

# OLD HARP

Number 52 2025

The New Harp of Columbia
Newsletter

## Singing Minutes from Years Past

By: Andrew Whaley

A wonderful new resource has been made available to the singing community thanks to the hard work of Christian Harmony singer Will Partain. Will has created a digital library of minutes from Old Harp singings (and Christian Harmony singings) that can be accessed at <a href="https://www.christianharmony.org/minutes/index.html">https://www.christianharmony.org/minutes/index.html</a>.

Most of the data has been collected **since 2005**. So, while not being a complete picture of the lifetime history of singings, it allows a very comprehensive look at the last twenty years. The site features minutes from past singing in the typical format, i.e. who led which song at which singing. However, there are also many additional features that allow access to unique information such as how many times a leader has led a specific song and how many total times a song has been led (i.e. which songs are most popular). There's also info on who led prayers, songs in memorial, and even recipes for dinner on the ground!

As an example, here are a few interesting notes discovered while using the site:

- The most popular songs in the book are No. 107 HOLY MANNA, No. 115.
   NORTHFIELD & No. 68T PARADISE
- The Shipp family (Jeremy, Elizabeth, James, Verity and Grace) have combined to lead 222 times
- Dr. Bruce Wheeler's most-led song was No. 20B HEBRON.
- In just four years, Elizabeth Wood has already led 51 times including 26 different songs.
- No one has led No. 143 WONDROUS LOVE more than David Sarten (60+ times)
- No. 99 MORNING TRUMPET is the most popular minor tune in the book and has been led 153 times.



From L to R: Dr. Harter, John Wright Dunn, Mae Headrick Adams and Burl Adams

- John Wright Dunn led No. 139 MEDITATION every year for the last four years of his life. Since that time, the song has been led most frequently by Nan Taylor.
- Robin Goddard has led No. 74 NEVER PART AGAIN over 100 times!
- Some songs, such as No. 92 DELAWARE, No. 129B WATCHMAN, No. 135 SPRING PLACE, and No. 187 SOLOMON'S SONG are reported as having never been led.
- Paul Clabo has led 173 times and prayed 34 times.
- Claudia Dean has led an astounding 93 different individual tunes (over  $\frac{1}{3}$  of the entire book!).

Another huge debt of gratitude is owed to Bob Richmond, who has contributed the vast majority of the data to this project. Bob has been faithful in keeping minutes at singings everywhere he goes for over two decades now. Thank you, Bob!

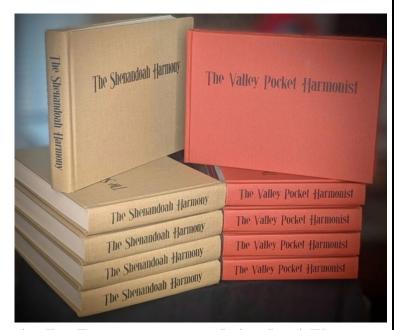
We encourage anyone with singing minutes (new or old) to forward them on to Will Partain (will@parple.org). Will accepts minutes from any old harp singing in any format.

## New Shapenote Books Draw From East Tennessee Music

By: Jeremy Shipp

Two four-shape tunebooks published recently in Boyce, Virginia, the *Shenandoah Harmony* (2013) and the *Valley Pocket Harmonist* (2024), use songs from the *New Harp of Columbia* and other East Tennessee sources. I corresponded with one of the compilers, John del Re.

"The Shenandoah Harmony was an effort to bring together songs that were popular outside of the Sacred Harp and have them in one place," Mr. del Re wrote. The Shenandoah Harmony used Swan's No. 122 SUMMER and No. 68T PARADISE and



P. M. Atchley's No. 67T SODA, as well as songs by other East Tennessee composers Robert Boyd, Wm. Bradshaw, Wm. Caldwell, and Reubin Monday (see the article below).

Regarding the *Valley Pocket Harmonist*, Mr. del Re wrote, "There were many more obscure sources, composers, and songs that didn't quite fit into that original narrative [for the *Shenandoah Harmony*]. Once the *Shenandoah Harmony* was done, we immediately recognized that these other sources were important to us as compilers and singers." This included East Tennessee books *The New Harp of Columbia* (1848/67), *Knoxville Harmony* (1838), and *Union Harmony* (1837) and other Tennessee books *The Eclectic Harmony* (1847), *Columbian Harmony* (1825), *Tennessee Harmony* (1821), and *The Western District Harmonist* (1838); yet "our search extended to upper New York state, Ohio, western PA and more. It was amazing to realize how many tune books were in use in the early 1800's. This correlates with a large percentage of the population participating in this music."

