

The
SING!
HYMNAL



THE *Sing!* HYMNAL

CROSSWAY
WHEATON, ILLINOIS

GETTY MUSIC
NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE

The Sing! Hymnal

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✠ Abbreviations

adapt.	adapted	LM	long meter
addl.	additional	LMD	long meter doubled
alt.	altered (by)	op.	opus number
anon.	anonymous	opt.	optional
arr.	arranged (by)	pt.	part
attr.	attributed (to)	ref.	refrain
b.	born	ren.	renewed
c.	century	rev.	revised (by)
ca.	circa	SM	short meter
CM	common meter	SMD	short meter doubled
CMD	common meter doubled	st., sts.	stanza, stanzas
D	doubled	tr.	translated (by)
d.	died	v.	verse
desc.	descant (by)	vers.	versification (by)
ed.	edition / edited (by)	vol.	volume
harm.	harmonized (by)		

✠ About Keith & Kristyn Getty

Keith and Kristyn Getty are hymn writers from Northern Ireland. Since their first hymn, “In Christ Alone” (co-written with Stuart Townend in 2001), their music has been sung around the world, leading a movement to champion biblically rich and singable hymns for the church—culminating in this collection.

Keith and Kristyn’s impact on the church and culture has been recognized internationally with individual and shared distinctions awarded, including an Officer of the Order of the British Empire from Queen Elizabeth II in 2018, a Fellowship of the Royal School of Church Music, a GRAMMY® nomination, multiple GMA Dove Awards, and three honorary doctorates.

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✠ Foreword

When I was a boy in Scotland, the church pews were hard, and each one provided a place for one's Bible and hymn book. Each of us was given a hymnal when we arrived unless we already had our own, as was the case with many. How quaint this must seem to a generation bred on large screens, containing the words of the songs and also the text of Scripture. An argument might be made for the benefit of each approach, but, whether in the UK of the 1950s or the USA of the 21st century, the *Book of Common Prayer* helps set our course:

Although we ought at all times humbly to acknowledge our sins before God; yet ought we most chiefly so to do, when we assemble and meet together to render thanks for the great benefits that we have received at his hands, to set forth his most worthy praise, to hear his most holy word, and to ask those things which are requisite and necessary, as well for the body as the soul!

This hymnal seeks to “set forth his most worthy praise.” Its modern hymns are not simply another idea to further Christian worship. They do not emerge in a vacuum. The writers come from rich theological and musical traditions, whether it be the traces of Scottish Presbyterianism and its reliance on the Psalms, the influence of such poetry as “Be Thou My Vision,” or the biblical pictures in the hymns of Cecil Frances Alexander. The new hymns contained here take their place alongside Wesley, Watts, Bonar, and Newton. Great hymns belong to the ages and will stand the test of time. If new generations sing them here, they will discover lyrics and melodies that engage the mind, causing them to ponder the greatness of God, marvel at his grace, and have their hearts stirred in Spirit-filled adoration.

It is an immense privilege to provide this foreword as one who from youth has learned the truth of the Bible and to know and love the one of whom it speaks. It is a double pleasure because Keith and Kristyn Getty have taught me to sing, “Take your truth, plant it deep in us; shape and fashion us in your likeness,” and over time have become the kind of friends that everybody needs but not everybody has—and for that Susan and I are immensely grateful.

Alistair Begg

✠ Prelude

Why We Sing—And Why This Hymnal

A People of Song

The people of God have always been a people of song, from the shore of the Red Sea—“I will sing to the LORD, for he has triumphed gloriously. . . . The LORD is my strength and my song, and he has become my salvation” (Ex. 15:1–2)—to the heavenly throne room of the Lamb—“Great and amazing are your deeds, O Lord God the Almighty! Just and true are your ways, O King of the nations!” (Rev. 15:3).

This is the great heavenly choir we join as his people on earth. For twenty centuries the church has been singing. We sing a music that flows into every part of our lives, for the delight and honor of the Lord and our deepest well-being. Those in whom the Lord dwells, who long to make their home in his presence, sing to him as freely and fully as the birds of the sky (see Ps. 84:2–4).

Hymns, then, are the heart language of the church, used to sing truth to the Lord and to one another in every season of the soul. This has always been the way. When we look to the Psalms, the great songbook of the Bible, we find God’s blueprint for singing. The Psalms sing to the valleys of human sorrow and the heights of eternal hope. They remind us of a salvation history and a salvation song we must not forget. They teach us to lament and to rejoice. They root our lives and give wings to our witness. They map out the character of the Lord, lifting our eyes to all that he is and has done.

Our hymns hold us, inspire us, comfort us—and form us. Some of the earliest memories either of us can remember are of singing with others at church: the accompaniment begins, songbook pages rustle, and that first shared breath is drawn as old and young step into a hymn together. We are so grateful to have been raised in homes where singing to the Lord as part of God’s family was the most natural and fitting thing in the world, treasured as the highest expression of the Creator’s gift of music. But it is too risky for us to assume that deep belief in the truths of God will flow with ease to the next generation. That depth must always be mined and cherished and taught.

A Book of Songs

This is why we have produced *The Sing! Hymnal*. Since the invention of the printing press in the fifteenth century, hymnals have been published to

enable Christians to sing together. In those days such curations of hymns enabled an expansion of the range of music available to a local church. Today, when the internet enables any of us to find endless options to sing, of varying depth, precision, and quality, perhaps a hymnal serves more as a trustworthy selection of that which is both substantial and beautiful.

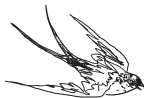
That has been our heart in putting together this hymnal. It was a daunting challenge to choose which hymns to include. There is always another hymn to discover, and hymn writers will continue to write new hymns—but at some point a book must close! A hymnal speaks to the context in which it is produced and lives. Each of the nearly five hundred hymns in this book has been selected in community and with care, to give as full and helpful a resource as possible. Each comes with an account of the story behind the song or a note on why we included it. You will also find over four hundred prayers and liturgies from every century of Christian history, either drawn directly from Scripture or written by great pastors and poets past and present.

The Arrangement of Hymns in This Hymnal

The hymnal is arranged into three main sections. *The Worship Service* follows the arc of the gospel in a worship service. *The Christian Life* aims to equip believers for faithful living “from life’s first cry to final breath.” *The Life of Christ* begins with Advent and Christmas, working through the church’s year to Pentecost and culminating with the return of Christ. In essence this is a curation of songs to carry through life, at church, and at home—songs that will help anchor you in the depths and give voice to your praise on the heights.

We are immeasurably grateful to the wonderful team that has helped us with this project. But the goal has never been simply to produce a hymnal. It is to enable and encourage churches, families, and individuals to do what God’s people have always done: tell of his salvation from day to day, worship him in the splendor of holiness, and find that the joy of the Lord is their strength.

Soli Deo Gloria,
Keith & Kristyn Getty



DEDICATION

Our sincere thanks go out to Josh Dennis, the Dennis family, and the remarkable writing, editorial, and design teams at Crossway; to John Martin, the Getty Music team, and the extraordinary collective of authors, artists, and advisors around this vision; to our church and all the prayerful supporters who surround us; to faithful grandparents and our devoted parents, John and Helen Getty and Gilbert and Heather Lennox; and to our wider family and friends, those with us and those who have gone on to be with the Lord.

Finally, to our four daughters, Eliza, Charlotte, Grace, and Tahlia, who daily inspire the passion and focus of this work, we write another word of thanks and give special dedication of this hymnal.

KEITH & KRISTYN GETTY

*One generation shall commend your works to another,
and shall declare your mighty acts.*

PSALM 145:4

THE WORSHIP
SERVICE



CALL TO WORSHIP

1 Psalm 95:1–7

Oh come, let us sing to the LORD;
let us make a joyful noise to the rock of our salvation!
Let us come into his presence with thanksgiving;
let us make a joyful noise to him with songs of praise!
For the LORD is a great God,
and a great King above all gods.
In his hand are the depths of the earth;
the heights of the mountains are his also.
The sea is his, for he made it,
and his hands formed the dry land.
Oh come, let us worship and bow down;
let us kneel before the LORD, our Maker!
For he is our God,
and we are the people of his pasture,
and the sheep of his hand.

2 Revelation 19:6–7

Then I heard what seemed to be the voice of a great multitude,
like the roar of many waters
and like the sound of mighty peals of thunder,
crying out,
“Hallelujah! For the Lord our God the Almighty reigns.
Let us rejoice and exult and give him the glory.”

All People That on Earth Do Dwell 3

1. All peo - ple that on earth do dwell, sing
 2. The Lord, ye know, is God in - deed; with -
 3. Oh, en - ter then his gates with praise; ap -
 4. For why? The Lord our God is good; his
 5. Praise God, from whom all bless - ings flow! Praise

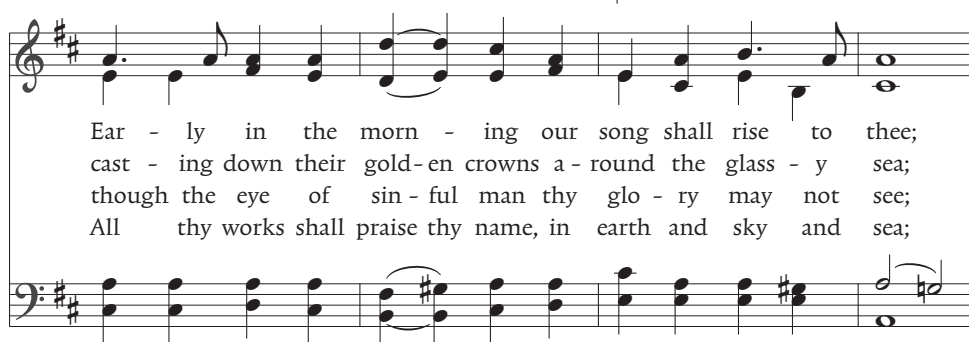
to the Lord with cheer - ful voice; him serve with fear, his
 out our aid he did us make. We are his flock, he
 proach with joy his courts un - to; praise, laud, and bless his
 mer - cy is for - ev - er sure. His truth at all times
 him, all crea - tures here be - low! Praise him a - bove, ye

praise forth - tell; come ye be - fore him, and re - jice!
 doth us feed, and for his sheep he doth us take.
 name al - ways, for it is seem - ly so to do.
 firm - ly stood, and shall from age to age en - dure.
 heav'n - ly host! Praise Fa - ther, Son, and Ho - ly Ghost!

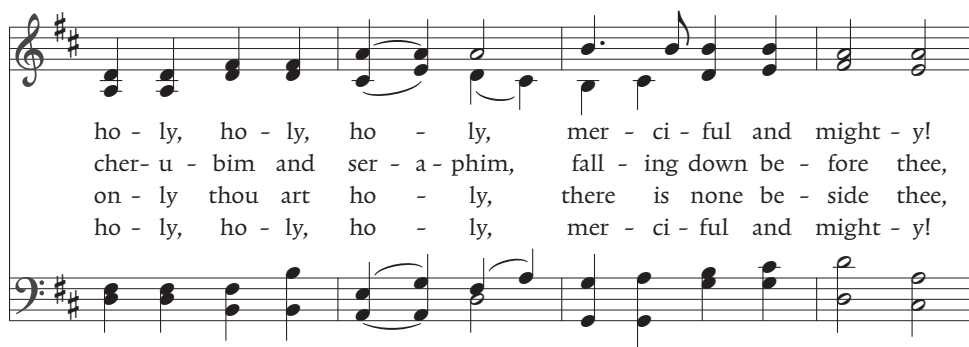
4 Holy, Holy, Holy



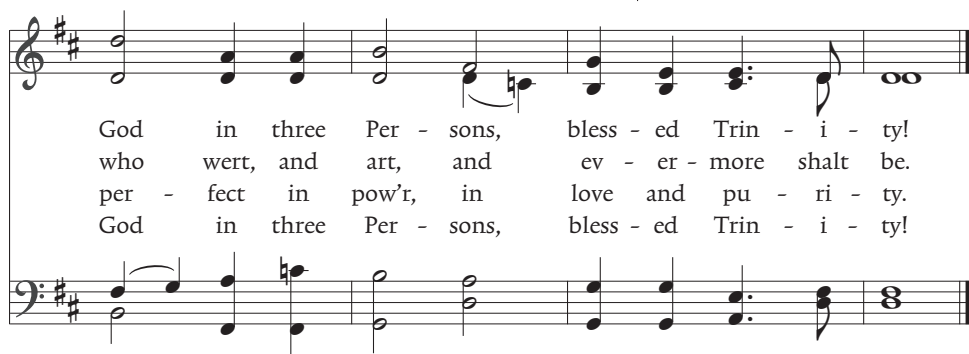
1. Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly! Lord God Al - might - y!
 2. Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly! all the saints a - dore thee,
 3. Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly! though the dark-ness hide thee,
 4. Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly! Lord God Al - might - y!



Ear - ly in the morn - ing our song shall rise to thee;
 cast - ing down their gold-en crowns a - round the glass - y sea;
 though the eye of sin - ful man thy glo - ry may not see;
 All thy works shall praise thy name, in earth and sky and sea;



ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly, mer - ci - ful and might - y!
 cher - u - bim and ser - a - phim, fall - ing down be - fore thee,
 on - ly thou art ho - ly, there is none be - side thee,
 ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly, mer - ci - ful and might - y!



God in three Per - sons, bless - ed Trin - i - ty!
 who wert, and art, and ev - er - more shalt be.
 per - fect in pow'r, in love and pu - ri - ty.
 God in three Per - sons, bless - ed Trin - i - ty!

Come, Christians, Join to Sing 5

1. Come, Chris-tians, join to sing, al - le - lu - ia, a - men!
 2. Come, lift your hearts on high, al - le - lu - ia, a - men!
 3. Sing this sal - va - tion song, al - le - lu - ia, a - men!
 4. Lift high the Sav - ior's name, al - le - lu - ia, a - men!

Loud praise to Christ our King, al - le - lu - ia, a - men!
 Let prais - es fill the sky, al - le - lu - ia, a - men!
 Christ on the cross has won, al - le - lu - ia, a - men!
 Till all the earth pro - claims, al - le - lu - ia, a - men!

Let all, with heart and voice, be - fore his throne re - joice;
 He who made all things well formed us his praise to tell;
 Praise we the ris - en Lord; come, run through mer - cy's door;
 Let now the gos - pel ring, Christ for the world we sing;

praise is his gra - cious choice, al - le - lu - ia, a - men!
 hear now the an - them swell, al - le - lu - ia, a - men!
 loved, res - cued, and re - stored, al - le - lu - ia, a - men!
 the world to Christ we bring, al - le - lu - ia, a - men!

6 All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name



1. All hail the pow'r of Je - sus' name! Let an - gels pros - trate fall;
2. Ye cho - sen seed of Is - rael's race, ye ran - sored from the fall,
3. Let ev - 'ry kin - dred, ev - 'ry tribe on this ter - res - trial ball,
4. Oh, that with yon - der sa - cred throng we at his feet may fall!



bring forth the roy - al di - a - dem, and crown him Lord of all!
 hail him who saves you by his grace, and crown him Lord of all!
 to him all maj - es - ty as - cribe, and crown him Lord of all!
 We'll join the ev - er - last - ing song, and crown him Lord of all!



Bring forth the roy - al di - a - dem, and crown him Lord of all!
 Hail him who saves you by his grace, and crown him Lord of all!
 To him all maj - es - ty as - cribe, and crown him Lord of all!
 We'll join the ev - er - last - ing song, and crown him Lord of all!



