

JOYFUL, JOYFUL, WE ADORE THEE

Have you ever heard a symphony orchestra?

Each different stringed instrument, each woodwind, each brass, each percussion instrument is beautiful in its own unique way – but played together, the rich blends of tone and harmony almost defy description!

Listen to a recording of Beethoven’s *Ninth Symphony* and you will hear that Beethoven adds to the orchestra the most unusual of all instruments – a chorus of human voices – to climax the final movement of the symphony.

Dr. Henry van Dyke, a Presbyterian minister, liked Beethoven’s *Hymn To Joy* so much that he wrote the words, *Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee* for it. Dr. van Dyke helped teach the Christian meaning of life in all that he did: teaching at Princeton University, serving as our government’s foreign minister to Holland, and as a chaplain in World War I. Perhaps you can read some of his poems and stories at the library: *Fisherman’s Luck*, *The Other Wise Man*, *The Lost Boy*, and *Collected Poems*.

We all know the story of Beethoven’s deafness – and how he was unable to physically hear his own compositions. But Beethoven – and all well trained musicians – learn to HEAR the sound of notes with the ***Ears of Their Minds!*** This ability to hear by looking at notes and thinking how they will sound is important to good choir singing, too.

Look at these notes:



Think how they will sound!

Now, play the notes or have your choir teacher sing them to you to see if you “thought” them correctly.

Gradually learn to hear how all four parts sound at once by looking, thinking, and then – checking to see if you heard correctly!

Beethoven’s tune and Dr. van Dyke’s words are such a joyful combination that you will have to be careful, as you sing, to keep the tempo steady and dignified as your heart joins “The Triumph Song of Life”.

