

Pilgrims' chorus: phonetic notes

Here are some notes to help with pronouncing the German text of the Pilgrims' Chorus.

Consonants

1. **ch.** There are two sounds used for the German spelling *ch*, depending on what the preceding sound is.
 - One is as in Scottish *loch*. You will know this in the word *Achtung*. However, it so happens that there are no words in our text with this sound.
 - The other is like the *h*-plus-*y*-sound at the beginning of the English words *huge* and *human*: somewhat similar to a *sh* sound. In our text this is found in the words *dich*, *ich*, *lieblichen*, *durch*, *nicht*, and also (spelt *g*) in *Ewigkeit*.
2. **s.** In some words the German letter *s* is pronounced like English *z*. In particular, this applies to *s-* at the beginning of a word. In our text we have this in *Sühn'*, *Segen*, and *Seligen*. It also applies in *versöhnt* ("fair-zönt"). However the combination *st-* at the beginning of a word or syllable is pronounced like *sht-*. The last part of *Wanderstab* is "shtahp".
3. **v.** The German letter *v* is usually pronounced like *f*. In our text we have *versöhnt* ("fer-") and *vor* ("for").
4. **w.** The German letter *w* is always pronounced like English *v*. In our text we have *Wanderstab* ("vander-"), *weil* ("vile"), and *Ewigkeit* ("ay-vish-kite").
5. **z.** The German letter *z* is pronounced as *ts*. In our text we have *Herze* ("hairt-suh").
6. Certain German consonants are always voiceless at the end of a word. In our text this applies to *und* ("oont"), *Wanderstab* ("-shtahp"), *hab'* ("hahp"), *Lied* ("leet"), and *Tod* ("toat"). It also applies to the *b* in the middle of *lieblichen* ("leep-").
7. *Gnade* is pronounced as written, with a *g*-sound immediately followed by an *n*-sound.

Vowels

8. **Long e and o.** German long *e* and *o* are 'pure' vowels like those of Scottish English *day* and *no*, rather than the diphthongal sounds we use in many other kinds of English. German long *e* is like French *é*; German long *o* is like French *eau*. In our text we have long *e* in *den* ("dayn"), *dem*, *der* ("dayer"), *Segen*, *er*, *geht*, *Seligen*, *Leben*, *Halleluja*, and *Ewigkeit*. We have long *o* in *o*, *froh*, and *Tod*.
9. **Short e and o.** German also has short *e* and *o*, which are much as in English *dress* and *lot*. We have them here in *Herren*, *Herze*, and *Gott*.
10. **eu** is like English *oy*. We have *getreu* and *Reu'* ("roy").
11. **Long and short ö.** The German letter *ö* ("O umlaut") is pronounced like French *eu* in *heureux*. To make it, say a German *e* but at the same time round your lips. We have long *ö* in *versöhnt*, *frönt*, *krönt*, and *ertönt*, and short *ö* in *Hölle*. If this is too difficult, just use an English *ur*-sound as in *nurse*.
12. **Long and short ü.** The German letter *ü* ("U umlaut") is pronounced like French *u*. To make this sound, say *ee* but at the same time round your lips. In our text this sound is found in *grüssen*, *Sühn'*, and *Büsser*. The first word is like "grees-en", but with rounded lips for "ee". This sound should be clearly different from the long *oo*-sound used for the letter *u* in *nun* ("noon"), *ruh'*, *Buss*, and *Halleluja*. There is also a short *ü*, pronounced like English *i* (as in *kit*) but with rounded lips. In our text we have this in *beglückt* (so "-glickt", but with rounded lips for the vowel). It should be different from the short *oo*-sound in *und*, *durch* and *drum*.

IPA

Those who are familiar with the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA) — perhaps through training in linguistics, TEFL, or speech and drama — may find this IPA transcription of the whole German text useful.

*Beglückt darf nun dich,
o Heimat, ich schau'n
und grüßen froh deine lieblichen Auen;
nun lass' ich ruh'n den Wanderstab,
weil Gott getreu ich gepilgert hab'.*

bəglʏkt darf nu:n dɪç
o: haɪma:t ɪç ʃaʊn
ʊnt gry:sən fro: daɪnə li:plɪçən auən
nu:n las ɪç ru:n de:n vandɛfta:p
vaɪl gɔt gətʁuɪ ɪç gɛpɪlɡɛt ha:p

*Durch Sühn' und Buß hab' ich versöhnt
den Herren, dem mein Herze frönt,
der meine Reu' mit Segen krönt,
den Herren, dem mein Lied ertönt,
den Herren, dem mein Lied ertönt!*

dʊrç zy:n ʊnt bu:s ha:p ɪç fɛrzø:nt
de:n hɛrən de:m maɪn hɛrtsə frø:nt
de:r maɪnə ruɪ mɪt zɛ:gən krø:nt
de:n hɛrən de:m maɪn li:t ɛrtø:nt
de:n hɛrən de:m maɪn li:t ɛrtø:nt

*Der Gnade Heil ist dem Büßer beschieden,
er geht einst ein in der Seligen Frieden;
vor Höll' und Tod ist ihm nicht bang',
drum preis' ich Gott mein Leben lang!*

de:r gna:də haɪl ɪst de:m by:sɛ bæʃi:dən
ɛ:r gɛ:t aɪnst aɪn ɪn de:r zɛ:lɪgən fri:dən
fo:r hœl ʊnt to:t ɪst i:m nɪçt bɑŋ
drʊm praɪs ɪç gɔt maɪn le:bən lɑŋ

*Halleluja! Halleluja!
in Ewigkeit, in Ewigkeit!*

hale:lu:ja: hale:lu:ja:
ɪn e:vɪçkaɪt ɪn e:vɪçkaɪt

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3 Feb 2012