

## Music Blurbs for 11-11-18

### News and Notes

This week's hymns will include "Eternal Father, strong to save," and "God of grace and God of glory." The choir anthem will be the American rural hymn "Come Thou Fount of Every Blessing" superimposed on music by Bach.

### Sunday Bulletins

The text of "Eternal Father, strong to save" was written by English musician and author William Whiting (1825-1878). He spent most of his life as Master of Winchester College Choristers School. Besides music he also wrote poetry and published two collections, one of which was entitled *Rural Thoughts* (1851). But by far his most well-known work is the text of this hymn which he wrote in 1860. A year later, the compilers of England's most influential 19<sup>th</sup> century hymnal, *Hymns Ancient and Modern*, made extensive revisions to the text. The original first stanza read: "O Thou who bidd'st the ocean deep, Its own appointed limits keep, Thou, Who didst bind the restless wave, Eternal Father, strong to save. O hear us when we cry to Thee For all in peril on the sea." Changes were made in the other stanzas as well. Whiting must not have minded since he went on to make revisions himself and his 1874 version was fairly close to the 1861 *HA&M* version.

The music was written by John Bacchus Dykes for the first edition (1861) of *HA&M*. The tune was written specifically for Whiting's text at the request of Henry Monk, the editor of the hymnal. The tune's name, "Melita" is a variant of "Malta" and recalls the safe haven St. Paul found after being shipwrecked off the island of Malta (Acts 28:1-2). Together, the Whiting text and the tune are known as the "Navy Hymn" throughout the English speaking world and one of the most popular and best loved hymns to this day to seafarers and landlubbers alike.