"We took our time going through them; we selected songs that stood out to us in originality, interest and singability. However, in many cases the books held a core of popular and well-known songs (found in many books), so we tried to get beyond that to find underappreciated gems. . . . We focused on finding songs we enjoyed and, in some cases, adapted them to make them more accessible." The *Valley Pocket Harmonist* used P. M. Atchley's No. 67B NEW YEAR and William Caldwell's No. A127 MALINDA, as well as other songs by East Tennessee composers Wm. Bradshaw and Caldwell (see the article below).

I asked Mr. del Re how we old harp singers might get a fresh appreciation for our own heritage and tradition. He answered, "We would suggest incorporating the less commonly sung songs. Expand your repertoire! They may be a little more difficult, but they would expand the group's knowledge and sight-reading abilities."

More information can be found at https://www.shenandoahharmony.com/.



### East Tennessee Composers Published before The Harp of Columbia

By: Jeremy Shipp

Four East Tennessee composers saw their first publication in The Harp of Columbia: P. M. Atchley (**67t SODA**, **67b NEW YEAR**), Rev. Wm. Atchley (**32 FAREWELL**), and M. L. and W. H. Swan (numerous songs). But there were seven previously published East Tennessee composers, not all of whom were republished in the Swans' books. The following is a brief introduction to these seven: William Bradshaw, Robert Boyd, William Caldwell, J. Cunnyngham, John B. Jackson, Reubin Monday, and John Martin. (For purposes of this summary, we do not distinguish arrangements from original compositions. The names of tunes appearing in the *New Harp of Columbia*, Restored Edition, are emboldened.)

Cpt. Robert Boyd (Blount & Knox Cos.; Dec. 25, 1771 – 1822 [Steel, The Makers of the Sacred Harp, p.89])

(12 ALBION, A96 DAVID'S VICTORY, EFFORT, FEMALE CONVICT, JUDGMENT aka ABSENT LOVE, MILINDA, NEW ORLEANS, OLNEY, 24 SALVATION)

Boyd's tunes first appeared either in the first edition of Ananias Davisson's *Kentucky Harmony* (1816) or in one of several editions of his *Supplement to the Kentucky* Harmony (1820-26). Today, ALBION, DAVID'S VICTORY, OLNEY, and SALVATION appear in *The Sacred Harp* or *Christian Harmony*, while Boyd's other songs have been reprinted in the *Shenandoah Harmony* (2013).

Captain R. Boyd was an associate of Ananias Davisson, who credited him as among the "Gentlemen Teachers" who assisted him with the *Kentucky Harmony* (1817, 2nd ed.). Davisson referred to him as a "young teacher" in the town or vicinity of Knoxville, in his May 26, 1818, Knoxville Register advertisement for his *Kentucky Harmony*.

David W. Music identifies this man as probably the Robert Boyd who was in Knox County from 1792-95, marrying Margaret Meek and rising in rank from ensign to captain in the Knox Regiment. From 1795, Boyd seems to have joined the Blount County militia and owned 100 acres in that county. Music found Boyd in Blount Co. records up until 1820, but notes that "new compositions bearing his name continued to appear in Davisson's books through 1826" ("Ananias Davisson, Robert Boyd, Reubin Monday, John Martin, and Archibald Rhea in East Tennessee, 1816-26", in *American Music*, Volume 1, Number 3, Fall 1983). There seem to have been a number of Boyds in the early years of Knox, Sevier, and Blount Counties, leaving streets, bridges, ferries, creeks, islands, historic houses, and people bearing the name to this day.

#### William Bradshaw (Sept. 1, 1797 – July 26, 1861)

(CAMDEN §†, CINCINATTI §‡, **A22 DETROIT**§, EDENTON §†, JUBILEE § \*, LAMENTATION § \* †, **113 LIVERPOOL** §, MARYVILLE §¶†, MISSISSIPPI § \* †, PALMIRA §, PORT ROYAL §‡, SUNBURY ¶, WORTHY THE LAMB ¶†, and VOLUNTEERS ¶)

Bradshaw's songs were published in two "batches", the first appearing in Davisson's §Supplement to the Kentucky Harmony (1820-26), with a few of these also appearing in Moore's \*Columbian Harmony (1825). Bradshaw's second batch of songs appears in William Walker's ¶Southern and Western Pocket Harmony (1845).