All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name 7



1. All hail the pow'r of Je - sus' name! Let an - gels pros-trate fall,
2. Ye cho - sen seed of Is - rael's race, ye ran-somed from the fall,
3. Let ev - 'ry kin - dred, ev - 'ry tribe on this ter - res - trial ball,
4. Oh, that with yon - der sa - cred thron' we at his feet may fall,



let an - gels pros-trate fall; bring forth the roy - al di - a - dem,
 ye ran-somed from the fall, hail him who saves you by his grace,
 on this ter - res - trial ball, to him all maj - es - ty as - cribe,
 we at his feet may fall! We'll join the ev - er - last - ing song,



and crown _____ him,
 and crown him, crown him, crown him, crown him,



crown



crown him, crown him, crown him, and crown him Lord of all!
 crown him, crown him,



him,

8 Rejoice

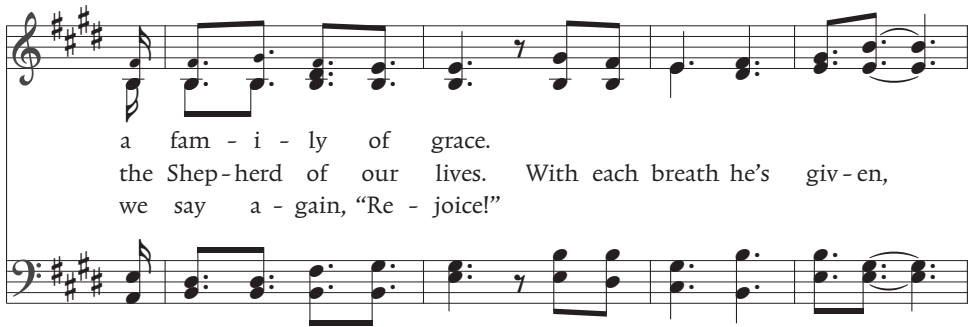
1. Re - joice in the Lord, now and al - ways; sing it a - gain,
 2. Re - joice and be anx - ious for noth - ing, pray - ing for all
 3. Re - joice in the Lord, now and al - ways; tell of the good

we re - joice. De - light in the love he has shown us,
 that you need. Come with a song of thanks - giv - ing;
 he has done. Wor - ship the Lord to re - mem - ber

grate - ful - ly lift up your voice. His gen - tle - ness a - mong us
 lay your re - quests at his feet. His peace will fall up - on us
 all of the joy yet to come. The hope that burns with - in us

st. 3 sing cue notes

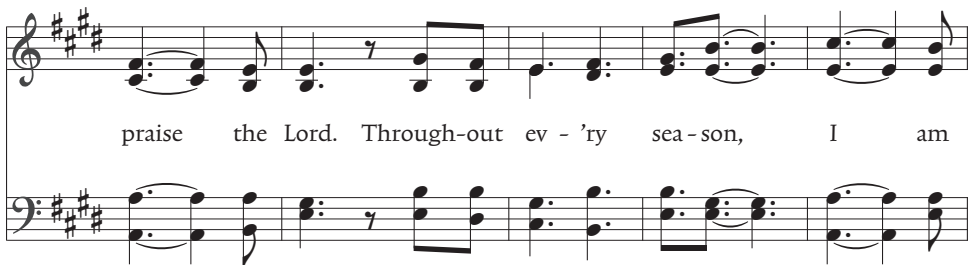
will join our hearts with praise. We gath - er in his good - ness,
 to guard our hearts and minds in Christ, who reigns e - ter - nal,
 the dark can - not de - stroy. With praise that's nev - er end - ing,



a fam - i - ly of grace.
the Shep - herd of our lives. With each breath he's giv - en,
we say a - gain, "Re - joice!"



praise the Lord! In these times we live in, we will



praise the Lord. Through-out ev - 'ry sea - son, I am



sure we have ev - 'ry rea - son to praise the Lord.

9 O Worship the King



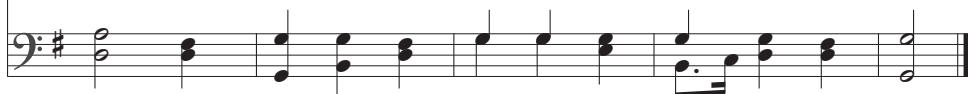
1. O wor-ship the King, all - glo - rious a - bove, and grate - ful - ly sing
2. O tell of his might, O sing of his grace, whose robe is the light,
3. The earth with its store of won - ders un - told, Al - might - y, thy pow'r
4. Thy boun - ti - ful care, what tongue can re - cite? It breathes in the air,
5. Frail chil - dren of dust, and fee - ble as frail, in thee do we trust,



his won - der - ful love. Our Shield and De - fend - er, the An - cient of
whose can - o - py space. His char - iots of wrath the deep thun - der - clouds
hath found - ed of old; hath stab - lished it fast by a change - less de -
it shines in the light. It streams from the hills, it de - scends to the
nor find thee to fail. Thy mer - cies, how ten - der, how firm to the



Days, pa - vil - ioned in splen - dor, and gird - ed with praise.
form, and dark is his path on the wings of the storm.
cree, and round it hath cast, like a man - tle, the sea.
plain, and sweet - ly dis - tills in the dew and the rain.
end, our Mak - er, De - fend - er, Re - deem - er, and Friend.



Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing 10



1. Come, thou Fount of ev - 'ry bless - ing; tune my heart to sing thy grace;
2. Hith - er - to thy love hath blessed me; thou hast brought me to this place;
3. Oh, to grace how great a debt - or dai - ly I'm con - strained to be!
4. Oh, that day when, freed from sin - ning, I shall see thy love - ly face;



streams of mer - cy, nev - er ceas - ing, call for songs of loud - est praise.
and I know thy hand will lead me safe - ly home by thy good grace.
Let thy good - ness, like a fet - ter, bind my wan - d'ring heart to thee.
full ar - rayed in blood - washed lin - en, how I'll sing thy sov - reign grace!



Teach me some me - lo - dious son - net, sung by flam - ing tongues a - bove;
Je - sus sought me when a stran - ger wan - d'ring from the fold of God.
Prone to wan - der, Lord, I feel it, prone to leave the God I love;
Come, my Lord, no long - er tar - ry, bring thy prom - is - es to pass;



praise the mount! I'm fixed up - on it, mount of thy re - deem - ing love.
He, to res - cue me from dan - ger, in - ter - posed his pre - cious blood.
here's my heart, Lord, take and seal it, seal it for thy courts a - bove!
for I know thy pow'r will keep me till I'm home with thee at last!



published in 1881. Originally spanning ten verses, his text, like the psalm, calls on all created things to praise the Creator, including “Men and women, young and old . . . from the north to southern pole.”

83 Sovereign Ruler of the Skies

In March 2020, a time when an unknown virus plunged the whole world into uncertainty, fear, and chaos, we discovered the poem “Sovereign ruler of the skies,” written in 1777 by John Ryland. The rich theology profoundly ministered to us in numerous ways, and we felt inspired to remake it into a modern hymn. As we introduced the song to others, it became evident that we were not the only ones moved by Ryland’s lyrics. Our prayer continues to be that the Lord would use this hymn to encourage the church that he is our “Sovereign Ruler . . . ever faithful” and “ever true!”¹ Katie Foto

84 Guide Me, O Thou Great Jehovah

In this hymn Welsh preacher William Williams compares earthly life to Israel’s wilderness journey. Jesus proclaimed that he was the bread of heaven who provides true sustenance (John 6:51) and the living water who satisfies our thirst (John 4:14). The Spirit is our faultless guide (John 16:13). And, when we approach the prospect of death, we need not be afraid (1 Cor. 15:54–55). This is among the most-loved Welsh hymns (they even sing it at their rugby matches), and the harmonies in the chorus make it exhilarating for congregations.

85 All the Way My Savior Leads Me

There were surely times when the Israelites who were wandering in the desert lost focus, lost hope, and probably felt like the journey was aimless or would never end. But God was there: “He encircled them, he cared for them. . . . The Lord alone guided them” (Deut. 32:10–12). Can we doubt it? There will come a day when we will look back at everything and be able to say, “Jesus led me all the way.”

86 God of Our Fathers

In the Bible God is sometimes identified as the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. This is a way to recognize the continuity of faith among believers, passed down from one generation to the next, but more importantly we recognize the continuity of God’s providence over

our ancestors as a manner of assurance, taking comfort in the way he watches over us now and will continue to do so through all of life’s trials and challenges.

87 God Moves in a Mysterious Way

William Cowper’s life was mired in depression. One time he ordered a coach to take him to the Tower wharf, “intending to throw myself into the river from the Custom House quay. . . . But upon coming to the quay, I found the water low, and a porter seated upon some goods there, as if on purpose to prevent me.” He later marveled at his preservation: “How mysterious are the ways of Providence! Why did I receive grace and mercy?” Some things we might never know on this side of heaven, “For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, declares the Lord” (Isa. 55:8). The hymn illustrates the power of stunning, poetic hymn lyrics, ones quoted in movies, books, and daily conversation—though, sadly, rarely sung in churches today.

89 A Sovereign Protector I Have

We never know so much of heaven in our own souls, nor stand so high upon the mount of communion with God, as when his Spirit, breathing on our hearts, makes us lie low at the footstool of sovereign grace and inspires us with this cry: “O God, be mine the comfort of salvation, but thine be the entire praise of it.” *Augustus Toplady*

90 Whate’er My God Ordains Is Right

Charles Spurgeon once preached, “The moment we are reconciled to God, we consent that Jehovah should do as he wills. What better rule could be than the absolute empire of love? . . . Let love reign without limit; let love be sovereign; let love bear the keys of government upon her shoulder, and let her name be called the mighty God. . . . When the heart is reconciled to God, we can say, ‘Amen, so let it be, what God ordains must be right.’”

91 If Thou but Suffer God to Guide Thee

Georg Neumark wrote this hymn of trust in the midst of the Thirty Years’ War, after being robbed of all his possessions and unable to find employment for two years. He later recalled after being offered a job, “Which good fortune coming suddenly, and as if fallen from heaven, greatly rejoiced me, . . . and had

cause enough to thank the Divine compassion for such unlooked-for grace shown to me.” Even if you choose not to sing this song in your church, the lyric itself is a healthy meditation for us all.

92 O Father, You Are Sovereign

In her collection *A Singing Heart* (1987) E. Margaret Clarkson wrote, “I know of no other hymn that sets forth the all-too-often neglected biblical teaching on the sovereignty of God quite as this text does. I wrote it hoping to crystallize this glorious doctrine in hymn form and give it back to today’s Christian believers. Without doubt, this truth is the strength by which I myself live today and have lived for over half a century. I want to share it with others!”

93 All of Our Tomorrows

While written for the turn of a new year, this hymn is a helpful reminder at any time that all our days are guided by the sovereign, wise, loving hand of our faithful Father. This world is not our home, and God will keep us until the very end, when we stand “blameless before the presence of his glory with great joy” (Jude 24). Bob Kauflin

98 Come, Ye Sinners

This hymn by English pastor Joseph Hart beckons the lost to find a willing Savior, ready to help. It is a welcoming call, and it comes without cost, courtesy of free grace. We need not wait to come to Christ until we have achieved some state of worthiness, because we would never measure up on our own. The refrain by Caleb Taylor is our response: “I will arise and go to Jesus.”

99 Lord, Have Mercy

This setting of the Kyrie is one we sing in our church regularly. The simple chorus harmonizes easily and is so accessible. We most often use it after a prayer of confession or before communion.

101 Come, Let Us Return to the Lord

The call to repentance echoes throughout Scripture, reminding God’s people to turn from their ways and return to him. We are in constant need of seeking the Lord with a humble heart. This hymn draws on biblical themes to offer words that encourage us to repent, trust in him, and embrace the grace that is ours in Christ. Matt Boswell

103 The Lord Is in His Holy Temple

This beautiful setting draws from Habakkuk 2:20, calling worshipers to quiet reverence before God. In times of lament, when answers seem distant and hearts are heavy, we are invited to bring our burdens before the Lord and wait on his sovereign hand. This hymn’s melody evokes a sense of awe and stillness, drawing us into a posture of worship and trust. The hymn works particularly well as a call to worship.

104 Not in Me

What would it sound like for the Pharisee in Luke 18:9–14 to repent? His prayer begins by proclaiming what he has not done, with a list of people he is “not like.” So repentance must be renouncing such boasts before God. In the end the repenting Pharisee’s prayer is the same as the tax collector’s. Ultimately there is only one gospel, one hope of salvation. God shows mercy to sinners, self-righteous or self-loathing, on the basis of Christ crucified and risen. We are both the tax collector and the Pharisee. One moment we are wallowing in our sin, relenting of any hope due to the greatness of our evil. The next moment we are boasting of our own righteousness and finding comfort in our external goodness and self-control. We need songs that preach the gospel to us and lift us out of the ditches on both sides of the road. Eric Schumacher & David L. Ward

105 Approach, My Soul

With words originally penned by John Newton, this hymn of assurance reminds us that Christ has made a way for us to approach him. The hymn calls the believer to bold assurance, believing that Jesus is our hiding place. Though burdened by sin, our faith-filled declaration is “I must, I will, I can, I do believe.” Jordan Kauflin

107 Jesus, I Come

The words of this gospel song were written by William T. Sleeper and first appeared in the collection *Gospel Hymns No. 5* (1887). The *Gospel Hymns* books (numbers 1–6) were published in conjunction with the urban revival movement led by D. L. Moody and Ira Sankey. Reformed University Fellowship campus minister Greg Thompson wrote this tune in 2000, and it first appeared on *For All the Saints: Indelible Grace III* (2003). Kevin Twit

110 Come, O Sinner

This hymn beckons the sinner to the foot of the cross, where we mourn, rejoice, and wonder. It highlights the profundity and gravity of this scene, where Jesus suffers in our place so that we might know his salvation. “Come, O Sinner” is a holy meditation, an invitation to stand in awe at the cross of Jesus. *Jordan Kauflin*

113 Lord, Have Mercy (For What We Have Done)

One of the central themes in the storyline of the gospel is our deep and ongoing need for mercy. This song, rooted in a traditional Anglican prayer, guides us gently into a moment of honest reflection and heartfelt repentance. It reminds us that God’s mercy is ever present and freely given, drawing us back to his grace time and again. *Matt Boswell*

114 Repentance (Father, We Have Sinned)

This beautifully simple, almost plainsong-like hymn of repentance draws from the Anglican communion service. The first verse expresses personal confession, while the second verse broadens the scope, interceding for the brokenness of the world. This hymn invites both personal reflection and a shared plea for God’s grace and renewal.

115 Depth of Mercy! Can There Be?

The original title of this hymn gives us a sense of Charles Wesley’s heart when he wrote it: “After a Relapse into Sin.” You probably know what it is like to feel as though you have fallen to a place where you do not deserve to be forgiven, or you should know better than to be where you are. But here is the good news of redeeming grace: “Jesus loves and seeks me still.”

117 How Long (We Have Sung Our Songs of Victory)

Lament is a recurring theme in the Psalms, and this hymn from Stuart Townend gives voice to the deep yearning in our hearts for God to come and make all things right. Drawing from the cry of the psalmist, it expresses our sorrow and longing, while also urging us to remain steadfast in our hope. Even as we cry out “How long?,” we are called to trust in God’s perfect timing, knowing that he will ultimately bring justice, healing, and peace.

“But I know a day is coming when the deaf will hear his voice, when the blind will see their Savior, and the lame will leap for joy. When the widow finds

a Husband who will always love his bride, and the orphan finds a Father who will never leave her side.”

120 The Solid Rock

In Matthew 7 Jesus offered a memorable simile, admonishing his listeners not to be like a foolish man who built his house on sand, which was then destroyed by floods. The lesson here is a spiritual one, and the Bible tells us, “No one can lay a foundation other than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ” (1 Cor. 3:11). We can withstand “every high and stormy gale” if we are anchored properly to the Rock.

121 Before the Throne of God Above

Vikki Cook learned this hymn text from a pastor who brought it back from the UK. She was overcome by the theologically rich, Christ-centered lyrics. She recalls, “During my quiet times, I would take out the lyrics and be so affected by them. . . . I spent many mornings with God weeping over those lyrics.” Christians are not immune from feelings such as despair and unworthiness, so it is good to be reminded that we have a loving Savior who intercedes on our behalf.

123 His Mercy Is More

Pastor and hymn writer John Newton once wrote to one of his congregants, “Our sins are many, but his mercies are more; our sins are great, but his righteousness is greater.” Prompted by this central thought, the goal of this hymn was a confrontational and confessional addressing of sin that leads to a beautiful and life-giving assurance of forgiveness.

126 Arise, My Soul, Arise

Part of the wonder of Jesus’ work of salvation is in the way he serves as both the sacrificial lamb and the high priest who appears before the Father to plead for mercy on our behalf, appealing to his own blood. Through this mediation we find reconciliation with a holy God, and, more than that, we are claimed as his children.

129 Precious Love

This song from Chris Tomlin reflects upon our redemption in Christ, beautifully capturing the essence of grace and mercy that God offers to all who come to him. Written in a distinctly hymnic style, it invites every soul to know “the precious love of Jesus, pouring out for you and me.”

130 I Am His, and He Is Mine

Taking its cue from Song of Solomon 2:16 and 6:3 (“I am my beloved’s and my beloved is mine”), this beautiful hymn is a wellspring of love and comfort. With this assurance of love the writer says we experience the world in a different way; everything seems sweeter and more radiant. May you find this peace and rest in your own journey with Christ.

131 I Hear the Words of Love

Go to him with your sorrow; he will turn it into joy. Go to him with your death; he will transform it into life. Go to him with your sins; he will forgive them frankly. Go to him with your stony heart; he will take it out of you, and give you the heart of flesh. Go to him with your chains; he will snap them asunder. Go to him with your hunger; he will feed you; with your thirst, he will give you drink; with every burden and care and weakness, he will remove them all.
Horatius Bonar

133 I Know Whom I Have Believed

The chorus of this hymn is a verbatim quote from 2 Timothy 1:12 and serves as a reassuring anchor for the uncertainties expressed in the hymn’s verses. We might not understand why God offered his grace to us, or how the Spirit works, or when this life will meet its end, but we know our God is real and is able to keep us in trust until we meet him face to face.

134 O the Deep, Deep Love of Jesus

This is an extraordinarily powerful hymn written by London tradesman Samuel Francis, who once stared at water and contemplated suicide. I love this minor-key tune because, even though the love of Jesus is warm and welcoming, it is also deep and mysterious; it is not always easy, it can be overwhelming, and it has a direction and destiny through all of life’s challenges.

135 Completely Known, Completely Loved

Tim Keller once wrote, “To be loved but not known is comforting but superficial. To be known and not loved is our greatest fear. But to be fully known and truly loved is, well, a lot like being loved by God. It is what we need more than anything.” Shortly after Dr. Keller’s passing, Matt Papa and Matt Boswell beautifully captured that theme, setting this profound truth to music in a way that makes it sing.

