

# Hymns in the Life of Church, School, and Home

2014 WELS National Conference on Worship, Music, and the Arts

## Outline

- I. Hymnals are for Church, School, and Home
  - A. First Generations
  - B. Further Generations
- II. Why sing to children?
  - A. Words put to music become embedded deeply in heart and mind, even into the shadows of dementia
  - B. Sing to children to prepare them to live under the cross and to die in Christ
- III. What shall we sing to them?
  - A. Songs sturdy enough to carry the content of the faith
  - B. Songs that children can grow into and not out of
  - C. Lutheran hymnody is unique in its doctrinal content and comfort that prepares individual Christians for a lifetime of living under the cross
- IV. How, Where, When?
  - A. Church
    1. Children in Church
    2. Hymns in the Divine Service
  - B. School
    1. Music in Lutheran Schools
    2. Hymnology
  - C. Home
    1. The Family Altar
    2. Hymns for Life

## Resources

Links to these resources are listed at <http://hymns.shepherdstory.com>

- A. Books/Videos
  1. Singing the Gospel: Lutheran Hymns and the Success of the Reformation. Christopher Boyd Brown (Harvard University Press, 2005).
  2. First Person Singular. Carl Schalk (Morningstar, 1998)
  3. Why Johnny Can't Sing Hymns. T. David Gordon (P&R Publishing, 2010).
  4. Singing the Faith: Living the Lutheran Musical Heritage (Good Shepherd Institute)
  5. Children Making Music. (LCMS/WELS, 2008).
- B. Presentations
  1. "[My Friend When I Am Dying](#)" by Pr. Christopher Esget to Good Shepherd Institute
  2. "[Will Our Children Stay Within the Church?](#)" by Pr Timothy Pauls (link on hausvater.org)
  3. "[Lutheran Hymns: Teaching the Faith in Both Church and Home](#)" North Texas Free Conference 2011
- C. Hymn Collections
  1. Children's Choirs of St. Paul's Lutheran, Ft. Wayne IN (CPH)
  2. Heirs of the Reformation (CPH, Amazon)
  3. Martin Luther: Hymns, Ballads, Chants, Truth (CPH, Amazon)

## Quotes

“Who will teach our children the songs of faith? Home, school, and church all have a part to play. And unless we are ready to give up a generation with no strong roots in the church’s treasury of song, we had better get busy.”

*Carl Schalk, First Person Singular (1998)*

“Here the Word of God and its teachings appear as verse wedded to melody, penetrating the heart and delighting the soul. Long before children have learned to read, they have sung. And as the elderly approach their twilight years, the melodies and texts of the church’s song are still recalled, even if their eyesight has faded and their fingers are no longer nimble enough to turn a page. From cradle to grave, the church’s song gives voice to the heartfelt cries and joyful strains of God’s children.”

*Introducing Lutheran Service Book*

“Consider a child born in the 1970’s, finding himself coming toward the end of his life in a geriatric ward in the 2060’s, and as he prepares to make his peace with God summoning up such a deeply spiritual ditty as: If I were a fuzzy wuzzy bear, I’d thank you, Lord, for my fuzzy wuzzy hair. Children’s hymns should never be seen as a form of entertainment to keep the kids happy.”

*John L. Bell, The Singing Thing (2000)*

“hymns that accompany one’s life are one of life’s richest treasures. And so when I became responsible for selecting hymns for my congregation on a weekly basis, I knew that I was equipping them to either live well or not so well.”

*T. David Gordon, “Why Johnny Can’t Sing Hymns” P & R Publishing Company Phillipsburg, NJ: 2010.*

## Core Lutheran Hymns

1. Savior of the Nations, Come	2	Ambrose, Luther
2. O Lord, How Shall I Meet You	18	Gerhardt
3. Of the Father’s Love Begotten	25	Prudentius
4. All Praise to You, Eternal God	33	Luther
5. Once Again My Heart Rejoices	37	Gerhardt
6. From Heaven Above to Earth I Come	38	Luther
7. O Jesus Christ, Your Manger Is	40	Gerhardt
8. Let All Together Praise Our God	41	Herman
<b>9. How Lovely Shines the Morning Star</b>	<b>79</b>	<b>Nicolai</b>
10. To Jordan Came, the Christ, our Lord	88	Luther
<b>11. A Lamb Goes Uncomplaining Forth</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>Gerhardt</b>
12. O Sacred Head, Now Wounded	105	Bernard of Clairvaux, Gerhardt
13. Upon the Cross Extended	113	Gerhardt
14. O Dearest Jesus	117	Heerman
15. Sing, My Tongue the Glorious Battle	122	Fortunatus
16. At the Lamb’s High Feast We Sing	141	Latin hymn
17. Come, You Faithful, Raise the Strain	142	John of Damascus
18. Awake, My Heart, with Gladness	156	Gerhardt
19. Christ Jesus Lay in Death’s Strong Bands	161	Luther
20. A Hymn of Glory Let Us Sing	171	Bede, the Venerable
21. Come, Holy Ghost, God and Lord	176	Luther
22. Come, Holy Ghost, Creator Blest	177/178	Maurus
23. We Now Implore God the Holy Ghost	190	Luther