In East Tennessee, MARYVILLE reappeared in Caldwell's *Union Harmony* (1837), while the popular DETROIT and LIVERPOOL reappeared in Caldwell's *UH*, Jackson's *Knoxville Harmony* (1838), and Swan's



Bradshaw's MARYVILLE from the Supplement to the Kentucky Harmony

HoC (1848). DETROIT and LIVERPOOL are in the Sacred Harp, and most of Bradshaw's less popular songs have been reprinted in the †Shenandoah Harmony (2013) or ‡Valley Pocket Harmonist (2024). In 1818 Bradshaw "married Melinda Wear (born 1800), daughter of Sevier County pioneer Colonel Samuel Wear" (Steel, p.89). By 1830 the Bradshaws had moved to Alabama and later Texas. Therefore, it appears the bulk of Bradshaw's composing work was done in Tennessee, while three of his tunes may have been composed after his time in Tennessee.

Steel casts doubt on the above identification of Bradshaw, pointing out that we get it only from Walker's 1867 addition of "Wm." to Bradshaw's attributions. However, Bradshaw's naming a tune for Maryville at a time when he was marrying a Wear of nearby Sevier County lends it some credence.

#### William Caldwell (Jefferson County; Oct. 24, 1801 – July 10, 1857 [Steel, p. 96])

(Some 48 songs, of which 17 appear in the HoC/NHoC)

William Caldwell published the first of two East Tennessee four-shape tunebooks, the *Union Harmony* (Maryville, Tenn., F. A. Parham, 1837). He was prolific, putting his name to some 48 tunes, while acknowledging some were existing tunes which he harmonized, or airs from the oral tradition of the Methodist, Baptist, and Presbyterian churches of his day which he "reduced to system and harmonized". Among local 19th century composers, only the Swans (collectively) have more tunes attributed to them.

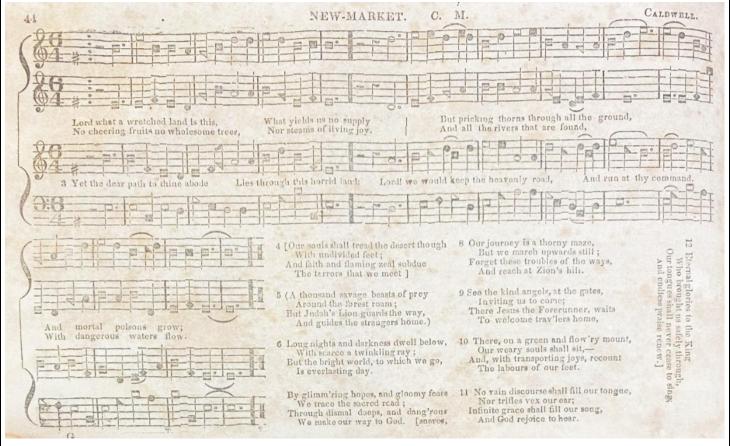
Caldwell was born near New Market, in Jefferson County, Tennessee, and farmed there until moving to Texas the year before his death. He was a vocal music teacher from about age 20 (a year after Davisson visited Knoxville promoting the *Kentucky Harmony*). He married in Jefferson County, became a widower with three children, and remarried having six more children. Like Davisson, he was a Presbyterian (Steel, p. 96-97).

Caldwell co-credited "J. Woods" on **105 ERIE** and "Smith" on REDEMPTION. Who knows, maybe this J. Woods and this Smith are two more East Tennessee composers?

Seventeen of Caldwell's tunes appear in the HoC, although M.L. Swan removed seven of them for the NHoC. **112 HUMILITY** and **57 PROTECTION** are popular at old harp singings.

The following Caldwell tunes can be found in the *Christian Harmony*, the *Sacred Harp*, or the Cooper book: THE CHRISTIAN'S FAREWELL, **46 CONCORD** aka THE DYING CHRISTIAN, FAMILY BIBLE, **102 FUNERAL THOUGHT**, **128 IANTHA** aka SWEETEST PLEASURE, IMMENSITY, **28 LOVING-KINDNESS**, **57 PROTECTION** aka HOW FIRM A FOUNDATION, **A53 REDEEMING LOVE** aka FLORENCE, and WAKEFIELD.