139 Blessed Assurance

The writer of Hebrews, in speaking of our great high priest, beckons us, “Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, with our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water” (Heb. 10:22). We have this assurance through the blood-bought gift of our great Mediator and our submission to his perfect will.

142 Standing on the Promises

The New Testament speaks often of being firm in the faith (1 Cor. 16:13; Phil. 1:27; 1 Pet. 5:9), standing fast in what we have been taught (2 Thess. 2:15); it admonishes us to “hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who promised is faithful” (Heb. 10:23). Therefore we do well to encourage each other in the faith and to voice our own commitment to what we believe.

148 Grace

This hymn is a meditation of the mystery of grace: “The Prince of Life without a stain was traded for this sinner.” By grace we are called to enter into the joy of the Lord. By grace we have been saved from death to life. By grace we will forever walk beside the one who saves us—and call him “my Savior.” What response could be more fitting for this gift beyond measure than erupting into eternally resounding song!

149 God of Every Grace

Shortly after a 2022 school shooting in Nashville, I (Kristyn) was sitting outside with my daughters while they were playing, wrestling with this tragedy and the ongoing weight of it. Much of the thought flow and a lot of the lyrics of this hymn began to form in my head that day. We are all tempted at different times to give up, to give in, to let circumstances steal our hope. This hymn is a prayer for God’s daily strength, the regular recalling of our hope, for faith to keep following, for rest in the truth that God knows, sees, counts the tears. We hope you can sing this prayer with us. “And after you have suffered a little while, the God of all grace, who has called you to his eternal glory in Christ, will himself restore, confirm, strengthen, and establish you. To him be the dominion forever and ever. Amen” (1 Pet. 5:10–11).

152 To God Be the Glory

Cliff Barrows, music director for evangelist Billy Graham, said of this hymn, “Of all the songs that have been popularized through crusade activity, we are most happy about this one. Its testimony should rebound in the heart of every Christian; every area of a person’s life should reflect this witness, “To God be the glory.’”

153 Victory in Jesus (Christ Won the Victory)

Eugene Bartlett wrote many gospel and country songs. This one was written during a very dark time for him. In 1939, when he was 53, he suffered a paralyzing stroke and could not walk or talk. As he thought of Christ’s love for him over his whole life, he wrote this song of redemption and victory in Christ, the healer of body and soul. He filled the lyrics with hope and joy.

The family that owns the publishing rights of this song visited our home in Nashville and asked whether we would like to refresh and refocus the lyrics for families and churches today. We were very honored to do so, and Matt Boswell helped. We launched this new version at the 2024 Sing! Conference in Nashville.

154 I Cannot Tell

William Young Fullerton spent much of his career devoted to Christian missions, and his heart shines through in this tremendous text. Evangelism cannot exist without a loving shepherd who set the example by finding and redeeming his lost sheep. His mission is ongoing, and there will come a day when a final harvest will call everyone to account and the world will erupt in ceaseless worship.

155 Here Is Love, Vast as the Ocean (Everlasting Praise)

When revival swept Wales in 1904–1905, this song was vital to the movement, sometimes called the “mighty love-song of the revival.” One writer at the time said, “The song is of the marvel of Divine Love, flowing as vast oceans of tender mercies in never-ebbing floodtide; of the very Prince of Life dying, dying to redeem our forfeit life.” This hymn has long held a special place in our hearts, though at times it has felt incomplete. Inspired by the original version of the hymn, which quotes Revelation 1:5–6, we wrote two additional verses.

156 God of Grace

God of Grace is a simple hymn that I cowrote with Jonathan Rea in 2003, focusing on the core doctrine of

God’s grace. It serves as a catechizing song, succinctly presenting the good news of the gospel in a way that is easy to grasp and sing. Through its straightforward yet powerful lyrics it reminds us of God’s unmerited favor and the transformative power of his grace in our lives.

157 By Faith

When we gather as a church, we stand on the shoulders of those who have gone before us and have passed on the torch of faith. When we sing, our voices join with the generations as we face the present and the future with renewed strength and resolve to walk by faith. Initially inspired by Hebrews 11, the chorus reflects the opening of Hebrews 12: “Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith.”

159 A Debtor to Mercy Alone

It is infinitely comforting to know, if we have come to God on the basis of his mercy alone, that we can be sure his mercy will keep us to the end. The law can no longer condemn us (Rom. 8:1–2), no power in hell or on earth can thwart God’s purposes for us (Rom. 8:28–30), and we are forever engraved upon the palms of our Savior’s hands (Isa. 49:16). Bob Kauflin

162 Grace Greater Than Our Sin

Where would we be without grace? When it seems as though our failures outweigh our faithfulness, we have this good news: “Where sin increased, grace abounded all the more” (Rom. 5:20); this grace is “lavished upon us” (Eph. 1:8). Through the blood of Christ we are washed clean (Rev. 7:14). What a generous gift!

164 How Sweet and Awful Is the Place

This hymn is based on the parable of the great banquet in Luke 14:12–24. Many who were invited made excuses and did not come, so the master asked his servant to invite anyone he could find on the street. Here Isaac Watts puts us in the position of the lowly who were granted entrance; then he petitions God to extend his gospel call to the nations with the hopes of uniting in grateful worship.

165 It Is a Thing Most Wonderful

The redemption story sometimes seems incomprehensible. Why would a perfect, invincible God choose to die a gruesome death, clothed in frail flesh, especially for people who did not love him? This is the beauty and wonder of the work of Christ. “Oh, light the flame within my heart, and I will love thee more and more!”

166 He’s Done So Much for Me

This simple gospel song comes from the pens of Theodore Frye and Lillian Bowles, early luminaries in the development of gospel music in Chicago in the 1930s. The song reminds us of the innumerable blessings God pours on us, beyond what we could ever count or tell.

169 But for the Cross of Christ

The cross of Christ is the place where all the promises, implications, and accomplishments of the gospel converge. This song was written out of a desire to distill all the glorious biblical truths of this gospel into a poetic, memorable, and singable form, in hopes that it would bolster courage and hope even in the deepest recesses of our souls. We are never in danger of reshaping our lives too much around these truths, and songs like this are vital to our catechizing of generations to come. The journey of the lyrics takes us through every facet of the Christian life as we carry and cling to this gospel, even drawing inspiration from historical theological truths, such as Martin Luther’s concept of the “great exchange,” found in 2 Corinthians 5:21: “For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.” Bryan Fowler

172 I Will Glory in My Redeemer

In 1 Corinthians 1:30–31 Paul tells us that Christ has become to us “wisdom from God, righteousness and sanctification and redemption, so that, as it is written, ‘Let the one who boasts, boast in the Lord.’” This hymn helps us do so as we glory in the Redeemer, who paid for our sins, who strengthens us against our enemies, and who will carry us until we see his face. Bob Kauflin

174 O Lord, My Rock and My Redeemer

This hymn is a meditation on the final words of Psalm 19: “Let the words of my mouth and the meditation

of my heart be acceptable in your sight, O Lord, my rock and my redeemer” (Ps. 19:14). He is our greatest treasure, strong defender, and gracious Savior. How could we not want to live every day for his glory? Bob Kauflin

178 The Lord Is My Salvation

This ballad was initially inspired by phrases from Psalm 27 that helps us address both the joy of our salvation and the way in which we deal with tough seasons of life. A “Gloria Patri” has been added to the end that can act as either a doxology or a bridge to return to the chorus.

180 Come, Behold the Wondrous Mystery

Our churches and worship gatherings should be filled with the passionate celebration of the gospel. We must preach the gospel. We must sing the gospel. Our songs must be saturated with the gospel. So give people the story, for the sake of the nations. People will fall in love with him. People who are in love do crazy things, like change the world. Matt Papa

181 In Christ Alone

This was the hymn that began our writing endeavors. Its purpose is to sing the gospel, in one song, to ourselves and to others, in praise to Christ alone—something that could teach people the foundations of what we believed in Christ, the God who changed all of history and who wants a relationship with each of us. It is a creed-based song, firing people with hope that here is the God whom even death cannot hold.

183 Christ Our Hope in Life and Death

This confession of faith, inspired by the sixteenth-century Heidelberg Catechism, affirms our hope in Christ using question-and-answer format. When we gather to worship, it is critical to remember that we are preparing one another for life and for death.

185 Crown Him with Many Crowns

Inspired by the “many diadems” of Jesus described in Revelation 19, this hymn was written by Matthew Bridges in 1851, with additional verses written in 1871 and 1874 by Godfrey Thring, dean of Wells Cathedral, Somerset. It imparts a majestic vision of the exalted Christ and can fit into almost any service throughout the year.

186 Jesus, Thou Joy of Loving Hearts

In his *Confessions* Augustine wrote, “You have made us for yourself, O Lord, and our hearts are restless until they rest in you.” This medieval Latin hymn conveys the same yearning for Christ, our Savior, our life, our light, our living bread and sustaining fountain. It ends with a beautiful prayer for peace, purity, and illumination.

187 I Stand Amazed in the Presence

This song is written from the perspective of someone humbled by spiritual brokenness and in awe of redeeming love. The act of that redemption—from Jesus’ agonizing in the garden to dying on a cross—grants us access to a brighter day, when we will meet our Redeemer face to face and declare his marvelous, wonderful love.

188 I Will Sing the Wondrous Story

Sometimes there is a perception of Christianity in which people find Christ and never struggle again, never doubt, never worry; in reality, as this author expresses, Christians are not immune from darkness and sorrow. But the good news is the loving presence of a Savior who never leaves our side, whose hand is always stretched out to us, and who will see us through to the end of our earthly days and beyond.

189 I Heard the Voice of Jesus Say

Scottish pastor Horatius Bonar, in a stroke of brilliant pastoral writing, highlights three promises of Christ for rest (Matt. 11:28–30), for living water (John 4:10–14), and for light (John 8:12), but he puts the quest for these things on our own lips, in our own hearts: “I heard the voice of Jesus say,” so I came, I found, I drank, I live, I looked, and I will walk. May this be our experience and our testimony. The melody of this hymn, known in Northern Ireland as the “Star of County Down,” is haunting and gives appropriate weight to the struggle to rest in God that all of us experience.

190 My Jesus, I Love Thee

Based partly on the hymn on “O Jesus, My Saviour, I Know Thou Art Mine,” by Caleb Jarvis Taylor, this hymn comes to us from Methodist England, written by a humble iron smelter named James H. Duffell. It is said to have been used for the first time in a class at Spon Lane in the English town of West Bromwich. Duffell died in 1883, not long after moving to Sydney, Australia.

191 How Sweet the Name of Jesus Sounds

In John Newton’s sermon notes for March 3, 1765, he wrote, “The name of Christ includes the whole revelation concerning him, who he is, what he has done—all that we read of his love, his power, and his offices make a part of his great and glorious name. The soul that is taught by the Word and Spirit of God to understand a little of these things receives such a sense of love and joy that the very sound of his name is sweeter than music to the ears, sweeter than honey to the taste.”

194 Christ, the True and Better

One of the great theological treasures of our time is the renewed emphasis on seeing Christ throughout all of Scripture. While the lives of biblical characters offer many lessons, their ultimate purpose is to point us to the central figure of the Bible: Jesus Christ. This hymn traces the line of Adam, Isaac, Moses, and David, celebrating how their stories find their fulfillment in the life and work of the Savior. Matt Boswell

197 Jesus, Your Name

This began as a meditation on the names of Jesus (as did a number of hymns that have come before). Written with our friend Ian Hannah, this hymn was developed as an expression of comfort and encouragement to people initially in the Christmas season, beginning with “Jesus, your name, Prince of Peace, quiets my soul, treasures the least” and finishing with, “Jesus, the name all nations will praise.”

199 Wonderful, Merciful Savior

Matthew 11:28 says, “Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.” With its tender melody and worshipful lyrics, this beloved hymn beautifully expresses the merciful, redemptive love of Christ, reminding the singer that Jesus is the true Healer, Comforter, and Redeemer.

200 Jesus, the Very Thought of Thee

From the same Latin hymn as “Jesus, Thou Joy of Loving Hearts,” this translation evokes similar imagery as found in “The Love of God”: “No tongue or pen can show the love of Jesus.” The translator, Edward Caswall, believed the true spirit of the hymn was in its sense of devotion; indeed, the relationship here is less elevated and more intimately personal than other hymns like it.

201 At the Name of Jesus

Caroline Noel's majestic hymn is an extended meditation on Philippians 2:5–11, explaining how the Creator of the world was humbled by his creation, then restored to his rightful place as the King of glory. This same King will return again—only next time his creatures and all earthly empires will recognize his power and bow to his authority.

203 Jesus Is Lord

It could be said that the declaration “Jesus is Lord” is a summary of the whole Apostles’ Creed—and it is also the climax of one of the first Christian hymns, in Philippians 2. When writing the melody and the original draft, we were struck by the thought of one day standing with all those throughout the centuries who have suffered beyond imagining for that statement, from New Testament Christians who stood up to Caesar to the many martyrs of our present century. It is a humbling and life-compelling thought—especially as many will stand before Christ and say “Lord, Lord,” but their lives will say something different.

204 Fairest Lord Jesus

Similar to the way that the moon gets its light from the sun and has no light of its own, the beauty of creation is like a mirror, reflecting something—or someone—much greater. Jesus is fairer, the hymn tells us; Jesus is brighter and purer. It is good and right to revel in the glories of nature, but it is even better to revel in the Creator.

205 Jesus, Lord, Redeemer

Patrick Kirkland's hymn begins with a summary of Philippians 2:5–11 but then takes us on a post-crucifixion journey down the road to Emmaus (Luke 24:13–35) and into the room where Jesus appeared to ten of his disciples, without Thomas (Luke 24:36–43). We, like those who met Jesus in a state of bewilderment, ask for Jesus to glow in our hearts, ease our sorrows, and offer us peace.

209 How Rich a Treasure We Possess

This hymn celebrates the true and eternal riches found in the finished work of Jesus Christ. In a world consumed with chasing fleeting wealth and possessions these lyrics call our hearts to the incomparable treasure of the gospel. The hymn invites every singer

to reflect on the immeasurable grace and inheritance he or she has received through Christ. *Matt Boswell*

210 The Love of God

Frederick Lehman wrote this beautiful hymn after hearing an evangelist read the words of the last verse during a camp meeting. Those words, adapted from lyrics by English poet Christopher Smart, echo the sentiments of an old Aramaic poem by Rabbi Meir ben Yitzchak and, in a way, John 21:25: “Now there are also many other things that Jesus did. Were every one of them to be written, I suppose that the world itself could not contain the books that would be written.”

211 The King in All His Beauty

This hymn serves as an invitation to reflect on and respond to the redemptive work of Christ on the cross. It begins by portraying the eternal worship of the Son, moves to the profound moment of the cross, and culminates in the exaltation of Jesus as the Savior of the world—all while highlighting the unmatched beauty of Christ. *Matt Boswell*

212 Majestic Sweetness Sits Enthroned

Much like Philippians 2, this hymn speaks of a God who is both omnipotent and incomparable and yet who lovingly and graciously plunged himself into a state of torture and humiliation for our sake, so that we could find victory over death. In response we offer our own lives and our gratitude.

213 Savior, Like a Shepherd Lead Us

Of the many images we have of who Jesus is, his role as shepherd is perhaps most comforting. We know he leads us beside still waters (Ps. 23:2) and that he purchased the flock with his blood (Acts 20:28). We all go astray (Isa. 53:6), but he lovingly seeks the lost (Matt. 18:12–14) and offers grace to those who ask (1 John 1:9). We longed to be filled (Eph. 5:18; Col. 1:9) and loved (John 15:9; 1 John 4:7–11).

214 We Come, O Christ, to You

Margaret Clarkson wrote this hymn as a collective call to worship for InterVarsity Christian Fellowship meetings, but what she offers here is more like a rallying cry around core Christian doctrines: the humanity and divinity of Christ; his all-sustaining work in creation, fueled by his love for his people; his

substitutionary atonement; his position as both judge and mediator; his nature as the source of all truth and wisdom; his empowerment as the giver of gifts; and his identification as the holy “I AM,” our source of true rest and true life, our sovereign Maker, Savior, Lord, and King, to whom we give our adoration.

215 I Love to Tell the Story

Kate Hankey was more than someone who merely wrote about telling the gospel story; she put her poem to action. Hankey was known for teaching the Bible to young girls in London, and she gave the proceeds of her literary works to missions. She sets an example for us, that we would share the message of salvation just as much or more than we would sing about it.

217 All Glory Be to Christ

This is a very clever and useful doxology using the Scottish tune typically sung to Robert Burns’ “Auld Lang Syne.” Threaded through the text are cues from Psalm 127:1; James 4:14; John 6:35; Matthew 6:9–13 (the Lord’s Prayer); and Revelation 19:11. It is a rousing way to finish a service.

223 How Deep the Father’s Love for Us

Usually songwriting for me is a long and laborious process, but on this occasion the whole melody came very spontaneously and quickly. And it came as a surprise, because at this point in my life I had never considered writing a hymn!

