

The music notation that you see in your hymnal was unheard of until around 1,000 A.D. It was about that time that a monk in Italy named Guido began using a staff of 4 lines to indicate how pitches should move up and down. He also invented a system of syllables to teach his students exact pitches. Those syllables (Do, re, mi, etc.) are still in use today. Since Guido had no chalk board or overhead projector, he wrote all this on his hand. Here is the (unofficial) story of Guido...

*Long ago in Arezzo lived Guido
Who thought it would really be "neato"
To write on his hand
(The idea was grand!)
All the notes that the choir was to know.*

*With some notes on a staff on his palm
He taught the church choir a new psalm.
"Do re me" on the fingers
Impressed all the singers.
But was "The Hand" a success
or a bomb?*

*For five hundred years...a success!
Guido's hand was used in excess.
"To sing nice and dandy,
Use parts of your handy,"
You'd hear each musician express.*

*But Guido is dead and long gone,
And we've new ways of learning a song.
Now the new rage
Is notes on a page
That we read as we sing right along.*

*But notes on a staff now we know
Were invented a long time ago.
And all of it started
With one who's departed:
The monk from Arezzo...Guido.*

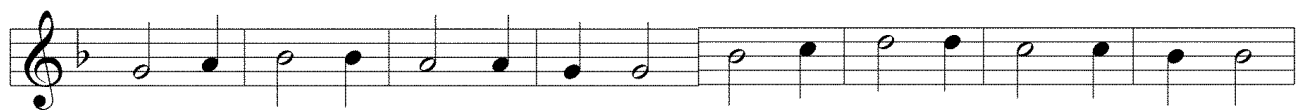


"Jesus, Joy Of Man's Desiring" is a famous hymn tune by J. S. Bach. The music below is written using modern music notation on a "staff" of 5 lines and 4 spaces. As you sing the song, notice how the notes move up and down on the staff indicating exact pitches to be sung.

If Bach was reincarnated as twins, we'd have a pair of... Re-bachs!



Je - su, joy of man's de - sir - ing, Ho - ly wis - dom, love — most — bright,
Drawn by Thee, our souls as - pir - ing Soar to un - cre - a - ted — light.
Mi Fa So So Fa Mi Re Re Mi Fa So Mi Re — Mi Re Do.



Word of God, our flesh that fash - ioned With the fire of life im - pas - sioned,
Re Mi Fa Fa Mi Mi Re Re Fa So La La So So Fa Fa,



Striv - ing still to truth un - known, Soar - ing, sing - ing round — Thy — throne.
Mi Fa So So Fa Mi Re, Mi Fa So Mi Re — Mi Re Do.