Other Caldwell tunes appear today in the *Shenandoah Harmony*, 2013, (INTERCESSION, THE LORD IS GREAT, ZION'S CALL) and in the *Valley Pocket Harmonist*, 2024 (REDEMPTION).



Caldwell's NEW-MARKET from his Union Harmony, 1837; cf. A63 in the New Harp of Columbia, Restored Edition

#### J. Cunnyngham

(ROME, published in the 2nd edition of the Knoxville Harmony, 1840)



Cunnygham's ROME, from the second edition of the Knoxville Harmony, 1840

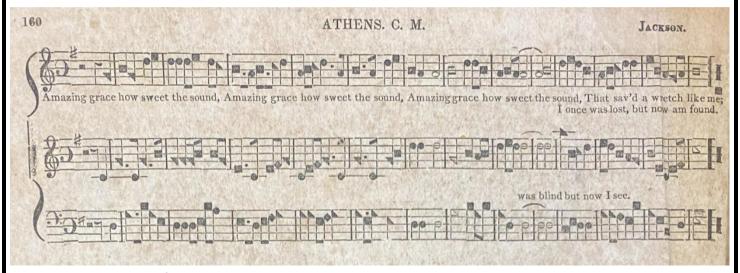
We know of only this one tune by J. Cunnyngham. Of all the original tunes in the *Knoxville Harmony*, ROME is the only one credited to someone other than the book's compiler, John B. Jackson. There was a Rev. J. Cunnyngham in East Tennessee who bore a son in Knox County in 1820. A reverend of this name was "sup." (supply preacher?) in the French Broad District of the Methodist church in 1821. And a reverend of this name

was stationed at Little River in the French Broad District of the Holston Conference in 1825. (There is a Cunningham Rd. just outside Rome, Georgia, but the name of this tune may rather correspond to the text's theme of this world's vain splendor.)

The tune is unconventional but pretty. However, the harmonization is full of discords, and there are about ten places where the number of beats don't add up in a measure. One gets the impression the harmonizer of this tune was untutored and the engraving of it was never proof-read.

#### John B. Jackson (McMinn, Monroe, and Hamblen Counties; d. 1858)

(ATHENS, CHRISTIAN DELIGHT, CHRISTIAN PROSPECT, CHRISTIAN UNION, CUMBERLAND, A36 MIDDLEBROOK, MILTON, MOUNT PLEASANT, NEW HARMONY)



ATHENS by John B. Jackson, from his Knoxville Harmony, 1838; note, this is not the same tune as A97b ATHENS

Jackson published the second of two East Tennessee four-shape tunebooks, *The Knoxville Harmony*, with editions in 1838 and 1840. The first edition was published in Madisonville (Monroe County seat) by A. W. Elder. The second edition was published at Pumpkintown, a farm-place "on the head waters of Eastanalle", also in Monroe Co. The Eastanalle or Oostenaula Creek flows from near The Lost Sea (outside Sweetwater, Monroe Co.) down through Athens (McMinn Co. seat).

Jackson "was born in North Carolina, a member of an old pioneer family of that state, and was highly educated, having served as professor of higher mathematics and music in Monticello Academy in Kentucky" (*The History of the Columbia River Valley*, Vol. II, The J. Clarke Publishing Company, Chicago, IL, 1928, p.448). From 1833 to 1834 he owned a house and Lot #32 in Madisonville. He sold a lot in Athens in 1836, by which year he had been elected Clerk of Court in McMinn County, in which office he continued "for many years" (ibid., p.448). Also in 1836, his wife Dorcas gave birth to a son, F. M. Jackson, in Athens. Already "a prominent farmer" (Hatchett, *A Companion to The New Harp of Columbia*, p.40), in 1838 he published the *Knoxville Harmony*, which is said to have "gained him a nice fortune" (*The History of the Columbia River Valley*, p.448). Jackson bought a slave in McMinn Co. in 1839. The family moved to Morristown (seat of Hamblen County, Tenn.) about 1842, in which town John B. died in 1858 and his son Francis Marion became city recorder before moving west in 1871 (<a href="https://www.hoodriverhistorymuseum.org/captain-francis-marion-jackson/">https://www.hoodriverhistorymuseum.org/captain-francis-marion-jackson/</a>).