I had been meditating on the cross, and what it cost the Father to give up his only Son—the pain, the grief, the sense of loss. And what was my part in it? Certainly undeserved; if I had been there at the time, I probably would have been one of those shouting “crucify him” along with the crowd. It just makes the sacrifice all the more amazing, all the more personal, and all the more humbling. *Stuart Townsend*

224 Christus Victor (Amen)

We collaborated with Matt Boswell, Bryan Fowler, and Matt Papa over several years to write this majestic anthem, drawn from the first and last songs of victory found in Scripture—the Song of Moses in Exodus and the Song of the Lamb in Revelation—proclaiming Christ as Lord from the beginning. The song includes a threefold amen set to the recognizable chord progression of Pachelbel’s Canon. Sing it with

your family and congregation as a way to invigorate singing together in harmony!

225 And Can It Be?

This is a stunning setting by Dan Forrest of Charles Wesley’s great hymn of faith, written around the time of his conversion, was inspired by Martin Luther’s commentary on Galatians 2:20, which says, “He that can with a firm and constant faith say these words with Paul, ‘I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me,’ is happy indeed. . . . Who is this Me? Even I, wretched and damnable sinner, so dearly beloved of the Son of God, that he gave himself for me.” The traditional version of the hymn can be found in the Conversion & Faith category of this hymnal.

226 Man of Sorrows! What a Name

Philip Bliss wrote this hymn for a Sunday School curriculum in 1875 to go along with a lesson on John 12:23–33, in which Jesus alludes to his impending death and resurrection. Some other key Scriptures are included here, too, especially the opening line from Isaiah 53:3, the spotless lamb of 1 Peter 1:19, and Jesus’ exclamation “It is finished” in John 19:30.

227 All My Boast Is in Jesus

In an age defined by self-fulfillment, personal brands, and likes and retweets, “All My Boast Is In Jesus” draws from the epistles of Paul to remind us that our boast should be solely in the cross of Jesus Christ (Gal. 6:14). In our weakness and brokenness we can rest confidently, knowing that his life, death, and resurrection are greater than anything this world has to offer.

230 Alleluia! Sing to Jesus

This hymn resounds in triumph before our victorious King and Redeemer, whose throne overlooks the crystal sea (Rev. 4:6). Though he no longer walks among us on earth, this is no distant King; he is still with us and among us through the gift of his Spirit. O Lord, hear our prayers, and continue to be our Friend and Intercessor.

231 Love Divine, All Loves Excelling

Originally conceived as a Christianized parody of the song “Fairest Isle, All Isles Excelling,” by John Dryden and Henry Purcell, Charles Wesley’s hymn has arguably become much better known. It is an earnest prayer for the Author of divine love to return to his

people and complete his work, never to leave again but to take us all to his throne room, where we will be “lost in wonder, love, and praise.”

234 Run and Run (Christ Is All My Righteousness)

A desire to sing the words “Christ is all my righteousness” inspired a search through forgotten and overlooked hymns of history—treasures that help believers proclaim the truth of being clothed in the righteousness of Jesus. Drawing from these rich threads, this hymn weaves together a chord of timeless truth, enabling us to sing of Christ’s righteousness with renewed depth and wonder. *Matt Boswell*

237 Thy Mercy, My God

This hymn was written by the Englishman John Stocker, of whom little is known. It was contributed to the *Gospel Magazine* in 1776 and appeared (with six verses) on the same page as the first full printing of Toplady’s “Rock of Ages.” Made popular more recently by Sandra McCracken, the hymn is a colorful articulation of God’s mercy.

238 Were You There

By the time this spiritual emerged in print through the work of the Fisk Jubilee Singers, based in Nashville, it was widely known across the country, with variants appearing soon after in Chicago, Georgia, Virginia, and elsewhere. It poses the question of what it must have been like to be present at the foot of the cross or when the stone was rolled away. We know the accounts, but who can truly fathom them?

239 Nothing but the Blood

Under most circumstances blood is anything but clean. In medical terms it is a biohazard, a carrier of disease. In household terms it is difficult to remove from clothing. But the Bible speaks of something astounding—people’s washing robes in blood and making them pure white (Rev. 7:14). Only the blood of Christ has the power to cleanse (Eph. 1:7). Praise be to God for this incredible gift.

242 Not What My Hands Have Done

It is the insistent testimony of the word of God that salvation is not a reward for human effort or good works. It is by grace, God’s unearned, unmerited favor and blessing. In other words it is a free gift. If we paid

anything for it, it would cease to be a gift. Since it is true that our salvation is all of God, then he, and he alone, deserves the glory and praise for it. *Robert Cottrill*

243 Alas, and Did My Savior Bleed

This hymn, like Wesley’s “And Can It Be?” or Bridges’ “Ah, Holy Jesus,” conveys a sense of bewilderment at the idea of our Sovereign God’s choosing to die for someone no better than a common worm (Job 26:6; Ps. 22:6). This revelation is deeply personal and moving, but the writer cautions that no weeping could repay this debt of love—our only offering is humble submission.

244 At the Cross

See hymn 243.

248 It Was Finished upon That Cross

In Christ’s final moments on the cross he utters a statement packed with meaning: “It is finished.” And suddenly a scene of grief and loss becomes the defining turning point in the history of the world. This energetic hymn from CityAight explores what Christ’s finished work means for us: the defeat of sin, the payment of our debt, a pardon, and a welcome so warm as we approach God boldly with “no more guilt to carry.” We are “free to live and free to love,” and we press “onward to eternal glory.” Singing this hymn is a great way for a congregation to remember that none of this is possible through our own efforts. It happens purely because “it was finished upon that cross.”

251 I Lay My Sins on Jesus

Sometimes our faults and our failures weigh heavily on us. We might feel guilty about mistreating someone or letting someone down or having a terrible lapse in judgment. The good news of the gospel says that we do not need to bear these things in our hearts or on our minds; we can turn them over to Jesus. He can relieve your aching desires and griefs, too, if you will let him. Will you let him fashion you for greater things?

252 He Was Wounded for Our Transgressions

This stirring hymn by the writer of “Great Is Thy Faithfulness” begins with the words of Isaiah 53:5 and incorporates other phrases from that great prophetic chapter, but the last verse shifts our focus toward the outcome: numberless souls who have found new life and are free to rejoice in the ultimate Victor.

253 Ah, Holy Jesus, How Have You Offended?

To craft this poignant crucifixion hymn, poet laureate Robert Bridges consulted a German text by the poet Johann Heerman and a Latin prayer on which it was based, which is sometimes attributed to Anselm of Canterbury (11th c.). It recognizes the poetic injustice of the blameless one's being punished for the perpetrator(s), and it asks in return for this willing substitute to show us a love we do not deserve.

254 Jesus, Thy Blood and Righteousness

There is no true faith, that is, justifying faith, that has not the righteousness of Christ for its object. All believers are forgiven and accepted, not for the sake of anything in them, or of anything that ever was, that is, or ever can be done by them, but wholly and solely for the sake of what Christ has done and suffered for them. This whole hymn expresses the same sentiment, from the beginning to the end.
John Wesley

255 Jesus, What a Friend for Sinners

As a tireless traveling evangelist, J. Wilbur Chapman undoubtedly wrote this for his revival campaigns, but it speaks of a deeply personal work in his own life, including the sorrow he experienced from losing two wives to death. Despite whatever hardships he faced, his hymn abounds in gratitude and assurance.

256 There Is a Redeemer

Melody Green wrote the first two verses of this song, and her husband, singer-songwriter Keith Green, added a third and recorded it on his album *Songs for the Shepherd* (1982). Keith's verse about meeting his Redeemer and serving him forever was fulfilled much sooner than either of them expected; he and two of their children perished in a plane crash five years later.

257 I Will Sing of My Redeemer

Philip P. Bliss and his wife, Lucy, were killed in a horrific train derailment in 1876, leaving behind a legacy of uplifting gospel songs, including these words in manuscript, which were set to music and published the following year by his colleague James McGranahan. As an evangelistic singer, he embodied the message of this hymn, and today we share this conviction to sing of our loving Redeemer.

259 His Robes for Mine

This hymn is a meditation on the doctrine of justification. Scripture repeatedly pictures imputed righteousness as a garment with which God clothes the sinner (Isa. 61:10; Zech. 3:1-5). The first stanza introduces what Martin Luther called the "great exchange," the trading of Jesus' righteousness for our sin (2 Cor. 5:21). The second stanza addresses Jesus' active obedience, his obeying the commands of God in our place (Matt. 3:15). The third stanza speaks of propitiation, Jesus' satisfying the wrath of God, which we deserve (1 John 2:2; 4:10). The final stanza and refrain marvel at the way in which God forsook his beloved Son, treating him as an enemy so that we, his enemies, might be made his children (Matt. 27:46). All grace! *Chris Anderson*

261 The Servant King

Graham Kendrick wrote this song to fit the theme of the 1984 Spring Harvest event. "It was a challenge to explore the vision of Christ as the servant who would wash the disciples' feet but who was also creator of the universe." The heart of Jesus is what he taught his disciples: "If anyone would be first, he must be last of all and servant of all" (Mark 9:35).

264 We Worship at Your Feet (Come and See)

Graham Kendrick wrote the tune for this song before he had any words to go with it. "There was an obvious kind of pathos in the tune and the melody. It was around the time that I was writing *Make Way for the Cross*, so it seemed appropriate that this song should be a meditation around the cross." It pictures Christ in his humility, and we in turn worship in adoration at his feet, pleading, "Help me take it in."

267 What a Friend We Have in Jesus

This hymn was written by Joseph Scriven in the nineteenth century from a life filled with suffering. Scriven penned the words to encourage his ailing mother and never intended anyone else to see it. It is a beautiful hymn reaching into our struggles, leading us to prayer, and ultimately to the Lord Jesus himself. It is helpful for both children and adults.

268 The Lord's Prayer

Albert Hay Malotte spent much of his career composing for the theater, including stints at Disney and Paramount in the early days of motion pictures with sound,

but he is probably best known for this powerful setting of the Lord's Prayer. While many composers have set this passage from Matthew's Gospel to music, Malotte's version stands out for its ability to convey both the intimate nature of the prayer and the majestic power of its final refrain, before concluding softly with "Amen."

269 Turn Your Eyes

This updated, gospel-rich song invites worshipers to fix their eyes on Jesus. The melody is simple yet moving, supporting lyrics that lead from personal surrender to shared hope. Each verse unfolds with grace, lifting hearts to Christ's glory and offering comfort, strength, and joy for every season of life.

272 Pass Me Not

Fanny Crosby's plaintive and compelling hymn has been sung by everyone from Bob Dylan to rapper MC Hammer. It is reminiscent of the story of the blind man at the side of the road (Luke 10:46–52; Crosby herself was blind), but Crosby senses the deep heart cry of the outcast and hears their objections to faith. The idea for the hymn was given to her by her frequent collaborator William H. Doane and was one of the first songs they wrote together.

273 Search Me, O God

Through the first verse of this hymn we voice the words of the psalmist in Psalm 139, inviting God to root out our impurities. The second verse offers thanks for such cleansing and asks for those places to be filled with holy passion and desire. But even more so we offer our whole lives and wills in total surrender to the indwelling of the Spirit.

274 I Must Tell Jesus

Elisha Hoffman wrote this hymn while he was a pastor, after ministering to a woman in deep distress. There are times when life is completely out of our control, and our only real choice is to turn the situation over to Jesus, because he sees more than we can see, and he is orchestrating an outcome we might not immediately understand.

281 Take My Life and Let It Be

This hymn of Frances Ridley Havergal is so extremely helpful to us because it does not merely say we want to follow, or obey, or surrender but breaks down this

idea into each of the most challenging categories—our hands and feet and where we go, our voice and lips and every word we speak, our silver and gold and every priority we have with money, our will and heart and what we will do in our future, and finally our affections—the things and the people we love.

282 Pass the Promise

Sandra and Kristyn read through Hannah's prayer of thanksgiving in 1 Samuel and were inspired by the way she looked beyond her own life to see the big plans of God's salvation over history. The lyrics follow the main things Hannah knew to be true about the Lord. As parents, we wanted to do the same—to pass on the great plans, the great promises of the Lord to our children. Singing them helps the thoughts stick.

283 We Give Thee but Thine Own

Part of coming into maturity as a Christian means recognizing the hand of God as the source of all blessings (James 1:17). This hymn voices what David declared after gathering materials for the temple: "Now we thank you, our God, and praise your glorious name. But who am I, and what is my people, that we should be able thus to offer willingly? For all things come from you, and of your own have we given you" (1 Chron. 29:13–14).

285 My Worth Is Not in What I Own

This hymn sets our focus on the cross as the place where we understand our full identity and value. It uniquely helps us to join the dots between the gospel and our time, talents, and treasures.

291 Lord, Speak to Me That I May Speak

This is my favorite hymn of illumination, serving as the primary influence behind the hymn "Speak, O Lord." It beautifully balances reverence and weightiness with a longing for transformation, reminding us that hearing God's word is not merely an intellectual exercise but a life-changing encounter. With a sense of expectation it calls us to listen with open hearts, knowing that the way in which we respond shapes our lives and holds eternal significance.

292 Speak, O Lord

This prayer of illumination was inspired by Isaiah 68:2; Psalm 119; and a number of the great liturgies from church history. We wrote this hymn in consid-

eration of the pastor's call for God's people to listen carefully to the words of power that can never fail.

294 How Firm a Foundation

The authorship of this hymn is one of the great mysteries of Christendom, but its message is based firmly in Scripture. In referring to the "precious and very great promises" of 2 Peter 1:4 the hymn declares many promises offered to us through the Bible, touching on Deuteronomy 33:25 and several portions of Isaiah (41:10, 43:2, 46:4, 40:11) before ending with Hebrews 13:5 (which quotes Joshua 1:5).

297 The Perfect Wisdom of Our God

This is a prayer for us to understand God's wisdom at work in all of creation, at the cross, and through every moment of life. There are often no simple one-line answers to the different struggles and sadnesses we face in this life, but there is real confidence and comfort found as we think on his perfect wisdom and eternal purposes.

298 Hark, My Soul, It Is the Lord

William Cowper wrote this hymn with John 21:15–19 in mind, in which Jesus asks Peter, "Do you love me?" Here Cowper interpolates some things Jesus was possibly thinking when asserting his own love toward Peter, and by extension toward us: he has offered nurture, direction, and parental care, and his love stretches beyond anything we could imagine, including a place with him in heaven. The response is brief. My own love is inadequate, but yes! Grant me the grace to love you more.

299 Show Us Christ

The aim of all Scripture, God's written word, is to point us to Jesus, God's living Word. Whenever we read the Bible or hear it preached, we have the opportunity to encounter the crucified and risen Christ. This hymn is a prayer, humbly asking God to remove anything that would keep us from seeing more clearly the glory of Jesus. *Bob Kauflin*

300 Thou, Whose Almighty Word

Through this Trinitarian hymn we ask for God's guiding light, especially for people in the world who are still lost in spiritual darkness. This is the light of John 1:4–5, which brings life to mankind and cannot be overcome by darkness.

301 God, in the Gospel of His Son

The Bible from cover to cover points ahead and points back to Jesus, but the four books narrating his saving work on earth are vital for knowing the good news—the gospel of Jesus. The heart of the story, written in blood, so to speak, has the power to release us from spiritual captivity and broaden our vision to heavenly things.

302 Reformation Song

The five *solas* are a way of defining Protestant orthodoxy. These *solas* state, in a concise way, that salvation is defined by Scripture alone and is by grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone, for the glory of God alone. The verses take us through the first four *solas*, unpacking the significance of each one, while the chorus is meant to remind us that every aspect of our salvation points uniquely and completely to the glory of God alone. *Bob Kauflin*

303 How Great the Wisdom

Benjamin Beddome's hymn pictures the twenty-four elders' casting their crowns before the throne (Rev. 4:10), with the angels and the armies (Rev. 9:16) declaring the work of the cross—"salvation well deserves the praise"! This robust *fuguing* tune drives home the message, sounding like multiple groups' coming together as one.

304 My Soul Longs for the Lord

Drawing imagery from various psalms, this hymn reminds us of the hope that comes from God's word, his promises, and the eternal victory of his presence. This hymn of illumination was first heard in 2015 at the Shepherds' Conference in Los Angeles.

306 Every Promise (From the Breaking of the Dawn)

This song is used best either before or after the preaching of the Word. It can also be used in a call-and-response style. They say Irish music moved to America and became bluegrass—so this is our humble tribute to those who generations before us brought their music, lives, and faith to the brave new world!

311 Break Thou the Bread of Life

Written in the earliest days of the Chautauqua Institution by two of its staff members and later expanded by a British organist, this has become a foundational hymn in approaching the word, the bread of life.

The words come from a position of longing, to know Christ personally—like sitting at his feet when he broke the loaves and fish—and to be taught by the great Interpreter, the Spirit.

312 *Sursum Corda* (Lift Your Hearts)

The Anglican Communion service begins with the “*Sursum Corda*,” Latin for “Lift up your hearts.” It is also known as the “Eucharistic Prayer.” This fresh setting is beautifully written, artfully matching the words and music to the theme and helping us prepare with joy and confidence for the feast of communion. It is also a stunning call to worship, a song of thanksgiving, and a response to sadness.

