2 has key words to section 5, using the & sign for “and”, “S” for “Samuel” and reminding the children of what they did on the words “Speak” and “Ready”. (See Poster #2)

Poster 3 features key words and an ear drawn, rather than written. On the coda, read part 1, tapping three times on “friend”. Later drop the taps and teach the children to feel the three beats. Work on part 1. Then notice that part 3 is a “stretched out S” for the augmented part, and everybody is together on “of God.” (See Poster #3)

**Lord give me an 
 to hear when you speak my
 so I'll be willing/hear/call
 & ready to follow/give/like S. S.**

**S~~~~~S~~~~~S~~~~~⁽³⁾
 S~~~~~S~~~~~S~~~~~**

OF GOD



REHEARSALS 5 AND BEYOND

MOP and polish the song, reviewing whatever is needed and emphasizing all the good tools of musicianship.

Be sure to emphasize the spiritual meaning of what children can learn from this great story about Samuel, the friend of God.

Jo Ann Butler
 retired this year from her position as Associate Professor of Church Music at Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary after 16 years. Previously, Jo Ann taught at East Central University in Ada, Oklahoma for 15 years. She has written many articles for *The Chorister* and other publications.