The *Harp of Columbia* used **MIDDLEBROOK** (removed for the *New Harp*) and Walker's Christian Harmony used CUMBERLAND, but it seems Jackson's compositions do not otherwise appear in any books currently in use.

#### **Reubin Monday (Knox County)**

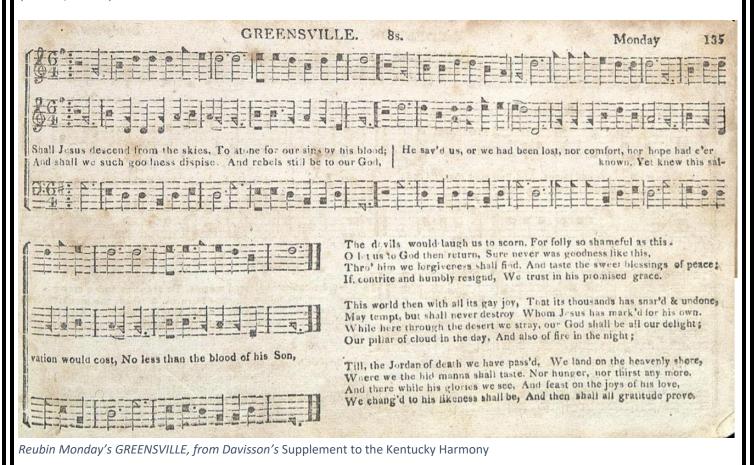
(GREENSVILLE\*, KNOXVILLE\$, LONDON\*, **163 NEW TOPIA**¶, TRANQUILITY¶, WASHINGTON\$)

Monday's tunes first appeared in Davisson's ¶*Kentucky Harmony* (1816, 1st ed.), Davisson's §*Supplement to the Kentucky Harmony* (1820, 1st ed.), and \*Moore's Columbian Harmony (1825). Of Monday's tunes, the *HoC/NHoC* and the *Sacred Harp* only use **NEW TOPIA**. (LONDON is a clear antecedent of the *Sacred Harp's* CORINTH, but possibly CORINTH is arranged from another source.) The Cooper Book only uses WASHINGTON. The *Shenandoah Harmony* (2013) uses KNOXVILLE, WASHINGTON, and TRANQUILITY. Monday's name is sometimes credited as "Munday" or "Mundy".

Reubin Monday was a captain in the Knox County militia from 1810. Davisson credited Monday in assisting him with the second edition of his Kentucky Harmony (1817). In 1818 the Knoxville *Register* advertised that "Mr. Monday's singing School will commence on Wednesday next at the Methodist meeting house." Later in 1818, Davisson advertised his association with the "young teacher" Captain R. Monday in his 1818 notice in the Knoxville *Register* upon publishing the second edition of the *Kentucky Harmony* and visiting Knoxville for an all-day Saturday singing at the Methodist meeting house. Monday may have moved to middle Tennessee by 1825, since Moore was the first publisher of two of Monday's tunes, one of which he co-authored (LONDON).

Perhaps GREENSVILLE is named for Greeneville (Greene Co.) and WASHINGTON for Washington County in Northeast Tennessee.

David W. Music praises the "vigorous, joyful melody" of TRANQUILITY, the "artful", "quite respectable setting" of NEW TOPIA, Monday's interesting "penchant for sudden unison sections" as in KNOXVILLE (Music, 78-79).



#### **Major John Martin (Knox County)**

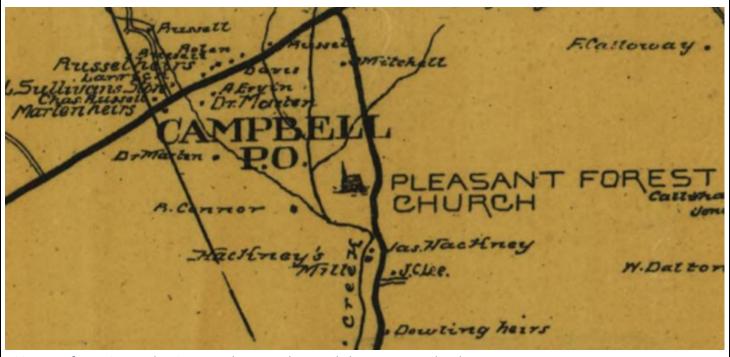
(PLEASENT FOREST, published in the 3rd ed. of Davisson's Supplement to the Kentucky Harmony, 1825, and picked up in The Shenandoah Harmony, 2013)



PLEASANT FOREST, by J. Martin, from the third edition of Davisson's Supplement to the Kentucky Harmony, 1825

Martin was a Knoxville-area singing-school teacher and, like Boyd and Monday, an agent for Ananias Davisson's *Kentucky Harmony* (1816-1826). Martin's only known composition is found in the 3rd edition (1825) of Davisson's *Supplement to the Kentucky Harmony*. Martin seems to have owned a couple hundred acres in Knox County as of 1806 (Music, p.80).