315 Behold the Lamb (Communion Hymn)

Written for communion, this hymn for the church family was the center point of our album *Awaken the Dawn*, which is shaped like a service of worship. The song moves from the preparation. In our church, we have sung it through as a complete hymn, but have also split the sections around the taking of communion.

317 Keep the Feast

Skye Peterson and Ben Shive present this simple reminder that the solemn work of Christ is in fact cause for much celebration! Skye says, “I feel like I’m really good at rehearsing the first part of the gospel—his death and suffering—and thinking about my own brokenness. I forget to remember that communion is also a joyful feast! So, I wanted to write a ‘happy’ communion song, and Ben Shive helped me do it!”

Drawing on the Anglican liturgy inspired by 1 Corinthians 5:7–8, the song carries on the tradition found in the call and response:

Leader: “Alleluia! Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us!”

Congregation: “Therefore, let us keep the feast, Alleluia!”

321 Come unto Jesus

This hymn calls us to respond to the gracious invitation of Jesus to bring all our burdens and sins to him. It highlights the sufficiency of our Savior’s love and encourages us to rest, believing that he is enough. The last verse captures our response of surrender and trust as we take up our cross and follow him. *Jordan Kauflin*

322 Here, O Our Lord, We See You Face to Face

The disciples gathered for the Passover meal, and Jesus was there. They talked with him, and he with them. Now, in the Lord’s Supper, inaugurated at that time (1 Cor. 11:23–26), he is present still (Matt. 18:20; 28:20), but it is an invisible, spiritual presence. We can only pray that the Spirit of God would enlighten our souls to perceive him in a new way as we gather at his table. And that is the prayer of this wonderful hymn. *Robert Cottrill*

326 Our God Will Go Before Us

This hymn echoes a common theme throughout Scripture: the nearness of God. In Exodus 33:15 Moses asks the Lord, “If your presence will not go with me, do not bring us up from here.” In Matthew 28:20 Jesus himself promises the disciples that he is “with you always, even to the end of the age.” As you share this song within your community, we hope you will be reminded that it is the Lord who leads the way, guides our steps, and brings us safely to our eternal home with him.

327 Benediction (May the Peace of God)

When we sing as congregations, we are expressing unity in Christ and are helping to encourage and strengthen one another with our voices. We often finish Sunday evening services in our home church with this benediction.

330 The Risen Christ

This is a Trinitarian doxology that Keith Getty wrote with legendary songwriter Phil Madeira. It can be used as a hymn of illumination or a hymn of revival. It sings very easily in four-part harmony and a cappella as well.

331 Gloria Patri

This ancient doxology was translated from Latin and set to music by American organist and choirmaster Henry W. Greatorex. This version of the text has been in continuous use in English worship since the first *Book of Common Prayer* (1549).

333 Glory Be to God the Father

This hymn of doxology comes from the pen of Scottish pastor Horatius Bonar. Through this text we shower praise upon our great King and Redeemer, the Lamb whose blood washes us from every stain, adored by angels and all creation.

334 Doxology

In the long tradition of English doxologies it is amazing how this particular tribute to the Trinity has been preserved and treasured by numberless generations. Its strength is probably its no-nonsense simplicity: we on earth and in heaven praise the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, who provide all good things. To that, we say a grateful amen.

338 All Things Bright and Beautiful

This selection is part of a collection entitled *Hymns for Little Children* written by Irish hymn writer Cecil Francis Alexander in 1848, based on the Apostles' Creed. While serving with her husband, the Bishop of Derry, she wrote these songs out of a concern that every child should sing deeply the truths of the Bible.

339 He's Got the Whole World in His Hands

Through this simple song children learn about God's providence, about the one who protects us with his everlasting arms (Deut. 33:27), and that "in his hand is the life of every living thing and the breath of all mankind" (Job 12:10).

343 Revelation 19:1

This stirring gospel song, with its overlapping parts, begins by quoting Revelation 19:1 verbatim. The full effect of the original can be found by listening to the original performance by the New Jerusalem Baptist Church Choir on its album *His Eye Is on the Sparrow* (1985), directed by the song's composer, Jeffrey LaValley.

344 Everything (Psalm 150)

Sandra McCracken and Skye Peterson worked on this new setting of Psalm 150 with me. We wanted to capture the joy of the psalm and the lists of musical instruments, and to leave room for a big every-one-and-everything breath in the chorus! Our voices are given to us to praise the Lord, and we hope this encourages children and families to enjoy that special calling. Kristyn Getty

349 Morning Song (Sing, Sing)

This is a children's song for beginning the day. In British school assemblies (chapels) it was a familiar habit to sing songs about the day. Each day the Lord awakens the dawn as a daily invitation to sing to God.

350 The Night Song

We can hold firm to the promises of Psalm 121, that he who neither slumbers nor sleeps watches over and keeps us, both now and forevermore. Each night the God of heaven, in whom there is no darkness, is by our side. Amid our fears we can rest in the salvation and resurrection of the Lord and can rejoice that we will dwell forever in the city illuminated by his glory, with the Lamb as its lamp.

351 I've Got the Joy

The foundation of this popular children's song was written by George William Cooke, a Methodist minister and camp meeting leader. Over time, as the song has been passed down to countless children, people have added the refrain and additional verses. Its infectious gladness reflects the words of the psalmist: "In your presence there is fullness of joy" (Ps. 16:11).

354 My God Is All I Need (My God Is So Big)

This joyful song from CityAlight celebrates the greatness and sufficiency of our God. With childlike faith and rejoicing, the lyrics contrast the darkness and difficulty of life's valleys with the unwavering truth that God is all we need, no matter the challenges we face. This one is fun and easy for all ages to sing and internalize.

355 I Am Not My Own

Based on Q&A #1 of the Heidelberg Catechism (1563), this song reminds us that, because sin messed up this perfect earthly home, we needed a Savior to fix all that was broken. Jesus paid a huge price to do that with his precious blood, and his Holy Spirit lives within all who trust in him. And so even more we delight in doing what is right with our bodies and minds and hearts and actions and learn to turn away from what is not. For I belong to the Lord. I am not my own.

356 Jesus, Joy of the Highest Heaven

Keith wrote the melody of this carol for Kristyn when she was pregnant with Eliza. Kristyn then penned the lyrics as a simple carol for children to sing about how Christ became human like us so that we could become children of God.

357 Away in a Manger

The original words of this carol are shrouded in mystery, appearing anonymously in American newspapers

as early as 1868 and sometimes imaginatively credited to Martin Luther. The third verse was added by gospel composer Charles Gabriel, and we offer the two most popular tunes written for it, written within the span of a decade at the end of the nineteenth century.

359 *Away in a Manger*

See hymn 357.

360 *Jesus Loves Me*

Anna Bartlett Warner of West Point, New York, was an avid writer. She included this simple poem in her novel *Say and Seal*, in a moment when a young boy, Johnny, was struggling with illness. Through this song we learn about the way God speaks through Scripture, the basics of salvation, Christ's watchful care, and the promise of heaven.

361 *John 3:16 (God So Loved the World)*

This is a fresh setting of a beloved and foundational Bible verse, encapsulating the heart of the gospel. With its simple yet profound message this hymn beautifully declares God's boundless love and the gift of salvation through Jesus Christ—a truth that every child should know and cherish.

362 *Jesus, Strong and Kind*

This simple yet resonant hymn from CityAlight is wonderful for families to sing together. Each verse reminds us that only Jesus can quench our deepest thirsts, bolster our weaknesses, shield our fears, and find us when we are lost.

363 *The Gospel Song*

While the gospel extends beyond the limits of our comprehension, its heart is contained in this simple chorus. The transcendent God took on human form to live a perfect life and bear on the cross the punishment for our sins, so that through him we could have everlasting life. Amazing grace. *Bob Kauflin*

365 *Jesus, Tender Shepherd, Hear Me*

This is helpful as a hymn for children to sing at night, teaching them to trust in Jesus as their shepherd. Throughout Christian history the rhythm of singing to the Lord in the evening has been a healthy and meaningful way to end the day in worship and reflection.

368 *Jesus, Friend of Little Children*

Walter Mathams wrote this text while serving as a Baptist minister in Edinburgh. It reminds us of Jesus' concern for teaching children, as in Mark 10:13–16 and Luke 18:15–17; as the song says, Jesus can relate because he was a child on earth, just like us.

372 *The Lord's My Shepherd*

To be honest, I never set out to write yet another version of probably the most covered psalm in history. And it came amazingly quickly—just in a few minutes from start to finish. We usually think of Psalm 23 as a psalm of comfort, perhaps in a time of difficulty or sorrow. But I found in myself a response of faith; if it is true that there is goodness and mercy following me every day, that there are indeed still waters and green pastures to find in my life, then I want to declare, "I will trust in you." I have also found that congregations love it when they can sing in parts, and the chorus provides a simple yet effective way of making a beautiful sound together. *Stuart Townsend*

375 *Fear Not*

This song for children is a confident, empowering melody and lyric written by Ellie Holcomb and inspired by Isaiah 43:1: "Fear not, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by name, you are mine." The infectious energy of Holcomb's music shines through in this song, which has the potential to become a classic Scripture song for children for generations to come.

376 *Jesus Calms the Storm (Hymn for Anxious Little Hearts)*

This song was written to help children of every age with anxiety. Initially subtitled "Hymn for Anxious Little Hearts," it was written out of our deep concern for the scourge of anxiety among children today, especially young girls, compared to previous generations. Simple to learn, the song encourages anxious little hearts, young and old, to trust the Savior in times of fear and uncertainty.

377 *Listen to the Word of the Lord*

This hymn of illumination for children helps us to mark out the process of what it means to meditate on God's word—to hear, to believe, to trust, to obey, to walk in it every day. The lyrics carry words of fatherly instruction that all of us might turn toward our heav-

enly Father, who speaks to us! His greatest and most beautiful Word to us is his Son, the Lord Jesus, our Savior and the one to whom all the Scriptures point.

379 This Little Light of Mine

Through this song we hear Jesus speak: “You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden. Nor do people light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a stand, and it gives light to all in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father, who is in heaven” (Matt. 5:14–16).

380 Tell Me the Story of Jesus

This children’s hymn invites an older generation to tell the glorious deeds of the Lord (Ps. 78:4). The hymn teaches children the fundamental truths of our faith, found in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus. It reminds them that everyone who trusts in him will be a child of God. *Jordan Kauflin*

381 I’m Ready to Go

This upbeat song for kids, inspired by the Great Commission, is a lively sending-out anthem filled with energy—and motions too! While it is joyful and fun, the song also aims to build confidence and enthusiasm in children, encouraging them to embrace their role as witnesses for Christ in their everyday lives.

384 Doxology

See hymn 334.

392 Amazing Grace

Before John Newton, a former slave trader, was appointed to the pastorate of Olney, he confided, “I am unworthy of the high honor of speaking in his name, but, if ever he permits me, grace, free grace, must be the substance of my discourse—to tell the world from my own experience that there is mercy for blasphemers, for the most hardened, the most complicated wretches.”

393 Amazing Grace (My Chains Are Gone)

Chris Tomlin was invited to write this refrain for the film *Amazing Grace* (2007), which is mostly about abolitionist William Wilberforce but also includes a depiction of John Newton. He was initially reluctant to amend the beloved hymn (“No, you do not mess

with that,” he thought), but the idea of being released from bondage brought these words to mind.

396 And Can It Be?

In this hymn Charles Wesley is simply asking, “Why me? How did I get so blessed, that I would seek after the saving work of Christ?” Our world, our children, and even our own hearts tend to ask a different kind of “Why me?”: “Why do I have it so hard?” Wesley’s opening line is the complete opposite. He is essentially asking, “Why should I get anything this good?” This question, unanswerable as it may be, was a true mark of grace upon Wesley’s life. *April Brover*

397 All I Have Is Christ

This hymn tells the story of every Christian. We, who once were lost, have been looked upon by the grace of Jesus. The hymn encourages believers to celebrate the momentous reality that Jesus is our life, and it invites us joyfully to surrender our boasts, desires, and very lives to him. *Jordan Kauflin*

400 O Great God

This is based on a prayer from *The Valley of Vision* called “Regeneration,” a passionate plea for God to take complete control of the life he has redeemed. The prayer highlights the already-not-yet tension between knowing how God has loved, espoused, received, purchased, and washed us while being very much aware that “rebel lusts” within us still resist his “holy war.”

401 My Faith Looks Up to Thee

Ray Palmer’s famous hymn came to fruition when he crossed paths with Boston composer Lowell Mason and offered him this text. Mason declared it to be an instant classic, wrote a tune for it, and published it. It is a humble prayer for God to uplift a fragile heart and fill it with zeal until the day when, Lord willing, death gives way to eternal glory.

402 Only Trust Him

As it was originally written, the refrain said, “Come to Jesus, come to Jesus,” and so on, but gospel composer-evangelist Ira Sankey liked “Only trust him” better and made it famous that way through his renowned campaigns with Dwight L. Moody and his popular songbooks. Through this hymn countless souls have been beckoned to respond to the call of Christ.

403 My Faith Has Found a Resting Place

Although creeds, catechisms, confessions, commentaries, and other documents are valuable for distilling fundamental aspects of our faith, the true bedrock is the written word, and by extension the Word-made-flesh and his gift of salvation. This seems to have been Paul's concern when he cautioned his readers against being "led astray from a sincere and pure devotion to Christ" (2 Cor. 11:3).

404 'Tis So Sweet to Trust in Jesus

This is a simple, beautiful hymn sung to an almost perfect country-folk tune. Its simplicity should not fool us into thinking it is either simplistic or comes from a place of minimizing life's complications—quite the opposite. It was written by Louisa Stead, who suffered ill health, career disappointment, the tragic loss of a husband who died trying to save someone else, and deep struggles in ministry. We in turn are left with this beautiful hymn, which can help all of us in life's darkest and most complex times.

405 Rock of Ages

If you fall, be humbled, but do not despair. Pray afresh to God, who is able to raise you up and to set you on your feet again. Look to the blood of the covenant, and say to the Lord, from the depth of your heart, "Foul, I to the fountain fly; wash me, Savior, or I die!" Make those words of the apostle your motto: "Perplexed, but not in despair; cast down, but not destroyed" (2 Cor. 4:8). *Augustus Toplady*

406 Softly and Tenderly

This hymn uses the idea of coming home to help us understand God's love for us. Our sin keeps us far away from the Lord. Our sin makes us weary because it does not fit us, and it is a huge burden to carry. But, because of the Lord Jesus' sacrifice for our sins, we do not need to stay away. He is waiting with open arms to greet us! The music and words combine in an almost onomatopoeic way, giving the hymn and enduring popularity inside the church and in popular culture.

409 Just as I Am

This hymn, most powerfully used as an altar call hymn or as a response to an evangelistic challenge, was the hymn a young Billy Graham sang as he became a Christian after a talk by Mordecai Ham, and in turn

he used it for decades around the world. Written by Charlotte Elliott, who herself was struggling to feel worthy or accepted, it has given voice to so many in the most important decision of their lives. As we read this, we ought to consider for ourselves the wonder of God's love for all of us and his invitation to each of us.

Just as I am, thou wilt receive,
Wilt welcome, pardon, cleanse, relieve;
Because thy promise I believe,
O Lamb of God, I come! I come!

410 I Surrender All

Evangelist Billy Graham was mentored in part by the lyricist of this hymn, Judson W. Van DeVenter. Several years later, in reflecting on this hymn, Graham wrote, "We should never fear to give God complete control over our lives. He loves us more than we love ourselves, and he will only plan what is best for us." The new verses by Matt Papa add depth to the original lyric—highlighting Christ's sacrifice, our response of worship, and the surrender of our very lives for his kingdom. This fresh expression invites worshipers to sing its timeless refrain with renewed vibrancy.

411 I'd Rather Have Jesus

George Beverly Shea, longtime associate of Billy Graham, recalled, "As I sat one evening playing the piano, my mother brought to me a piece of paper on which was written a poem by Rhea Miller. . . . She then asked me to try my hand at writing a melody for it." The result is a powerful song of commitment, a statement of where we choose to place our highest trust.

415 I Have Decided to Follow Jesus

When Jesus asked people to follow him, they did not always say yes—as with the wealthy man, for instance, who "went away sorrowful, for he had great possessions" (Mark 10:22), or those in Jerusalem who "were not willing" (Matt. 23:37). The hymn seems to draw from Jesus' cautionary words in Luke 9:62, "No one who puts his hand to the plow and looks back is fit for the kingdom of God." May we all answer positively and without hesitation.

419 There Is a Fountain

William Cowper (pronounced "Cooper") was a much-beloved and yet tormented literary figure who

was hugely respected as a secular poet. His combination of poetic use of language and imagery along with deeply felt emotions is evident in all his greatest hymns, which allows them often to speak to us in profound ways. This hymn has rich, bold imagery; as Elizabeth Cosnett has pointed out, Cowper's point here "was not of gruesome amounts of blood but of boundless mercy."

422 The Blood Will Never Lose Its Power

Taking his inspiration from an older gospel song, Andraé Crouch was a teenager visiting the home of gospel legend James Cleveland when he hashed out this adaptation on the piano with his friend Billy Preston. "In my mind's eye, I could see Jesus carrying his cross up to Calvary, and I saw his blood. I saw people following him up the hill where he was to be crucified," he once recalled. Over time the song has become a gospel classic.

