

2024-25

DUP Song Histories



The songs for this year have been chosen to enhance and support each monthly lesson theme, to experience a variety of music, and to strengthen appreciation for our pioneer history and values.

September 2024 - School Days

"School Days" is an American popular song written in 1907 by Will D. Cobb and Gus Edwards. The song is a reflection of days gone by, looking back sentimentally on childhood in primary school. Clearly in support of strong pioneer traditions and values, education was a top priority in the founding of early university education in Utah. With the early establishment of the University of Deseret, young people often came from humble classrooms taught in a community building that housed both church and school gatherings. The goal was to educate and prepare future generations of the pioneers.

([Wikipedia.org/wiki/will-d-cobb](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Will_D._Cobb))

October 2024 - O Ye Mountains High

Charles W. Penrose was born in London, England on Feb. 4, 1832. He married Lucetta Stafford in London. He and his wife joined the LDS Church and emigrated to Utah seven years later. Known throughout the pioneer territory as a gifted poet, he penned the words to several hymns. He later served in leadership of the LDS Church and passed away at the age of 93 on May 16, 1925. His love for the beauty and grandeur of the Rocky Mountains where the pioneer settlements were established, are expressed in his words to the beautiful song "O Ye Mountains High."(<https://rsc.byu.edu>)

November 2024 - Country in the West

Allyn Laurence Lyon, along with Ruby Woolsey, wrote and arranged the song "Country in the West." This pioneer song expresses the dreams and hopes of our early pioneers seeking to find a new land to settle as well as the hardships endured along the way.

A. Laurence Lyon was born in 1934 in Rotterdam, Holland where his parents were serving a Netherlands Mission. He attended schools in Utah, where he wrote his first music composition at age 12 and learned how to play the organ at age 16. He was educated at the University of Utah and Eastman School of Music and taught as a professor of music at Western Oregon University. He served in the US Army for 2 years. Dr. Lyon arranged and published well over 200 songs including music for LDS temple dedications. His work has played an important role preserving pioneer music heritage. (www.mormonwiki.com) and (<https://singpraises.net>)

December 2024 - I Heard the Bells on Christmas Day

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, a well-known American poet and educator, was born Feb 27, 1807, in Massachusetts. Educated at Bowden College in Brunswick, Maine, he lived at a time of great political division in the nation. During the 1860's, hoping for reconciliation between the northern and southern states after the Civil War, he wrote the poem "Christmas Bells," later the basis of the carol "I Heard the Bells on Christmas Day." Longfellow knew grief and great personal trials in his life with the death in 1861 of his beloved wife from an accidental fire. To add to his grief, his eldest son, Charles, had been severely wounded, fighting for the Union Army in 1863. His hope for the future of peace on earth and his faith in God are written beautifully in the beloved Christmas hymn, "I Heard the Bells on Christmas Day," (<https://en.wikipedia.org>)

January 2025 - Once I Lived in Cottonwood

In 1854, Brigham Young sent 28 families to establish a community in the southwest area of the Utah Territory. Settlers began an attempt to grow cotton in the St. George and Santa Clara areas. The settlers nicknamed the land "Dixie." The harsh environment and intense summer heat were unbearable. With a resolve to build homes and farms under these conditions, settlers like George A. Hicks used their wit and sense of humor to lighten the hard-pressed community. His song, "Once I Lived in Cottonwood," describes on a humorous note, the history, and experiences of the Dixie pioneers. George Armstrong Hicks is long remembered and beloved for his witty folk songs. (<https://atom.lib.byu.edu>)

February 2025 – If the Way Be Full of Trial Weary Not

The year 1858 was full of trial and hardships as the pioneer settlers were forced to temporarily abandon the Salt Lake Valley for fear of the forthcoming Johnston Army invasion. Although this song was written and published in Pennsylvania years later, in 1878, the feelings and challenges expressed would have been pertinent to the pioneers in 1858 in the Salt Lake Valley. The composers of this song, William H. Flaville and John Robson Sweeny, were both educators from Chester, Pennsylvania. Together, they partnered several hymns and published this song in 1878. The song first titled "Weary Not" listed life's experiences in trails, sorrow, and tribulation but also emphasized the rewards of enduring to the end. (https://hymnary.org/person/Flaville_WH)

March 2025 - Our Mountain Home So Dear

Evan Stephens was born June 28, 1854, in Wales. His family joined the LDS Church and emigrated to Willard, Utah Territory, when he was 12 years old. Stephens loved the beauty of the mountains and nature, growing up as a boy in what is now Box Elder County. Later, he moved to the Salt Lake Valley where he taught music at the University of Utah and was made the director of the Mormon Tabernacle Choir in 1895. He tripled the size of the choir during his time as director and composed several LDS hymns. (en.wikipedia.org>wiki>evan.stephens)

April 2025 - The Handcart Song

John Daniel Thompson McAllister composed "The Handcart Song" in 1856 while helping a handcart company prepare to travel to the Salt Lake Valley. He, along with Reddick Allred and others, were invaluable in assisting the handcart pioneers. McAllister was born in 1827 in Delaware and later joined the LDS Church. In helping a handcart company prepare to leave Iowa, he taught them a little handcart song which they often sang as they pushed and pulled handcarts across the plains and mountains. McAllister later moved to St. George. He died in 1910 at the age of 83. (en.wikipedia.org>wiki.john.d)

May 2025 - Whenever I Think About Pioneers

Della Dalby Provost was born Dec. 28, 1910, in Rexburg, Idaho. She married Emery O. Provost on June 17, 1937, in Salt Lake City, Utah. They were the parents of one daughter. Della was musically gifted, composing several songs for church and community groups. She died April 1, 1873, in Salt Lake City, Utah. Partnering with A. Laurence Lyon, Della Dalby Provost composed "Whenever I Think About Pioneers." This beautiful song was primarily directed for the children of the LDS Church and published in the Childrens' Songbook. The message is to focus on remembering the legacy of the pioneer heritage and the importance of instilling these values in the posterity of our pioneer ancestors. (www.mormonwiki.com) and (https://singpraises.net)