I find on the 1895 Vance, Coffee and Pill map of Knox County a Pleasant Forest Church beside Turkey Creek at the junction of present-day Campbell Station Rd. and Concord Rd., along with several nearby homeplaces labeled "Marten". At least five Martins are buried in the cemetery which remains. The church associated with this cemetary, Pleasant Forest Presbyterian, was disbanded and its building dismantled in 1910. This is only a couple of miles from Sinking Creek, where the *Harp of Columbia*'s Swan family may have owned tracts of land. For more history of Pleasant Forest, see <a href="https://www.pleasantforestcemetery.com/history">https://www.pleasantforestcemetery.com/history</a>.



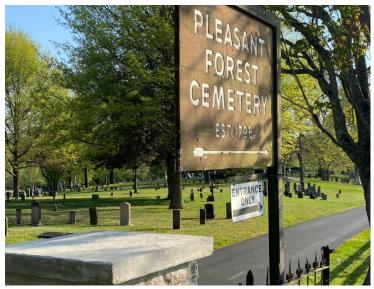
1895 map of Knox County showing several Marten places and Pleasant Forest Church

## An Update from the Board

By: Andrew Whaley

The Friends of The New Harp of Columbia is a non-profit Board of Directors created in 2005. Its purpose is to conduct business (manage funds, keep the book in print, etc.) and to aid in the promotion and continuation of our singing tradition. This is achieved through our website, social media outlets, newsletters, mailing lists, singing schools, etc. Board meetings are traditionally held annually, typically following an announced annual singing. All singers are welcome to attend board meetings.

As many of you know, members of the board have been working with the University of Tennessee to try and obtain another reprinting of the book. However, we've encountered some difficulties and delays which have led to a low supply of books for sale.



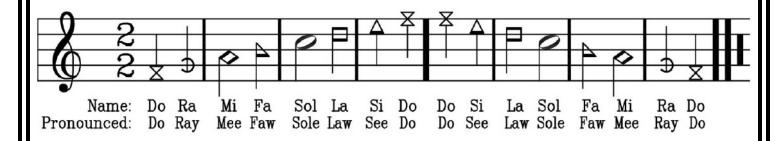
Pleasant Forest Cemetery in Knox Co.

We hope to have answers on the plan for a reprint very soon. In the meantime, if you need to purchase a book or have any questions contact Joe Sarten, Andrew Whaley or Claudia Dean. Other members of the board are President- David Sarten, Mandy Askins, Tina Becker, Robin Goddard, Kathleen Mavournin, and Joe Schrock.

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If you haven't signed up for the Old Harp e-mail distribution list, please reach out to Claudia Dean or Andrew Whaley and we will get you taken care of. All major announcements for annual and monthly singings are e-mailed regularly. Another great way to keep up to date with the singing community is to join our Facebook group Old Harp Singing in East Tennessee.

Don't forget the website as well: oldharp.org to find all sorts of valuable singing schedules, links and resources.