424 Oh, Happy Day

Gospel legend Edwin Hawkins once told an interviewer, "My mother had an old hymnal and I had a knack for rearranging hymns." He wrote this adaptation of an old camp-meeting refrain for the Northern California State Youth Choir when he was only twenty-five, and it became an instant smash hit. As you sing this, you might wonder, How did Jesus teach us to fight? He taught us the identity of our true enemy: "We do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places" (Eph. 6:12).

425 There Is Power in the Blood

Leviticus 17:11 tells us, "The life of the flesh is in the blood, and I have given it for you on the altar to make atonement for your souls." Jesus would become the final, permanent atonement for us (1 Pet. 1:18–19; Heb. 10:10), and because of that sacrifice we have victory over death and evil (Heb. 2:14; Rev. 12:11).

429 Redeemed, How I Love to Proclaim It!

The words of this hymn resound with a gratitude so overwhelming that the writer says, "I sing, for I cannot be silent." The natural response to the work of God among his people is praise, as when the Pharisees sought to hush Jesus' followers, but Jesus replied, "I tell you, if these were silent, the very stones would cry out" (Luke 19:40).

434 Be Thou My Vision

This hymn is translated from the Irish text "Rop tú mo Baile," from the tenth or eleventh century, and is an expression of devotion to the Lord in the tradition of the old *lorica* prayers for protection. We often use this as we pray for our children, for the safeguarding of God's wisdom throughout the journey of their lives.

435 Jesus, Keep Me Near the Cross

It seems impossible to compile a hymnal for largely American churches without recognizing the immense contribution of Fanny J. Crosby. The cross is the central theme woven throughout her vast body of work, rooted in her own conversion at an evangelistic meeting while hearing "At the Cross" by Isaac Watts. Her life's story is marked by both the extraordinary breadth of her hymns and the deep intensity of her faith. She once said, "If I had a choice, I would still choose to remain blind, for when I die, the very first face I ever see will be the face of my blessed Jesus." One of my childhood favorites, this hymn is rarely sung today, so we sought to adapt the lyrics—both to modernize the language and to incorporate this profound quote of hers in a new fourth verse.

436 A Christian's Daily Prayer

This hymn is a helpful, hopeful prayer for each and every day. It moves us through morning, midday, and evening, ending with the promise, "Though our strength fades like the light, new mercies will appear." It can be used in personal devotion, family worship, and corporate gatherings. *Jordan Kauflin*

437 May the Mind of Christ, My Savior

One imagines the hymn writer, Kate Barclay Williamson, when working with the young girls she cared for in London, as praying this for each of them, perhaps each with different struggles; or perhaps she was just praying through her own day. Either way, this is a beautiful prayer reminding us that all things occur "only through his power."

438 A Charge to Keep I Have

Charles Wesley sometimes read through his Bible and would generate brief hymns verse by verse. Some of these were collected in *Short Hymns on Select Passages of the Holy Scriptures* (1762). As a hymn of commitment, this one is rooted in Leviticus 8:35, "At the entrance of the

tent of meeting you shall remain day and night for seven days, performing what the Lord has charged.”

439 Lord, I Need You

This was written collaboratively for the Passion conference in 2011, using the old hymn “I Need Thee” as a starting point. One of the writers, Kristian Stanfill, explained, “There’s so much power in this confession, ‘Lord, I need you,’ this idea of humbling ourselves before God; it’s a way of saying ‘I can’t; I need you.’”

440 My Labor Is Not in Vain

Sometimes believers will serve God with great zeal and excitement, but occasionally we may be tempted to question the purpose of our work for the Lord. This hymn by CityAlight helps us learn that the value of Christian service is not assessed by our own personal satisfaction or happiness. Instead the value is derived from the privilege of doing what God asks, and so fulfilling his great eternal purposes. This gives us great clarity in following Paul’s instructions in 1 Corinthians 15:58: “Be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that in the Lord your labor is not in vain.”

441 Forth in Thy Name, O Lord, I Go

This powerful hymn invites us to dedicate our daily work to God, infusing even the most common activity with divine purpose. As we sing or reflect on this hymn, it becomes a prayer, asking for God’s guidance in all we think, speak, and do throughout the day. The line “thee, only thee, resolved to know, in all I think or speak or do” helps us align our goals, prayers, and even fears with his will. Wesley beautifully elevates the concept of work, reminding us that every task, no matter how small, is an opportunity to serve God with a willing heart, offering our daily lives as a blessing to him.

442 I Want Jesus to Walk with Me

Although this African American spiritual had been recorded by Homer Quincy Smith in 1926 and the Jubilee Gospel Team in 1928, it came to prominence in the 1930s largely through the singing of famed mezzo-soprano Marian Anderson. The song belongs to a category often called “journey songs,” an expression of perseverance and hope amid trials. When sung corporately, it serves as a poignant reminder that, even if we are not personally experiencing hardship, we are

part of the body of Christ—which always includes people who are hurting.

443 Fight the Good Fight

Monsell’s hymn is based on 1 Timothy 6:12. Together we can also pray this prayer: “O God, grant that, being strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might, we may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil, casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ.”

444 Before You I Kneel (A Worker’s Prayer)

This is a hymn for the working day, a prayer for each task we are given. The spark for the song came from our good friend Jeff Barneson, who introduced us to a special service called “The Holy Ordination to Daily Work,” which Intervarsity conducts annually at Harvard University. As Keith and one of our Nashville friends, Jeff Taylor, put the melody together, they reflected on J. S. Bach, who finished his working day of writing for the church by inscribing SDG (*Soli Deo Gloria*) at the bottom of the manuscript page. It became the hook on which we built this hymn.

446 He Who Would Valiant Be

This hymn is a recasting of a poem by John Bunyan in *The Second Part of the Pilgrim’s Progress*. Here the character Valiant is questioned as to why he was not discouraged by hearing of the failures of people who had come before him; he replied, “I still believed what Mr. Tell-true had said, and that carried me beyond them all . . . and by believing am come to this place.”

447 I Asked the Lord

Considered a traditional American melody, (“The Water Is Wide”) the tune “Waly, Waly” is actually rooted in Celtic heritage and found its way to Appalachia through Irish and Scottish immigrants. On it rests the extraordinary poem by John Newton, which offers the comfort of James 1:2–4 to every believer, beautifully illustrating how the Lord uses affliction to bring about Christian maturity.

448 Dear Lord and Father of Mankind

John Greenleaf Whittier describes what is for him the authentic spirit of Christ’s religion: the Quaker

ideal of simplicity, stillness, silence. Real worship, he insists, is something inward, not outward, concerned with the heart and life. We gratefully accept what the poet has to teach us about the place of silence in worship and the need to cultivate a calm and restful spirit in our daily lives. Frank Colquhoun

449 Have Thine Own Way

The Bible sometimes speaks of God as a potter and of us as his vessels. In Jeremiah 18:1–11 God declares his right to mold or even break his people; in Isaiah 29:16 we see the frivolity of the vessel's turning against the potter (cf. Rom. 9:20–23); in 2 Corinthians 4:7 we are carriers of the gospel light in fragile jars of clay “to show that the surpassing power belongs to God and not to us.” Through this hymn we yield to the will of the potter.

450 Jesus, All for Jesus

Jennifer Atkinson brought an early draft of these words to Robin Mark during a time when a member of their church, Christian Fellowship Church in Belfast, was gravely ill with cancer. Mark worked the lyrics into a song and presented it shortly before the man passed away. The song offers a message of dedication and surrender to God's perfect will.

451 More Love to Thee

Writing after the heartbreak of losing two children, Elizabeth Prentiss here expresses a passionate desire to be more devoted to Christ. She embraced her situation, saying, “Let sorrow do its work.” Rather than attempting to find earthly peace, we hear the affectionate call of Christ: “Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest” (Matt. 11:28).

452 In the Cross Alone I Glory

Inspired by Galatians 6:14, the same passage that gave us “When I Survey the Wondrous Cross,” and penned by the brilliant Sir John Bowring; the powerful image of the cross towering over a troubled world is both striking and deeply comforting. It helps us remember that, in the midst of life's struggles, the cross remains our source of hope, joy, and ultimate victory.

453 In the Cross of Christ I Glory

The roots of this hymn are found in Galatians 6:14, where Paul remarks, “Far be it from me to boast except

in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world.” Frank Colquhoun remarked on how these words “speak of the consolation we derive from the cross amid life's trials and disappointments, and of the added luster it imparts to our days of peace and bliss.”

454 What Grace Is Mine

For Easter Sunday 2008 our pastor and friend Alistair Begg asked us to write a new song. It was the first time in over one hundred years that St. Patrick's day coincided with Holy Week. Kristyn took the “Danny Boy” melody (the most famous and greatest tune ever to be born in Ireland!) and wrote this as a response to the Resurrection and Christ's call on our lives.

456 Trust and Obey

This selection epitomizes the best of gospel songs, which distill a simple yet core challenge of the Christian faith and help it to live with us for the rest of our days. This hymn is concerned with the rewards of trusting God's word and obeying God's will, ultimately found in “fellowship sweet” when “we will sit at his feet,” in a way that has been a challenge and a balm to countless believers (and even those yet to believe), as we hope it is for you.

457 Fill Thou My Life

In this hymn Scottish pastor Horatius Bonar helps us to pray for so much more than lips that are filled with joyful abundance; we ask for our lives to be rooted in and reflective of godly worship in the way we speak to each other gracefully, surrender our worries, and find the sacredness in every hour, day and night.

458 All for Jesus

An obituary for Mary D. James seems to encapsulate the sentiment of her most famous hymn: “Her life during the greater part of her more than seventy years was ‘hid with Christ in God.’ Spirituality was her normal state; her soul was ever wrapped in divine contemplations.” The music for the hymn is from the conclusion of John Stainer's oratorio *The Crucifixion* (1887).

462 Jesus, I My Cross Have Taken

Whatever God's representative on earth may demand from us, such demands are few and feeble compared with those of God himself, and the utmost that duty

and devotedness can bestow may well be offered at the feet of him, to whom we owe all, and on whom we depend for all. *Henry Francis Lyte*

465 A Mighty Fortress Is Our God

Although this hymn is commonly known as the “Battle Hymn of the Reformation,” Martin Luther called it “Ein Trost Psalm,” meaning “a psalm of comfort.” He once wrote, “We sing this psalm to praise God for being with us. He miraculously preserves his Word and Christendom against the gates of hell.” The hymn had an extraordinary impact on sixteenth-century Germany as it spread the gospel throughout Europe, and it vindicates Luther’s trailblazing convictions in both the power of great music and the singing of the Bible in the common tongue.

466 The Church’s One Foundation

Samuel Stone wrote this hymn in response to a theological controversy in his time, and also to offer his parishioners a “simple and attractive explanation” of the Apostles’ Creed through a series of hymns, this one being based on the article “I believe in . . . the holy catholic church, the communion of saints” and especially picturing the church as the bride of Christ, for whom he had offered his own blood (Eph. 5:25–26).

470 O Church, Arise

The challenge with this number was to write a modern hymn about the church that celebrated the joy and wonder of being part of his body, “the fullness of him who fills all in all” (Eph. 1:23). We used many ideas such as the “communion of the saints,” the amazing truth that, when we gather to sing, we are joining with people of every generation to sing his praise. We also addressed the realization of spiritual warfare, as we live in a world that wars against the great truths of the faith. The overall impact of the song, however, is a call to action not merely as individuals but as his bride, the church. Chris Tomlin helped us write a new refrain for *Facing a Task Unfinished* (2016).

471 There Is One Gospel

This hymn by CityAlight is a glorious celebration of the good news of Jesus. The lyrics begin with personal enthusiasm for the gospel, “my highest joy and my deepest need.” Then the hymn takes us to the cross, “where justice and mercy meet,” changing our lives.

And, having articulated our journey from death to life, we sing with glorious confidence that the empty tomb of Jesus “still speaks”—a powerful reminder that the resurrection is not just a narrative for Easter Day, because “I, too, will rise.” Finally we consider how gospel truth unites the church as the Holy Spirit leads us home to eternal glory, where we will continue to sing with gratitude for all that Christ has done!

473 Beneath the Cross of Jesus

Our church studied the book of James and we were looking for a hymn on the context of the body of Christ and how we relate to each other. Kristyn and I wrote this hymn based on the title of Elizabeth Clephane’s classic hymn “Beneath the Cross of Jesus.” While it is true that through the cross we have been given unbelievable promises for the future, its implications for how we live our lives here and now are equally radical. One such implication is how we live together as a community. We are not saved for ourselves; disassociating ourselves from the rest of the body (regardless of how difficult others can be) is simply not an option.

474 Brethren, We Have Met to Worship

On the surface a hymn about manna falling around us might seem odd, but this is consistent with what Jesus declared in John 6:32–33: “Truly, truly, I say to you, it was not Moses who gave you the bread from heaven, but my Father gives you the true bread from heaven. For the bread of God is he who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world.” Therefore we ask for God to send life through the living Word and the Holy Breath, the Spirit.

475 God of Grace and God of Glory

This hymn, a very urgent personal prayer, was written for the construction of Riverside Church in New York City. Hymn scholar Frank Colquhoun wrote, “The sentiments it expresses are still a call to active Christian discipleship, and its repeated prayer for wisdom and courage is as needful now as ever.”

476 Thy Hand, O God, Has Guided

This hymn is something in the nature of a historical survey. It acknowledges God’s guiding hand in the story of the church’s life and witness “from age to age,” but at the same time it makes clear that the story has not been altogether a rosy one. There have

been dark days, “when shadows thick were falling”; there have been troubled times, with “many a scene of strife.” But God has never failed his church or left himself without witness. Frank Colquhoun

477 Christ Is All in All

As our world divides around us, “Christ Is All in All” reminds us that our identity is rooted in that which the Lord has done for us—chosen us, loved us, and adopted us as his children made one by the blood of Jesus! Written in more of a gospel style with our friend Dwan Hill, this hymn was a theme song for the 2022 Sing! conference.

478 For All the Saints

Part of being in the church of Christ is being part of a long lineage of believers who have been faithful to carry on the mission of the church. Those who have gone before us are described as a “great cloud of witnesses” (Heb. 12:1). Imagine the resounding praise of the countless saints who cry together, “Alleluia!”

479 Christ Is Made the Sure Foundation

One of the greatest images in the Bible is the idea of Christ as the cornerstone of his church (Ps. 118:22; Eph. 2:19–22), with us as the living stones (1 Pet. 2:5), or living temples (1 Cor. 6:19). Through this hymn we pray for God to hear and bless our prayers but, even greater, also to join with him permanently in the heavenly city.

480 I Love Thy Kingdom, Lord

Timothy Dwight was president of Yale when he created this psalm-based hymn, drawing mainly from Psalm 137, but from other psalms as well (Pss. 17:8; 26:8; 48:2; 100:5; 141:2). Through these words we voice our commitment to the church of believers, which was bought with the blood of Christ, and to joyous acts of gathered worship.

484 Go Forth and Tell! O Church of God

This hymn reflects the tremendous missionary zeal and enthusiasm of its author, Jim Seddon, who spent twenty-two years of his ministry working for BCMS (now known as Crosslinks) both overseas and at home. The main thrust of the hymn is reflective of Christ’s final command to his disciples to go into all the world and make disciples of all nations (Matt. 28:19–20). Edward Darling & Donald Davison

485 Facing a Task Unfinished (We Go to All the World) Frank Houghton, an Anglican bishop and missionary to China, wrote this hymn in 1931. Originally it was part of a campaign to bring two hundred more missionaries to China during a horrific period in Chinese history. In light of the extraordinary work of the gospel, the hymn becomes even more compelling and is a theme song both for Overseas Missionary Fellowship and for movements of Chinese missionaries back to the rest of the world.

487 Lift High the Name of Jesus

This was written especially for the 2013 Gospel Coalition conference and its missions theme. It celebrates the multidimensional calling of living the Great Commission daily. As the apostle Peter declares, “There is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved” (Acts 4:12).

490 For the Cause

This is a hymn on the call to missions and the cause of God’s kingdom around the world. The song is dedicated to Danny Akin and our friends at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary (SEBTS), who have sent and continue to send out countless missionaries to every corner of the world. The song has become SEBTS’s seminary hymn.

491 Rise Up, O Men of God

William Pierson Merrill wrote the hymn on a steamer in Lake Michigan on his return to Chicago, where he was serving as pastor of Sixth Presbyterian Church. He had been meditating and reflecting on an article by Gerald Stanley Lee titled “The Church of the Strong Men,” and this immediately prompted him to write the text of the hymn for the Brotherhood Movement, the words coming to him “almost without conscious thought or effort.” Edward Darling & Donald Davison

493 Compassion Hymn

This song is a call to action as we determine to live lives that mirror the compassion of Christ. It was written for our friends at Compassion International. The words we sing should energize our feet to action as we go from our streets to all nations, bringing the transforming light of the gospel into the dark places of the world.

494 Lift High the Cross

The words of this hymn were originally written in 1886 for a Society of the Propagation of the Gospel Festival in Winchester Cathedral; they were extensively rewritten and paired with this stirring tune thirty years later for *Hymns Ancient & Modern*. This is a call to action in service of international missions, and it points to the cross as the ultimate means by which this is accomplished.

