



SEPTEMBER - "Covered Wagons"

The song "Covered Wagons" was composed by Richard Randolph, Anne Kaelin, and Gladys Pitcher. A favorite pioneer song of both children and adults, it was often performed and shared at the July 24th programs and celebrations throughout the intermountain west. It describes the journey of a covered wagon company slowly crossing the plains. It details the daily travel and thoughts that would have been prevalent in the minds of pioneer families as they traveled west facing challenges of the journey with optimism.

After arriving in the Salt Lake Valley, several pioneer groups were sent out to start settlements and build communities. This month we will learn about the story of the Las Vegas Fort. Such was an example of a pioneering community established in a harsh desert climate by sturdy and determined pioneers. (Richard Randolph-Wikipedia)

OCTOBER - "He's Got the Whole World in His Hands"

This familiar African American spiritual, was believed to be shared through generations orally. It finally was first published in 1927. Like many songs from this genre, the lyrics found their origins from passages or stories from the Bible. It is unknown who created this folk song originally, but it became a favorite, likely beginning in the South and later sung throughout the United States today. Those singing would often create new verses to the original song. This folk song, like many others, was a well-known favorite, and often sung at various gatherings or working in the fields.

Pioneer women led demanding lives with days filled keeping house, laundry, cooking, sewing, gardening, animal care, doctoring, and raising children. During their work, they were heard singing or humming familiar folk songs like this month's song, as they endured their demanding days. Our lesson this month will share some interesting and historical information about the task of washing laundry in frontier towns. (American Music - Wikipedia)

NOVEMBER - "Westward Ho"

Exploring the new frontiers meant discovering the best routes to travel as pioneer groups and explorers became familiar with new unfamiliar territory. Through inquiring best information that was available at a time when maps and guides were primitive or non-existent, different groups would travel west facing hardships with harsh weather, rugged topography, sickness and death, wagon and oxen breakdowns, lack of food and supplies, and threatening Indian attacks.

The song "Westward Ho" was written and composed by Miriam H. Kirkell and Marcia Davidson. It first appeared in the Child Craft Series, Art and Music, vol 13. Later it was published in the LDS Children's Songbook and enjoyed by children who are learning about their pioneer heritage moving west. (Miriam H. Kirkell -Wikipedia)

DECEMBER - "Jolly Old St Nicholas"

This classic American Christmas song originated from a poem titled "Lilly's Secret" by Emily Huntington Miller written in December 1865. Often attributed to composer James R. Murray, who likely wrote the music in 1874. The song celebrates the cheerful, gift-giving, and the aspects of Santa Claus as seen through the eyes of a child.

Children's traditions and celebrations at Christmas are delightful to learn about as seen from the perspective of early pioneer families. The song focuses on the anticipation of Christmas Eve, leaving stockings, and the jolly Santa which became popular in America during the mid-to-late 19th Century. Many of these traditions continue today. (James R. Murray- Wikipedia)

JANUARY - "Simple Gifts"

This Shaker song was written and composed in 1848, and generally attributed to Joseph Brackett from the Alfred, Maine Shaker Village. The song was unknown outside the Shaker community and later became well known when Aaron Copeland used the melody in a ballet score. This song has become familiar favorite today in many instrumental and choral concerts throughout the country.

The lesson for this month focuses on the native Americans, namely the Ute tribes which resided in the Utah area and mountain west. We learn that these tribes lived simple lifestyles with their own traditions and ways to survive, living off the land. Simplicity was the theme of their lives and required and involved simple survival as a way of life. (Joseph Brackett- Wikipedia)

FEBRUARY - "Long, Long Ago"

"Long, Long Ago" is a song dealing with feelings of nostalgia, written in 1833 by English composer Thomas Haynes Bayly. It was originally titled "The Long Ago". Bayly was a prolific songwriter, poet and dramatist. The song title was changed to "Long, Long Ago" when it was published in 1843 in a Philadelphia magazine managed by Rufus Wilmot Grisold. The song became a Victorian era parlor song favorite and was popular in the US in 1843-1844.

Walking through the streets of Salt Lake City, visitors can still see signs of the city's historic beginnings. Throughout the city are many reminders of pioneer history and of the rich heritage left by early settlers who helped build its industry, businesses, places of worship, and entertainment. (Wikipedia)

MARCH - "For the Strength of the Hills"

The lyrics for this beautiful hymn were originally written by Felicia D. Hemans (1783-1835) as "Hymn of the Baudois Mountaineers in Times of Persecution." It was later adapted for the LDS Church hymnbook by Edward L. Sloan and set to music by Welsh composer Evan Stephens. The original poem celebrated the Vaudois (Waldensians), a group of Christians in Italy who found refuge and spiritual strength from the mountains during intense religious persecution. The words emphasize holding strong in times of trouble. The song focuses on gratitude to God for protection, finding courage in nature, and the spiritual strength derived from mountainous sanctuaries. The lyrics were adapted to reflect the pioneers' journey to the Rocky Mountains, viewing the mountains as a "safe home" or "refuge." (Waldensians - Wikipedia)

APRIL - "In the Sweet By and By"

This classic 1868 American hymn was written by Sanford Fillmore Bennett and Joseph Philbrick Webster in Elkhorn, Wisconsin. Webster came into Bennett's office one day looking depressed. When asked about his concerns, Webster replied that "I will be all right by and by." Bennett thought it was a good idea for a hymn and together they added verses and music and a violin. The Salvation Army made the song popular and is still often sung in army funeral services.

This song provides a background for this month's lesson about the Salt Lake Cemetery. The verses of the song express a hope of a restful hereafter. As one learns about the rich pioneer history of those who are buried in the cemetery, a greater understanding and appreciation can be gained for those who have lived and passed on and the stories of their pioneer lives never to be forgotten. (Sanford Fillmore Bennett - Wikipedia)

MAY - "To Be a Pioneer"

This month we will enjoy the lovely song "To Be a Pioneer" as we learn more about the lifestyle, dress and daily adventures of our early pioneer folks. As a culmination of our year, we remember and appreciate the pioneers as expressed in this lively song written by Ruth Muir Gardner and music arranged by Vanja Y. Watkins. Originally written for a Primary summer program in 1977, it was later published in the LDS Children's Songbook. The words teach that pioneering is a matter of faith and courage and not just moving west in a covered wagon. That idea is our message as we see continual growth and excitement for the Utah Daughters of Pioneers. We proudly remember the theme that we are "Daughters of the Future and Keepers of the Past." (Ruth M. Gardner, Vanja Y. Watkins -Wikipedia)