



# George Herbert 1593 -1633

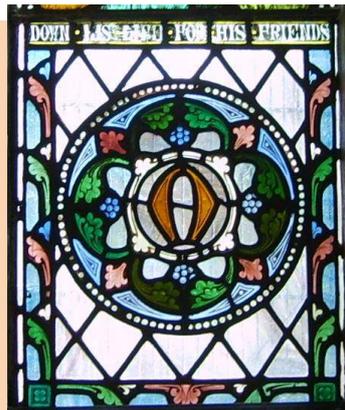
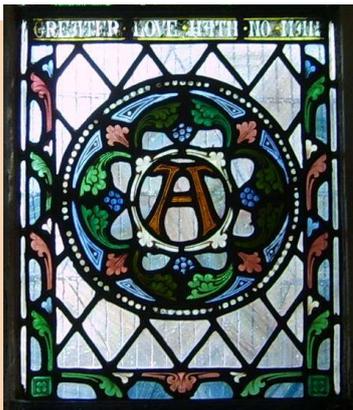
## 4. The Musician

The God of love my shepherd is

What sort of instruments do you think George Herbert might have played?

This is a lute seen here on a kneeler from St Andrew's, the Bemerton Church. It is a stringed instrument still played today and was very popular in Herbert's lifetime.

The two windows below are also from St Andrew's. They show the Alpha and Omega symbols. The Bible says that God is the beginning and end of everything, ever...even before creation! Herbert, in his words and music, wanted to celebrate the concept that God is all powerful and always with us.



Today many craftspeople are still inspired by George Herbert and his poetry. The list includes musicians, artists, builders, carpenters, poets, calligraphers....and more. The photo (over) shows Jason Battle, stonemason, crafting a statue of George Herbert which can be seen on the West Front of Salisbury Cathedral. The altar frontal (right) in Bemerton St Andrew's Church reflects the ideas in Herbert's poem

*"The Flower"*

*How fresh, O Lord, how sweet and clean  
Are thy returns! E'en as the flowers in spring*

In this poem, Herbert explores the idea of plants which appear dead in the winter but bloom again in spring. He uses this to compare our life journey. We all suffer dark and sad times but can find new hope and happiness.

You may know this hymn but did you know George Herbert wrote the words?

*Let all the world in every corner sing,  
My God and King.*

*The heavens are not too high,  
His praise may thither fly:*

*The earth is not too low,*

*His praises there may grow.*

*Let all the world in every corner sing,  
My God and king.*

Herbert used to walk across the water meadows to the Cathedral for Evensong which he called 'heaven upon earth'. Then he would join Cathedral musicians and enjoy playing music with them. He composed tunes to his own poems but sadly none of them have survived.

Since his death some of his poems have been set to music and churches all over the world sing these hymns as they worship.

Do YOU sing in your school worship? What sort of words and music do you have to tell the Christian Story?

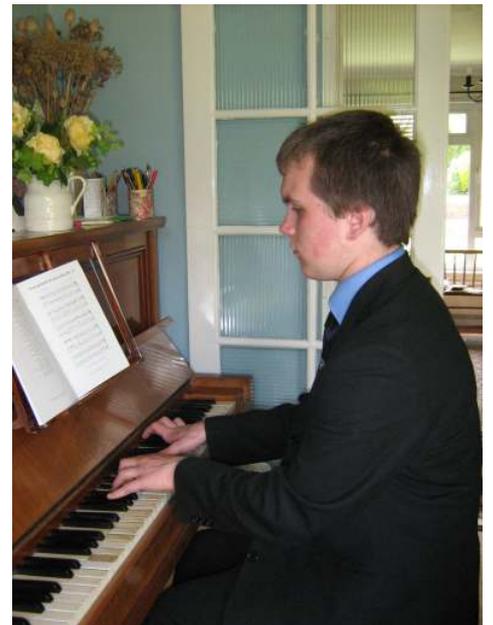


Embroidery by Jane Lemon and the Salisbury Cathedral Embroiderers 1988

Edmund Hampton, a young musician, composed a new tune to be used as a hymn for one of Herbert's poems (*Gratefulness*) in the hymnbook *Another Music*, published 2007 by the Royal School of Church Music and the Bemerton groups.

Edmund said:

"I have been described as a hymn fanatic – I like singing hymns and the chance to compose motivated me. Big, bold tunes with a dramatic organ accompaniment are a particular favourite of mine. George Herbert's poetry can be difficult to understand at first glance but a thorough exploration helps to get to grips with what he is saying in his poetry."



### Activities

- 'Compose' music to reflect God's everlasting nature. Explore the Creation story in Genesis to help you.
- Make a special cloth for your school worship table (or even the altar in your local church for a festival e.g. Easter) Think of symbols and colours you could use.
- There are many musical versions of Psalm 23: The Lord is my Shepherd. Find a version you like, as a class, and learn to sing it.
- Make a collage which explores the idea of Jesus as a 'shepherd'. You can find some help in the Gospels to give you ideas.

**Wise Words: The best mirror is an old friend**

*If you want an honest opinion about yourself ask someone you trust and who has known you a long time*

A moment to Reflect.....

\*Display images of different times in our lives from babyhood to old age \*Think about people who are important to us during those stages of life e.g. family, teachers, nurses, friends etc \*Read *The Flower* and think about how Christians welcome God into their lives \*Light a candle Take time to remember your families and friends and the people who may have influenced your life