495 Tell Out, My Soul, the Greatness of the Lord

The Song of Mary is a beloved part of the Nativity story. It is recast here by Anglican bishop Timothy Dudley-Smith, who took his cue from the New English Bible translation. Set to a dramatic tune, Mary's humble song takes the form of what Bert Polman has called "a bold hymn of thanksgiving, a jubilant psalm that praises God for divine blessings, mercy, might, and faithfulness."

496 Let the Nations Be Glad

Psalm 67 is one of Scripture's great missional calls, inviting all the peoples of the earth to join in the song of God's praise and to find everlasting joy in him. The idea for this hymn was born in a seminary classroom and has since become a heartfelt anthem for global missions, inspiring worship in diverse settings around the world. *Matt Boswell*

497 King of the Ages

This hymn is based on the "song of Moses and of the Lamb" passage in Revelation 15. In a time when experience-oriented songs are ubiquitous in the church, we wanted to be sure there are still pieces that focus on the objective truths of Christ and His great salvation. What better place to start than with the words of the redeemed, which will echo through eternity!

499 Hear the Call of the Kingdom

We wanted to write a song suitable for sending people out at the end of a service, one that would be a call to go out confidently and positively as salt and light to the world. Verse one considers how we respond first and foremost to the cross, coming into the Kingdom of Christ and seeking to praise him. Verse two was inspired by the Sermon on the Mount, where Christ teaches what it means to be children of the kingdom—loving righteousness and justice, walking in humility, with mercy, and letting his light shine through us. Verse three reminds us of our call to declare the gospel

and the kingdom to the lost. The chorus is our response to follow, and ultimately in all we do—helping the sick, feeding the hungry, working for justice, explaining the faith—our aim is to proclaim salvation in Jesus' name.

506 That Man Is Blest

This paraphrase comes to us through *The New Metrical Version of the Psalms* (1909), which formed the textual basis of what would become *The Psalter* (1912). Psalm 1 looks at the distinctions between the righteous and the wicked; the righteous meditate on the word of God, and because of it they flourish.

508 Psalm 1

For the *Trinity Psalter Hymnal* (2018), published jointly by the Orthodox Presbyterian Church and the United Reformed Churches in North America, the committee crafted a new paraphrase of Psalm 1, designed to fit the tune for "In Christ Alone."

510 Lifter of My Head

The first three verses of this musical adaptation of Psalm 3 express both the emotional anguish and the triumphant faith of King David as he fled his son Absalom, an event recounted in 2 Samuel 15. The final verse is intended to draw two parallels, first between the experiences of David and of Christ, and second between the experience of Christ and the potential experience of believers. *Dan Totten*

512 O Lord, Our Lord

This new treatment of Psalm 8 is a more classical setting that works well as an opening hymn to a service and particularly well with orchestra and choir. It finishes majestically with an "Alleluia" doxology.

514 The Hope of the Poor

Psalm 9 is a song of hope. It looks to the future and sings praise to God for a deliverance that, while tasted partially in the present, is ultimately yet to come. With an eye on the unchanging character of God, the psalmist invites us to trust that God will finally set the world right, bringing justice and salvation to those who are currently oppressed. *Wendell Kimbrough*

516 How Long, O Lord

Lament is a consistent theme in the Psalms. "How Long, O Lord" gives voice to the yearning in our hearts

for the Lord to come and make all things right. This hymn invites us to be steadfast in our hope, even as we cry out, “How long?” *Jordan Kauflin*

520 Protect Me, O My God

This poetic rendering of Psalm 16 captures beautifully the psalmist’s deep trust in the Lord’s presence, protection, and promise. It expresses unwavering confidence that God will not abandon his people to death but will lead them in the path of life. The closing lines resound with hope—pointing to the fullness of joy found in God’s presence.

521 All You That Fear Jehovah’s Name

This paraphrase comes from verses 23–26 and 30–31 of Psalm 22, which Episcopal minister Christopher Webber calls the “spiritual center” of the Psalms: “No other text so effectively ties together the Old and New Testaments, and no other text so bluntly reminds us of who we are and who God is.”

522 Good Shepherd of My Soul

This is a fresh interpretation of Psalm 23 using new language and phrasing. It is quite a challenge to find new ways to sing the most-used Bible passage in this hymnal. The music was inspired by my love of shape-note harmony singing in the early American church.

525 My Shepherd Will Supply My Need

It is amazing how Isaac Watts could take one of the most beloved texts in the Bible and somehow make it sweeter and more personal. Not only will we “dwell in the house of the Lord forever,” as David says, but we will be more than guests or strangers—we will be like children at home (John 1:12).

528 Surely Goodness, Surely Mercy

Shane & Shane have brought about a completely fresh and beautiful setting of Psalm 23. This has the feel of a classic gospel ballad and captures the essence of the psalm’s imagery with the soaring chorus, “Surely goodness, surely mercy.”

529 The King of Love My Shepherd Is

Albert E. Bailey called Henry W. Baker’s paraphrase a “work of genius” by its “fusing into the psalm Christ’s parable of the Good Shepherd (John 10:1–5, 11, 14–18) and John’s teaching that Christ is the incarnation of

God’s love (John 15:9–14; 1 John 4:8–11).” As such, Baker helps us to interpret Psalm 23 through the lenses of a multitude of related Scriptures.

530 The Lord’s My Shepherd

The twenty-third psalm is perhaps the best known of all the Psalms for how it reminds us of God’s shepherding care as he leads us to rest in him through every season of the soul, and ultimately to dwell in the house of the Lord forever. The CRIMOND setting of the Scottish text is perhaps the best-loved version.

532 Ye Gates, Lift Up Your Heads

This is my favorite metrical psalm of praise (it also includes an amazing call-and-response section). The poetic interpretation of the second half of Psalm 24 comes from the Scottish 1650 psalter, and this grand tune was written in 1820 for the traditional communion procession in St. George’s Church, Edinburgh. Together they give us a picture of the kingship of our mighty God, the King of glory, and the emphatic worship due his name.

533 Psalm 27 (The Lord Is My Light)

This hymn invites us to consider the Lord’s protection, the beauty and goodness of his presence, and our response of faith. It calls the singer to wait on the Lord in confidence, believing and trusting in his faithfulness to his people. It can be used as a hymn of assurance, consecration, and gratitude. *Jordan Kauflin*

535 Psalm 34 (Taste and See)

Shane & Shane are two of the most prolific writers of psalm settings today. If you wish to learn Psalms in a more contemporary musical language, there really is no one better! “Taste and See” is a song of testimony and invitation, based on Psalm 34, that has many uses in a church service.

536 The Lord Is Good

This new setting is a fresh way to sing and internalize Psalm 34. Almost a call-and-response, it is inspired by gospel music. Beginning with “Oh, taste and see the Lord is good,” it runs through themes of struggle, family, and renewal of our days.

538 As the Deer

Martin Nystrom was a schoolteacher in Seattle, attending a Christian conference in Dallas, fasting

and looking for spiritual renewal, when he sat at a piano where a Bible had been left open to Psalm 42. He started to sing the words he saw on the page, and this song flowed from there. After returning to Seattle, he recorded it for a cassette ministry, and the song spread like wildfire.

540 Lord, from Sorrows Deep I Call

This song began as a melody that was filled with sorrow, hope, and longing. After Matt and I completed a couple of different versions of the lyric, we finally landed on the title “Lord, from Sorrows Deep I Call,” which seemed to capture both the ache of the tune and also the reality of the human condition. As we look to Psalm 42, and the Psalms at large, we see things that are sadly so rare in our corporate worship gatherings: confessions of despair, fear, and anger. As Christians we know that God, who sees us, is great enough to handle our hearts, and he offers us hope if we trust him, which is the direction of the song: “O my soul—put your hope in God.” *Matt Papa*

542 God Is Our Strength and Refuge

Psalm 46 vividly contrasts the chaotic instability of the world’s governments with God’s eternal stability and invincible power. Even though the future may involve overwhelming calamities, those who take refuge in the Lord can face it with fearlessness, certain that he will eventually end every war and destroy every weapon. While the epic statement “Be still, and know that I am God,” is often spoken to anxious believers, here God speaks it to the chaotic world, advising rebels to repent and acknowledge his sovereignty. When Jesus calmed the raging sea with the words “Peace! Be still!” he proved himself to be the Sovereign Lord over creation who is “very present” with his storm-tossed disciples and who will end this world’s chaos when he returns (see Mark 4:37–41; Rev. 19). May Christians continually sing Psalm 46: “The Lord of hosts is with us!” *Joe Tyrpak*

545 The Mighty God, the Lord, Has Spoken

The Lord is represented as summoning the whole earth to hear his declaration, 1–6; he then declares the nature of the worship he accepts, 7–15; accuses the ungodly of breaches of the precepts of the second table [commandments 4–10], 16–21; and closes the

court with a word of threatening, 22, and a direction of grace, 23. *Charles Spurgeon*

547 God, Be Merciful to Me

King David wrote Psalm 51 after his biggest, most egregious failure. In that moment, he knew God alone could pardon him, offer mercy, and wash him clean, and he wanted to be renewed from the inside out. In return, he would offer a heart of praise and a testimony of salvation.

549 Psalm 62

Psalm 62 expresses deep trust in God as our unshakable refuge and rich delight in God as the source of our salvation. These modern lyrics dive into that ancient prayer, including sentiments of how we will respond when friends slander us, when sin tempts us, even when greed tries to seduce us. The song ends with a daily resolution to pour out our souls to God in light of life’s fleeting nature—and God’s resurrecting power.

551 My Soul Will Wait

How often are we tempted, in the midst of difficulties and opposition, to rely on our own resources, wisdom, and strength. But in Psalm 62 King David models the kind of response that pleases God: acknowledging one’s need, expressing confidence in the Lord, and waiting for his deliverance. We can trust in him to be our refuge not just some of the time but at all times. *Bob Kauflin*

552 May the Peoples Praise You

Based on Psalm 67, this selection is a great opener for a time of worship. It begins by declaring our position in Christ and what he has won for us, and it calls us to celebrate our own personal journey of discovery in coming to faith. It then goes on to describe the ongoing journey of living for Christ, his gifts to us, and the way we are drawn more and more to his likeness throughout every stage and element of human life. The chorus is a refrain or response in which we are invited to recognize and declare God’s centrality in our lives. *Stuart Townend*

553 Hail to the Lord’s Anointed

Inspired by Psalm 72, this hymn is a celebration of the Advent promise of Christ’s return in glory and

his work on behalf of the vulnerable and the weak. It is vital because it challenges us to our need both for self-reform and to work toward recognizing the kingdom of God in this world. The writer James Montgomery was a radical example of such work in his passion for both Sunday School teaching and foreign missions, as well as opposing the slave trade, child exploitation, and state lotteries.

555 Jesus Shall Reign

Isaac Watts used the ideas of Psalm 72 to write this hymn. He lived at a time when the British Empire would have been feeling confident in its own strength, but this hymn was and still is a wonderful reminder that it is the Lord Jesus who will reign over the whole earth. Empires rise and fall, but the rule of the Lord will be forever. We recorded an additional chorus to use for the 2017 Global Hymn Sing.

556 In Your Presence

Three key thoughts are woven through this psalm. The first is the concept of pilgrimage, as the worshiper draws toward the temple with mounting excitement. Next is the joy of God's presence, expected and then encountered in that holy place. And then we see the sense of home and belonging, with a welcome for all—for Christians fulfilled less by some specific building than by being among the community of God's people, praising the Lord. *Martin Leckebusch*

557 How Lovely Is Thy Dwelling Place

For this interpretation of Psalm 84, about the dwelling place of God—which uses a traditional Irish tune called “The Homes of Donegal”—London-based musician Jonathan Asprey took his cue from the old Scotch paraphrase and created this new setting.

559 Lord, the God of My Salvation

This psalm was composed *for answering*. In this word the Spirit calls us to understand the mystery of this matter with which we are constantly dealing, namely, that we sing and pray in church by turns. For what does it mean for one to answer to the other, if not to help complete the same song or the same work and bring it to a perfect end? So also, says the apostle, I may complete the sufferings of Christ that are lacking in my flesh (Col. 1:24). This is what it means to suffer together for the purpose of reigning together, to

endure together for the purpose of reigning together (2 Tim. 2:12). *Martin Luther*

561 O God, Our Help in Ages Past

“Arise, and shine long as a fair example of holiness in a dark and wicked world, and let every year of life brighten thy character on earth and enlarge thy reward in heaven. Then shall it appear that life is thine in the sweetest sense, when every stage and period of it shall add new honors to the name of thy God” (Isaac Watts). In the United Kingdom this paraphrase of Psalm 90 has been used honorably for important commemorations, especially Remembrance Day, and in many places it is often associated with New Year services. It serves these situations well because it speaks of God's timeless, unchanging nature, which offers us stability and reliability in a rapidly changing, unstable world.

563 Call Jehovah Your Salvation

Whether we look at sin as disease or as guilt, or as both together, we find that in regard to it we must deal with God alone. The medicine, the skill, the pardon, the deliverance are in his hands. The counsel that must be given to the sick soul is, go straight to God; deal with him, and let him deal with you. *Horatius Bonar*

564 My Dwelling Place

Psalm 91 is one of the most helpful psalms for the Christian life as a psalm of protection in times of hardship. It was the favorite psalm of one of our heroes, Jim Elliot. This particular setting was put together over time with a soulful Celtic setting. Interestingly it was not adopted during its first year, but during the COVID-19 pandemic the “plague and pestilence” lyric (which a couple of friends had suggested was not relevant to a contemporary mindset) became much more relevant.

567 Sing a New Song to Jehovah

In view of the wonders of God's grace and righteousness, as revealed in the coming and in the work of the Messiah, the whole creation is invited to unite in praise to Jehovah. “Oh sing unto the LORD a new song” out of the newness of all things in consequence of the redemption of humankind through the work of the Messiah. “For he has done marvelous things”—the miracles of his grace in bringing salvation to the world.

God himself intervened in favor of his people; it was his miraculous interference through him who is called Wonderful that brought deliverance to those who sat in the shadow and darkness of death. *Paul E. Kretzmann*

569 My God, How Wonderful Thou Art

Frederick Faber attempted to write hymns in the style of both Wesley and Newton, and in this hymn he expresses the contrast between the greatness of God and the unworthiness of poor, fallen human beings. Yet Faber dared to believe that the Lord would receive us by his grace.

570 I Love the Lord

This setting of Isaac Watts's paraphrase of Psalm 116 was written by the brilliant Richard Smallwood and made globally famous by Whitney Houston and the Georgia Gospel Choir. The music and harmonies soulfully capture the deep cries of this lament, making it a powerful corporate expression. In seasons of sorrow or joy our cries do not fall on deaf ears. God bends down to hear us, attentive to every whisper of our hearts.

571 The Stone the Builders Once Refused

Psalm 118 is one of the psalms quoted most frequently by the writers of the New Testament; Jesus himself proclaimed how his kingdom was foretold by this passage. Although he was rejected by his own, it was the Lord's doing that he was established as the Savior of the nations. Now we are able to give him thanks, honor, and blessing as the Rock of our salvation. *David P. Regier*

572 Your Words Are Wonderful

The author of Psalm 119 explodes with the reality that God did not give us the words of Scripture simply to be read, understood, and discussed. Even more, they are gifts to be treasured, trusted in, and obeyed. God's word is our rest, our joy, our protection, our freedom, and our life. Where else could we go? *Bob Kauflin*

573 He Will Keep You

This benediction hymn, based on Psalm 121, lifts our eyes above our circumstances to the Creator, who never sleeps and who guides our every step. He keeps us from all evils that would separate us from his love, while "preparing for us an eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison" (2 Cor. 4:17). *Bob Kauflin*

574 I to the Hills Will Lift Mine Eyes

Those unloose their pains who, disregarding God, gaze to a distance all around them and make long and devious circuits in quest of remedies to their troubles. Such is the inconsistency natural to us, that, so soon as we are smitten with any fear, that we turn our eyes in every direction, until faith, drawing us back from all these erratic wanderings, directs us exclusively to God. *John Calvin*

575 From Depths of Woe

These are noble, passionate, and very profound words of a truly penitent heart that is most deeply moved in its distress. In fact, this cannot be understood except by those who have felt and experienced it. We are all in deep and great misery, but we do not all feel our condition. Crying is nothing but a strong and earnest longing for God's grace, which does not arise in a person unless he sees in what depth he is lying. *Martin Luther*

578 I Will Wait for You

This hymn of repentance based on Psalm 130 has been paired with the modern Scottish Psalter paraphrase, sung to the tune of MARTYRDOM. Psalm 130, known as "De Profundis," or "Out of the Depths," is one of the finest, most heart-wrenching laments in all of literature. It is used in countless liturgies and has shaped the work of many poets, preachers, and musicians.

580 Oh, How Good It Is

This is a celebration of Christian community. Day to day our faith not only is expressed individually but must be lived out in the community of all those who trust in Christ. This is, of course, both wonderful and very difficult at the same time! The hymn was written at a time when in fresh ways we were learning the benefits and challenges of community in Nashville.