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Founder: Larry Olszewski

Publisher: Friends of The New Harp of Columbia

Editor: Andrew Whaley

## **OLD HARP ANNUAL SINGINGS 2025**

Visit www.oldharp.org or follow Old Harp Singing in East Tennessee on Facebook

Date	Day	Time	Singing Location & Contact
Mar. 7	Friday	6:00	Jubilee Festival- Laurel Theater- Knoxville, TN  Jeremy Shipp
<b>Mar. 30</b>	Sunday	2:00	<b>Boogertown Singing-</b> Oldham's Creek Missionary Baptist Church- Sevier County, TN- <i>Hal Wilson &amp; Andrew Whaley</i>
<b>Apr. 13</b>	Sunday	2:00	<b>Tuckaleechee United Methodist Church-</b> Townsend, TN <i>Tom &amp; Nan Taylor</i>
May 4	Sunday (1st)	2:00	Middle Creek United Methodist Church- Pigeon Forge, TN David Sarten
<b>May 31</b>	Saturday	†10:00	<b>Franklin Singing-</b> New Bethel Cumberland Presbyterian Church- Greeneville, TN- <i>Jeff Farr</i>
June 22	Sunday (4 <sup>th</sup> )	2:00	Caney Creek Singing- Beech Grove Primitive Baptist Church- Pigeon Forge, TN- Sharee Green
July 20	Sunday (3 <sup>rd</sup> )	2:00	<b>Little Greenbrier Schoolhouse</b> - Great Smoky Mountains National Park- <i>Robin Goddard</i>
Aug. 17	Sunday (3 <sup>rd</sup> )	2:00	Cades Cove Primitive Baptist Church Great Smoky Mountains National Park- Robin Goddard
Sep. 27	Saturday	†10:00	Wears Valley Convention- Valley View Baptist Church
Sep. 28	Sunday (4 <sup>th</sup> )	†10:00	(Saturday) & Headrick's Chapel (Sunday)  David Sarten and Andrew Whaley
Oct. 12	Sunday	2:00	Maryville College- Center for Campus Ministry Tom & Nan Taylor & Nancy Olsen
Nov. 26	Wed.	*6:30	Larry Olszewski Memorial- Laurel Theater, Knoxville Claudia Dean, Phillip Pardue & Jeremy Shipp
Jan. 3 (2026)	Saturday (1 <sup>st</sup> )	†10:00	New Year's Singing- Claxton Community Center- Anderson County, TN Sara Melton, Phillip Pardue and Jeremy Shipp

<sup>\*</sup>Dinner on the ground followed by singing

**Monthly Singings**: (Please contact to confirm as some monthly singings are subject to cancellation) KNOX COUNTY, TN- Epworth Old Harp Singing at Laurel Theater- 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturdays at 10:00 AM (no September singing, November moves to second Saturday Nov. 8) (Jeremy Shipp)

SEVIER COUNTY, TN- Middle Creek United Methodist Church- 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesdays at 7:00 PM (David Sarten) JOHNSON CITY, TN- (Christan Harmony) St. John's Episcopal- 3<sup>rd</sup> Sundays at 2:00 PM (Jeanie Walker) CHATTANOOGA, TN- (Sacred Harp) First SDA Church- 2<sup>nd</sup> Saturdays at 3:00 PM (Deborah Taube)

<sup>†</sup>Dinner on the ground in between singing sessions

## **CONTACT INFORMATION**

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Hal Wilson: (865) 436-2590, (865) 654-9503

## **SINGING LOCATIONS**

Laurel Theater- 1538 Laurel Ave. Knoxville, TN 37916

Oldham's Creek Missionary Baptist Church- 3629 Boogertown Rd. Sevierville, TN 37876

Tuckaleechee United Methodist Church- 7322 Old Tuckaleechee Rd. Townsend, TN 37882

Middle Creek United Methodist Church- 1828 Middle Creek Rd, Pigeon Forge, TN 37863

New Bethel Cumberland Presbyterian Church- 90 Cox Rd, Greeneville, TN 37745

Beech Grove Primitive Baptist Church- 625 Caney Creek Rd, Pigeon Forge, TN 37863

Little Greenbrier Schoolhouse- Turn off Wear Cove Gap Rd. onto Little Greenbriar Rd. (The schoolhouse is at the end of the road on the right)

Cades Cove Primitive Baptist Church- Cades Cove Loop Rd, Townsend, TN 37882 (Turn off Cades Cove Loop Rd left onto a gravel road, if you get to the Methodist or Missionary Baptist Churches you've gone too far)

Valley View Baptist Church- 2219 Little Cove Rd, Sevierville, TN 37862

Headrick's Chapel- 4317 Wears Valley Rd, Sevierville, TN 37862

Maryville College Center for Campus Ministry- 211 Maryville College, Circle Dr, Maryville, TN 37804

Great Smoky Mountains Heritage Center- 123 Cromwell Dr, Townsend, TN 3788

Claxton Community Center- 1071 Edgemoor Rd. Clinton, TN 37716

St. John's Episcopal Church- 500 N. Roane St., Johnson City, TN 37601

First SDA Church- 7450 Standifer Gap Road, Chattanooga, TN 37421