24. Triune God, Oh, Be Our Stay	192	German Litany
<b>25. A Mighty Fortress Is Our God</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>Luther</b>
26. Lord, Keep Us Steadfast in Your Word	203	Luther
<b>27. Wake, Awake, for Night Is Flying</b>	<b>206</b>	<b>Nicolai</b>
28. Who Knows When Death	210	Juliane
29. Praise the Almighty	235	Herrnschmidt
30. All Praise to God, Who Reigns Above	236	Schütz
31. Kyrie! God, Father	266	
32. Isaiah, Mighty Seer in Days of Old	267	Luther
33. We All Believe in One True God	271	Luther
34. The Ten Commandments Are the Law	285	Luther
35. All Who Believe and Are Baptized	299	Kingo
36. From Depths of Woe I Cry to You	305	Luther
37. As Surely As I Live, God Said	308	Herman
38. Soul, Adorn Yourself with Gladness	311	Franck
39. Jesus Christ, Our Blessed Savior	313	Luther
40. O Lord, We Praise You	317	Luther
41. Jesus, Priceless Treasure	349	Franck
42. Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence	361	Liturgy of St. James
<b>43. Dear Christians, One and All, Rejoice</b>	<b>377</b>	<b>Luther</b>
44. All Mankind Fell in Adam's Fall	378	Spengler
45. By Grace I'm Saved	384	Scheidt
<b>46. Salvation unto Us Has Come</b>	<b>390</b>	<b>Speratus</b>
47. Our Father, Who from Heaven Above	410	Luther
48. My God Will Never Leave Me	418	Helmbold
49. If God Himself Be For Me	419	Gerhardt
50. Why Should Cross and Trial Grieve Me	428	Gerhardt
51. Evening and Morning	430	Gerhardt
52. I Walk in Danger All the Way	431	Brorson
<b>53. Lord, You I Love with All My Heart</b>	<b>434</b>	<b>Schalling</b>
54. Rejoice, My Heart, Be Glad and Sing	443	Gerhardt
55. O God, My Faithful God	459	Heermann
56. Jesus, Thy Boundless Love to Me	479	Gerhardt
57. In the Midst of Earthly Life	534	Luther
58. Lord Jesus Christ, with Us Abide	541	Selnecker
59. Behold a Host, Arrayed in White	550	Brorson
60. May God Bestow on Us His Grace	574	Luther
61. Father, We Praise You	581	Gregory I
62. All Christians Who Have Been Baptized	736	Gerhardt
63. God's Own Child, I Gladly Say It	737	Neumeister

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## Hymn Selection Guidelines

*Pr. D. Richard Stuckwisch*

1. Not every hymn can or should say everything, but every hymn should say something. What it says should be a confession of the Word of God (that is, it should say what God has said), both the Law and the Gospel, properly divided, with the Gospel predominating.
2. The hymns selected for a particular day should confess the Holy Scriptures appointed for that day, in particular the Holy Gospel. That is especially true for the Sundays following Pentecost. During the festival seasons of the Church Year (Advent through Eastertide), many of the hymns may reflect more generally the seasonal emphases rather than any one particular Reading.
3. Hymns should be implicitly (if not explicitly) Trinitarian and Christocentric. There should be no doubt or ambiguity as to who the “God” of a hymn is, nor as to what He has done and is doing in the Person and work of Christ Jesus. Which also means, by extension, that hymns should be implicitly (if not explicitly) Sacramental in proclaiming the Gospel. Not just “God,” but the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Not just “Christ,” but Him crucified for our transgressions and raised for our justification. Not simply “once upon a time,” but actively present and at work, here and now, to forgive sins and give life in the means of grace, through the preaching and administration of the Gospel.
4. The appointed Hymn of the Day should be regarded as one of the Propers, and should therefore be used. Exceptions to this rule should be exceedingly rare, and only for compelling reasons.
5. At Matins and Vespers, Morning and Evening Prayer, the “office hymn” should be appropriate to the time of day (morning or evening), comprehensively pertinent to the season of the Church Year, or directly related to the particular occasion.
6. The Hymn of Invocation is fundamentally a prayer for the Holy Spirit to open our ears and our hearts to hear and receive the Word of God and the gifts of Christ in the Service. In some way, more or less, the hymn should articulate that purpose.
7. Distribution hymns *may* specifically speak of the Lord’s Supper. It is not necessary that most of them do so. It is appropriate and helpful for distribution hymns to pick up on aspects of the Holy Gospel of the Day, or on the special emphases of the liturgical season, in order to identify the Jesus who gives His body and blood in the Sacrament with the Jesus proclaimed, confessed and celebrated in the preaching.
8. If there is an offertory hymn, it need not describe the offering, because it *is* an offering, that is, a priestly sacrifice of prayer, praise and thanksgiving. An offertory hymn should give thanks and praise by confessing what God has said and done, or else it should pray for that which He has promised.
9. If there is a final hymn following the Benediction, it should not put the people back under the Law, but it should underscore and emphasize the gift and certainty of the Gospel and express a joyful confidence in the life that is already theirs in Christ Jesus. It may also serve as a prayer of eschatological longing and hope for the consummation of God’s promises in the resurrection.
10. A solid core of good Lutheran hymns should be used with a fair degree of repetition throughout each year, in order that the people learn to know those hymns by heart through singing them.
11. It is helpful to identify a particular hymn from the Divine Service on Sunday (usually the Hymn of the Day) to be sung throughout the week: in the daily prayer offices of the congregation, in the daily catechesis of the home and family, and at meetings and other gatherings of the people.
12. Hymns that have established themselves in the piety of the people over the course of years, even if not the strongest examples of good hymnody, should be used with careful consideration, allowing for the significance that has attached itself to such hymns in association with the life of the Church. Weaker hymns, however, should be supported by a context of stronger hymns (with reference, in either case, to both text and tune).