

07.27.04 Easy Background Graphics Part 2

Check out the **How-To Guide 3: Easy Background Images** to learn how to make a basic worship image for projection software.

With this guide I'll show you how to transform free images you can find on Google into a smooth worship background. Instructions for finding Google images are at <http://www.worshiphomepage.com/usegoogle.shtml>

AltaVista: I've been using Google and AltaVista a lot lately to find background images for PowerPoint. I like AltaVista a little better because you can specify what size image you want (you want to get as large an image as possible so it won't look pixelized if you need to enlarge it.) Unfortunately, even with the filter on, you still might get a few nasty pictures at AltaVista. So far I haven't gotten anything bad at Google. Graphics links are at <http://www.worshiphomepage.com>.

Even though I'm finding lots of cool pictures, some just won't work in worship projection - they're too uneven. You need an even tone across the picture so your words will be legible (in PowerPoint, at least - EasyWorship and others create a background around the text for legibility.)

Here's a quick way to alter a photo to make the lyrics more readable. This will work in any graphics program like CorelPaint or PhotoShop Elements - even the free PhotoPlus (download instructions are in the How-To Guide 3.)

1. Find the picture you want. We were singing "Savior, Like a Shepherd Lead Us" in church so I wanted a pasture image. I typed "pasture" at AltaVista's image search (with Family Filter "on") and had it set to only return large pictures. I found a nice pasture image a few pages into the search, right clicked the image and saved it to my hard drive. I made the image fit into a 720x540 size (the How-To Guide 3 explains this) in PhotoPlus.
2. Layers: the concept with these photo-editing programs is layers - you can have different pictures on different layers and blend the two layers together for special effects.

I opened my pasture image in PhotoPlus. In the Layers Manager box I clicked the little plus sign at the bottom and created a layer - Layer 1.

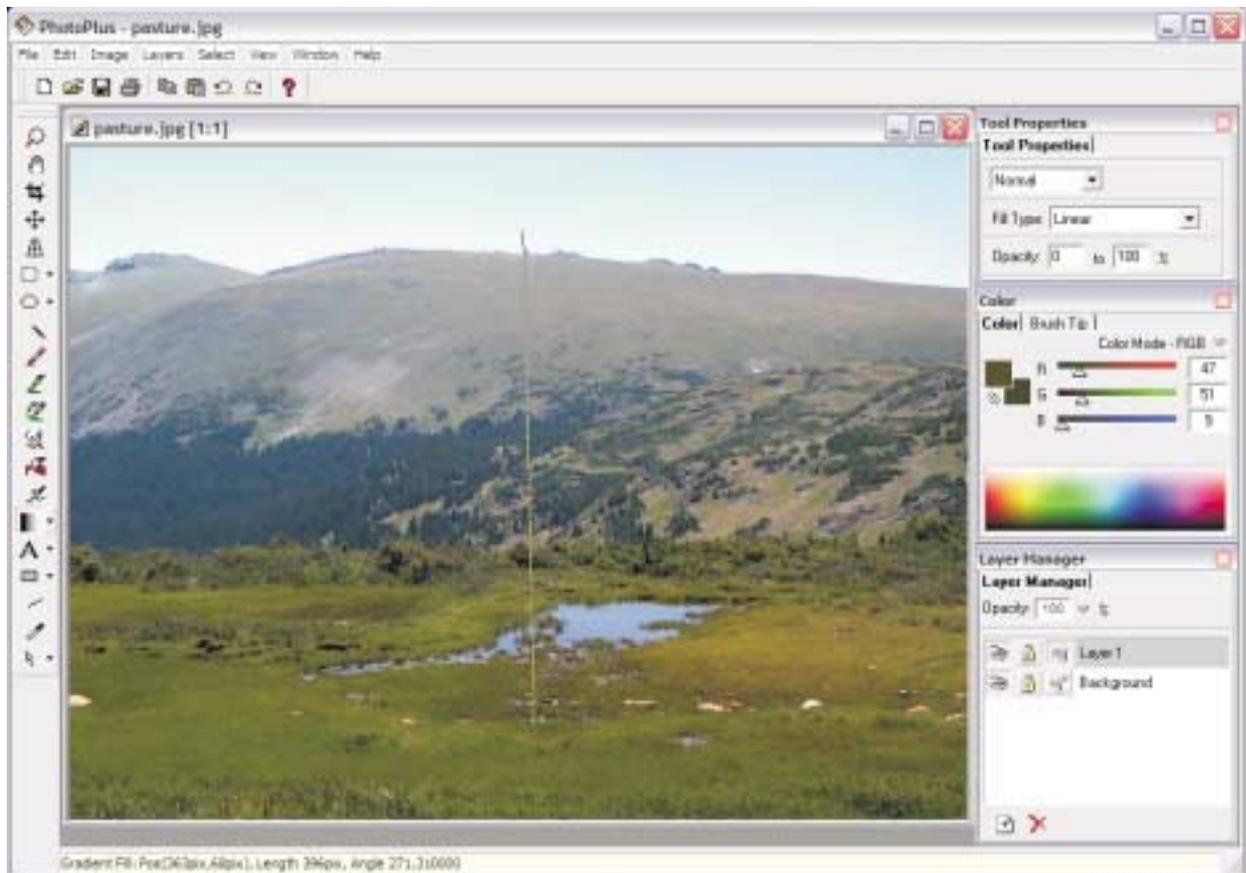
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With the color pickup tool on the left side of the screen, I clicked a green area in the picture. This selects a green color in one of the two color boxes. I selected the other box and clicked in the green area of the picture to make this box also select a green color. I double clicked on this second box and an "Adjust Color" box came up - I can now make this green color a little darker.

