

Blessed Assurance **(Originally appeared in the 2013 Mosaic)**

Do you know who Fanny Crosby is? Francis Jane Crosby was born in 1820 and lived to be 95 years young, passing away in Bridgeport in 1915. With all due respect to Charles Wesley and Isaac Watts, she is probably the most prolific hymn composer of all time and at the very least the nineteenth century. Depending on whose estimate you choose to believe, she wrote at least 6,000 hymns and probably closer to 10,000 hymns in her lifetime. So numerous and popular were her hymns that publishers turned many away because users expected a wide range of composers in their hymnals. It is estimated that she was published with as many as two hundred pen names. Writing 10,000 hymns would seem to be all consuming in itself but Fanny also wrote many volumes of secular and sacred poetry, patriotic and popular music and spent much of her life serving and teaching.



The United Methodist Hymnal has included: “*To God be the Glory*”, “*Jesus, Keep Me Near the Cross*”, “*Pass Me Not, O Gentle Savior*” among dozens of others and not including those that may be credited to her pen names. Of all of those, probably her most famous and best loved is *Blessed Assurance*. Although I have to admit this is my favorite hymn, it became even more important as I learned more about Fanny Crosby. I particularly love the second stanza that includes the beautiful words “perfect submission, perfect delight, visions of rapture now burst on my sight.” Did I mention that Fanny Crosby was blind from infancy? When asked about her blindness, she just responded what a blessing it would be that the first face she would see would be the face of her savior Jesus Christ.

Repeating stories of great accomplishments by those who have what most of us would consider “challenges” helps to remind us that with God anything is possible. More importantly, however, it teaches us that God calls everyone to His purpose and gifts each of us for that calling. Maybe being “blind” to the world opens our eyes to the “Kingdom.” It seems to have worked for Fanny Crosby.

“This is my story, this is my song. Praising my Savior all the day long!”

Paul Prewitt

Scripture:

2 Samuel 22:50
2 Corinthians 1:3-7
Psalm 18
Jude 1:17-25
2 Chronicles 15:7
Romans 15:5-13
Psalm 100