3. Flood tool: I selected the flood tool on the left side of the page. See the little arrow next to it? Choose that and the gradient tool will be selected.

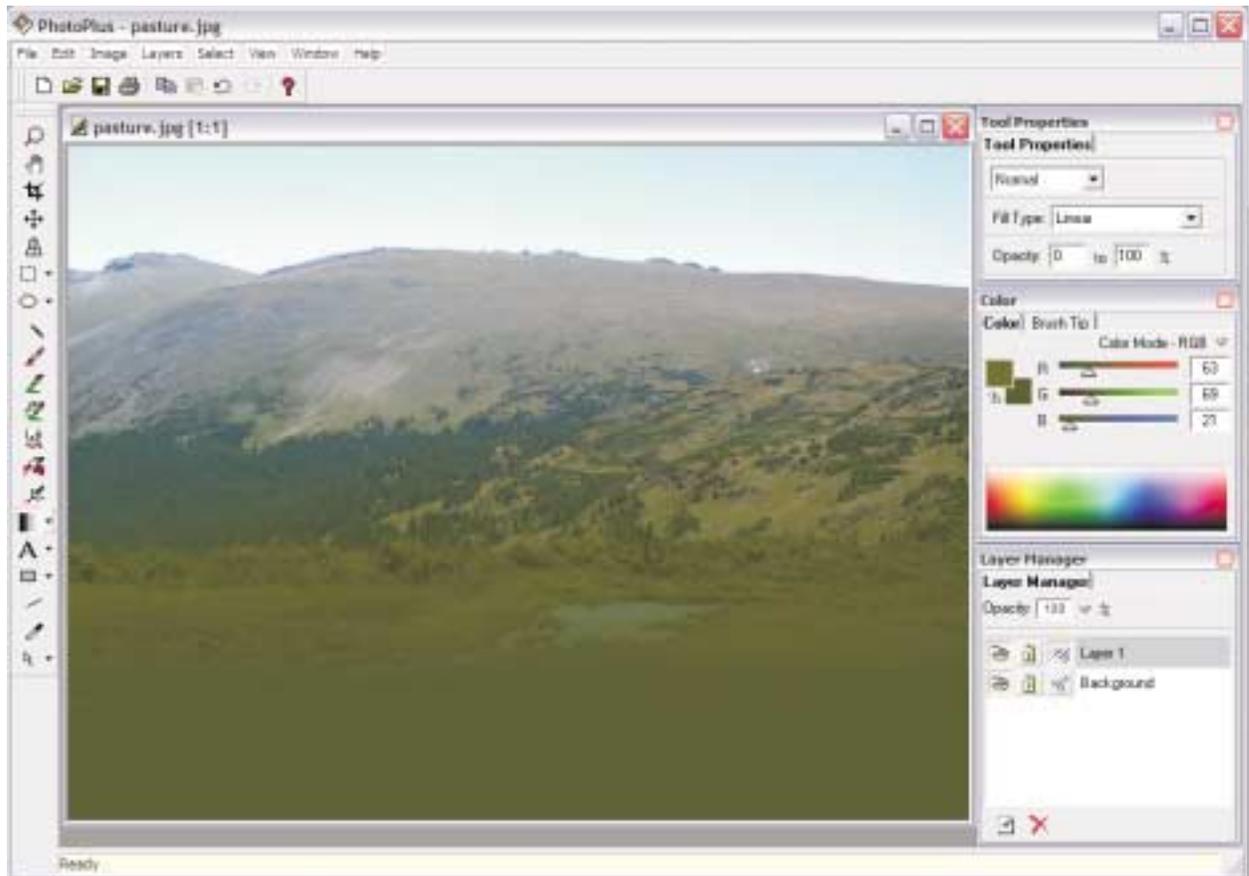
Now in the Tool Properties box on the right, select "Normal," fill type is "Linear" and Opacity is 0 to 100%

With the gradient tool still selected, draw a line from the top of the image to the bottom. See how the blue sky is still intact, but the bottom green has blended and smoothed out? Now I have a nice, even-toned background for my PowerPoint words! Try this with any good image that is too uneven for PowerPoint words.

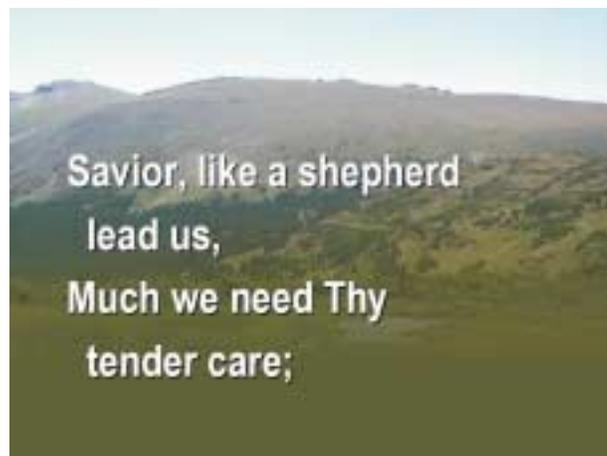


drawing a gradient line on the pasture image

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the pasture image now has a darker, more even area to put the song lyrics



the finished PowerPoint slide