583 Give to Our God Immortal Praise

I love this hymn by Isaac Watts so much. It was the original (adjusted) lyric to the melody for "In Christ Alone." Its two greatest qualities are in the way the title immediately shows the greatness and immortal "bigness" of God and its roots in Psalm 136. This is one of the many hymns of Isaac Watts that were reinterpreted in light of Christ's coming.

586 How Great Is the Greatness of God

Psalm 145:3 served as the inspiration for this setting. Instead of being a traditional metrical psalm the song takes the profound theme of God's greatness and explores it through the lens of the Trinity. Each verse highlights a distinct member of the Godhead, drawing the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit together in a unifying chorus that magnifies their majesty and glory. *Matt Boswell*

589 Psalm 150 (Praise the Lord)

This is an exciting new hymn from modern hymn writers Matt Boswell and Matt Papa. It emphasizes the power of the book of Psalms and the way it culminates amid a range of human emotions in overwhelming joy and praise!

593 Jesus, Lover of My Soul

In this hymn Charles Wesley explored the struggle of being helpless, expressed through a series of evocative images—a storm, a place of refuge, and the refuge of God's wings—that highlight both his hopes and his fears. The beauty of the hymn is in the way his struggle appeals to us in our shared experience of walking through difficult times with faith in Christ. *Patrick Eby & Christopher McFadden*

594 Yet Not I, but Through Christ in Me

Originally inspired by a sermon from Colossians 1:29, this powerful hymn by Michael Farren, Rich Thompson, and Jonny Robinson is a stunning expression of confidence in Christ to empower us in every circumstance to which he has called us. In our need, his power is displayed!

595 Great Is Thy Faithfulness

God can use the most ordinary folks to do great things. Because, while we might be ordinary, he is far from it. Everything we do can be taken by that extraordinary God and turned into something so beautifully used for his glory and honor. And, even when we fail and are faithless, our covenant-keeping, never-failing, mercy-giving, never-changing God will be faithful. *April Brover*

598 He Will Hold Me Fast

Australian pianist Robert Harkness had been recruited by American musician Charles Alexander to be part of

R. A. Torrey's traveling evangelistic team. They met British poet Ada Habershon while in London, and she supplied texts for Harkness to set to music, including this one. More than one hundred years later, a new tune was written for this old hymn, along with some minor alterations and additions to the lyrics, and first sung at Capitol Hill Baptist Church in Washington, DC, in 2013.

601 Christ Is Mine Forevermore

This hymn is a poignant prayer exploring the struggles we encounter through tears, trials, and triumphs on the journey of faith, resolving with the comforting truth in each verse: Christ is ours, now and forevermore! This is a stirring and important hymn of assurance from our Australian friends.

602 Precious Lord, Take My Hand

In 1932 Thomas Dorsey tragically lost his wife and newborn baby. He was heartbroken. He took some of his pain and turned it into a song to the Lord. Just as King David did in the Psalms, Dorsey cried out to the Lord for help through the words and melody of a hymn.

603 The Steadfast Love of the Lord

For her setting of Lamentations 3:22–23 the Episcopal songwriter Edith McNeill worked verbatim from the New Revised Standard Version, therefore offering a simple, singable way to memorize this beloved Scripture passage.

604 Heal Us

I love how William Cowper understands that we need more than just forgiveness. We are not just guilty. We also live in a broken world, and we ourselves have been harmed and have suffered in so many ways. I find that people who've grown up in church often find it easier to say "I'm sinful" than to say "I'm broken, and I'm needy, and I'm wounded." To sing this hymn, you have to own that we need healing, that we are deeply wounded. *Kevin Twit*

606 Christ, the Sure and Steady Anchor

The beginning of this song came from wanting to write a hymn of lament that still had a redemptive center to it. Matt Papa and I really worked through this one, wanting to be sure that it gave the right voice to the singer going through doubt, sin, sorrow, suffering, and death, and that it highlighted how

Christ is the sure and steady anchor through all these experiences in the Christian life. *Matt Boswell*

610 Be Still, My Soul

This beautiful hymn of comfort has been carried into many hearts by the peaceful music of Jean Sibelius. The hymn is associated commonly with Psalm 46:10 (“Be still, and know that I am God”), but it also relates well to Psalm 131:2 (“I have calmed and quieted my soul”) or Psalm 116:7 (“Return, O my soul, to your rest; for the LORD has dealt bountifully with you”).

612 Still, My Soul, Be Still

Throughout the ages when people gather, a call to stillness has been an integral part of worship. Many things in life make us restless—worry, fear, sin, earthly ambition, forgetfulness of truth, and despair. Used as a solo or with the congregation, this song echoes the psalmist’s cry that our souls might respond and remember that he is God.

614 Dear Refuge of My Weary Soul

Steele’s hymn presents a believer who has retreated to a place of peace in God, who reigns enthroned upon the mercy seat. Steele’s achingly plaintive devotional language contrasts the highly exalted position of the Lord with her own acutely felt state of lowliness. Even so, she finds a quiet peace in her resignation to wait humbly upon the sovereign will of God. *Holly Mulherin Farrow*

615 O Love That Wilt Not Let Me Go

In speaking of the way God’s love sees us through our most difficult hours, Scottish minister George Matheson wrote, “Thy path of tears was an unconscious rainbow; it led thy soul aloft on an arch of triumph. It was only from the summit of the arch that thou couldst tell how really glorious was thy path of tears. . . . And when thou countest up the gifts of Divine love, thou shalt look upon the crosses of thy life and say, ‘The love of Christ constrained me’ (2 Cor. 5:14).”

616 I Set My Hope on Jesus

We wanted to write a song about trusting in the Lord even through all the struggles, and hoping in the Lord all the way through life. Each verse looks at things that often turn us away from the Lord: (1) questions that are hard to answer, (2) sins that are hard to say sorry for or bring us shame, and (3) sufferings that feel

too hard to bear. The chorus is a reminder to continue to set our hope in Christ, who loved us first and is strong enough to hold our whole lives.

618 When Trials Come

This hymn was written in 2005 for a study on the book of James. Written in an almost pentatonic manner, it can be sung in many styles and touches on many of the themes in which our trials are most poignant (e.g., at night and in tired seasons), then turns to the victory of the cross and the hope of heaven as a galvanizing message.

619 I Need Thee Every Hour

Annie Hawks wrote this hymn in a way she later thought was prophetic, because it was conceived on “wings of love and joy,” and it was later in life when “the shadow fell over my way”—the loss of her husband and two of her children. Both can be true for a Christian: We should feel our need for God’s presence at all times and in all seasons.

620 All My Hope on God Is Founded

When life shifts and changes under our feet, God, and not anything built by human hands, can be trusted to guide us to safety. God’s qualities endure forever: his goodness, wisdom, light, life, and beauty. His gifts are better than anything we could imagine, attended with love and joy, and because of these wonders we offer praise.

623 Like a River Glorious

The author of this hymn caught a severe illness while returning home from a trip to Switzerland, which brought her close to death. But despite her terrible condition she felt an overwhelming sense of peace. “My one wish was to glorify God and to let my doctor and nurse see it; so at the very first I determined to ask for nothing and just obey. . . . Sometimes I could not quite see his face, yet there was his promise, ‘I will never leave thee.’ I knew he said it and that he was there.” Isaiah 26:3 states, “You will keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on you, because he trusts in you.” This hymn paints the picture of this peace.

626 Jesus, Draw Me Ever Nearer

So many of the greatest hymns were written through experiences of suffering. Rather than being clichéd or

self-obsessed, we wanted to write with a psalmist-like honesty that clings to the promises of Scripture: Christ is with us, refining us through our troubles and promising heaven as a real hope on which we fix our eyes. The first performance of this hymn was in 2001 in New York at Ground Zero following the September 11 terrorist attacks.

627 Christ, Our Wisdom

Life at times is filled with unexpected turns, unfulfilled expectations, unrealized dreams, and unimaginable sorrows. But at every point we can be confident that the God who ordained the death of his Son to redeem us has planned our circumstances to work for our ultimate good and his endless glory. *Bob Kauflin*

628 Leaning on the Everlasting Arms

Inspired by Deuteronomy 33:27, “The eternal God is your dwelling place, and underneath are the everlasting arms,” this hymn has brought comfort to many by taking that picture and applying it to the life of faith. Showalter wrote the chorus in response to two friends, both of whom had been through the pain of losing spouses. The song has become synonymous with the gospel tradition and has been recorded by artists from Mahalia Jackson to Alan Jackson. It allows us to ask questions about all our fears then reply (we recommend in harmony) with this chorus.

631 Kyrie Eleison (Have Mercy)

This hymn is about developing awareness of the spiritual and physical needs of those around us, near and far, particularly those who still have not heard of Christ. It was written for the closing communion of the historic Lausanne III, in Cape Town. We were very disappointed to miss the conference (Kristyn was pregnant with Eliza at the time), but that made the privilege of being able to write for the conference all the more significant. As the conference was in Cape Town, we took a melody inspired by South African gospel music we had heard on a previous visit there and built the song around it. We hope this song will also be a great opportunity for congregations to sing in harmony.

632 There Is a Balm in Gilead

This African American spiritual, invoking Jeremiah 8:21–22, comes to us from the Fisk Jubilee Singers. It contains allusions to earlier works, such as John New-

ton’s hymn “The Great Physician,” Daniel March’s hymn “Hark, the Voice of Jesus Crying,” and an anonymous camp-meeting refrain. Taken all together, the result is something greater than its parts, a treasured song of comfort.

633 God Leads Us Along

In this hymn we hear many echoes of Psalm 23, and yet it reminds us of how the pathway through life is not always beside still waters; sometimes it is through fire or flood, and for the believer it is always with the help of the blood of Christ. If you are struggling, will you pray for God to put a song of encouragement in your heart?

636 He Leadeth Me! Oh, Blessed Thought

Joseph H. Gilmore was teaching as a guest at First Baptist Church, Philadelphia, during the Civil War and was examining Psalm 23 when he came to a simple conclusion: “The fact of God’s leadership is the one significant fact in human experience—that it makes no difference how we are led, or whither we are led, so long as we are sure that God is leading us.”

640 Come to Jesus (Rest in Him)

Inspired by Matthew 11:28–30, this hymn of assurance invites the weary and burdened sinner and sufferer to rest in the security of God’s love and compassion. With a simple melody and profound truths this hymn can be sung in the privacy of personal devotions or with the encouragement of the gathered church. *Jordan Kauflin*

642 Jesus, I Am Resting, Resting

As humans we seem to be constantly in need of rest or peace, whether physical, mental, or spiritual. Paul spoke of getting to a place in life where “I have learned, in whatever situation I am, to be content” (Phil. 4:11). Jesus offers to be the root of this kind of calm assurance, which comes by trusting his loving-kindness and waiting for his providence.

645 Jesus, Priceless Treasure

Catherine Winkworth said that Johann Franck “ranks only second to Gerhardt as a hymn-writer . . . one of the principal poets of the day; . . . his leading thought is the union of the soul with its Redeemer, ‘that Christ be in you the hope of glory.’” For this hymn Franck was inspired by a secular love song, using it as a model for his love song to Jesus.

647 Day by Day

Lina Sandell drew her inspiration for this hymn from Jane Taylor's short story "The Discontented Pendulum." The message is perhaps best summarized by Sandell's paraphrase of Matthew 6:34, "We worry about tomorrow before tomorrow comes. And yet the Lord has said: 'It is enough that each day has its own pain.' Oh, how foolish to want to add to the present moment the weight of the future." Brett Nelson

648 Commit Thou All Thy Griefs

In his second letter to the Corinthians Paul spoke of the "God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our affliction, so that we may be able to comfort those who are in any affliction" (2 Cor. 1:3–4), pointing to the way in which we sometimes experience hardship so we can learn how to minister to others in the same fashion (2 Cor. 7:6–7; 1 Thess. 5:14).

649 His Eye Is on the Sparrow

The lyricist Civilla Martin conceived this song after visiting a woman in Elmira, New York, who had been bedridden for twenty years; she told Martin, "How can I be discouraged, when my Father watches the sparrows, and I know he loves and cares for me?" Martin sent the words to Charles Gabriel, who had been in a "despondent, down-hearted mood"; these words "seemed like a voice speaking directly to me as I read, and its melody rang out of silence into my heart."

652 I Will Not Forget (N-am Sa Uit)

During the late 1950s and early 1960s faithful believers in communist Romania suffered at the hands of the authorities for their religious activities. Nicolae Moldoveanu and Traian Dorz were imprisoned during this time; although they endured physical and psychological indignities and tortures, they composed hundreds of songs together, including "N-am să uit, Iusue, Doamne, niciodată," translated here as "I Will Not Forget." The hymns composed by these men in prison strengthened believers during a time of intense persecution and continue to inspire and instruct believers today.

655 Come, My Soul, with Every Care

The Bible tells us, "Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God" (Phil. 4:6). In this hymn the first request is for forgive-

ness, so that our hearts are right before God. Through these words we ask for guidance, encouragement, and strength—but, most of all, to be in his perfect will.

656 Children of the Heavenly Father

Lina Sandell was no stranger to heartache. Between 1858 and 1860 she lost her father, mother, and sister. Later in life her only child was stillborn. But she still found hope in her Lord. In 1860, she wrote in her diary, "Let me never seek any other support than yours. All other supports are unreliable, and they fail when you want to rely on them. But you are steadfast."

658 We Rest on Thee

On January 3, 1956, five missionaries sang "We Rest on Thee" before entering the Ecuadorian jungle to bring the gospel to the Waorani (or Auca) peoples. They were never to be seen again, and this hymn by humble, sickly British poet Edith Cherry, inspired by the Old Testament story of godly King Asa and sung to the tune FINLANDIA, became the best-known missionary hymn of the twentieth century.

663 My Heart Is Filled with Thankfulness

In this song we give thanks to God for spiritual blessings—past, present, and future. We remember all that Christ has achieved for us through his suffering on the cross: forgiveness, new life, eternal hope, and a pattern to follow as he walks beside us each day on a path flooded with the light of his every promise for the future. This is the hymn we sang after the birth of each of our children.

664 Now Thank We All Our God

This hymn is an amazing testimony of thankfulness during the most trying of times. It was written during the Thirty Years' War, in 1630; seven years later, a great plague struck the hymn writer's city, and he personally officiated the funerals of about 4,500 people—including his wife. Erik Routley called this hymn an "unpretentious celebration of that brightest of Christian graces: gratitude."

665 Come, Ye Thankful People, Come

Henry Alford's hymn of thanks and harvest is also a reminder of a greater harvest to come. Alford especially had the parable of the tares (Matt. 13:24–30, 36–43) in mind, which says the Son of Man will send his angels to sort the wheat from the weeds—the

righteous from the evil—and his fruitful harvest will be gathered to him to abide in his presence.

666 We Gather Together

Written in the midst of an eighty-year war against Spain for independence, this Dutch hymn shows a remarkable trust in God's providence: "He forgets not his own." Although the conflict in the hymn is spiritualized and can be sung by anyone, the people who first sang this had a very real sense of asking God to have their oppressors "cease from distressing."

670 We Plow the Fields and Scatter

Originally written as part of a German story called "Paul Erdmann's Feast," this song was adapted into a hymn by Jane Montgomery Campbell, a pastor's daughter. Through this hymn we are reminded how, even though we work in the field, God is the one who ultimately provides the nourishment for growth, and the true gift we offer back to God is not the work of the hands but the condition of the heart.

673 Let All Things Now Living

These words were written for a choral anthem by Katherine K. Davis, who also composed the arrangement of this Welsh tune known popularly as "The Ash Grove." It is a song of praise to our Creator and, much like "All Creatures of Our God and King," invites all creation to join the celebration.

674 Lord, for the Years

Timothy Dudley-Smith wrote this text in 1967 for the centenary of the Children's Special Service Mission (which we attend each year). The hymn offers a meaningful opportunity to reflect on God's constant love and guidance throughout life, particularly emphasizing the theme of looking back on the years with gratitude for his faithfulness.

676 O God Beyond All Praising

This extraordinary melody, which is part of Holst's composition "Jupiter" from *The Planets*, has inspired multiple texts, usually about the wonder of the universe God has created; of all of them, this is the finest.

679 My Tribute

Andraé Crouch spoke to the sense of this powerful song: "When we find out God has brought us out of

something, brought us through something, we need to feel like David did when he shouted, 'Praise him for his mighty acts!' Mountains and valleys, situations and problems can be answered with praise. When we praise and bless him, he loves it so much, he blesses us. It's a continuous thing."

680 When All Thy Mercies

This hymn was inspired by the near-death experience of British politician Joseph Addison after surviving a shipwreck. Addison wrote, "If gratitude is due from one to another, how much more from one to the Maker? The Supreme Being confers upon us not only those bounties that proceed more immediately from his hand, but even those benefits conveyed to us by others. Every blessing we enjoy, by what means soever it may be derived upon us, is the gift of him who is the great Author of good, and Father of mercies."

686 Give Me Jesus

A cherished song of response, this poignant African American spiritual originally made famous by the Fisk Jubilee Singers is based loosely on Matthew 16:26, among other passages. Mark 8:36 asks, "What does it profit a man to gain the whole world and forfeit his soul?"

687 It Is Well with My Soul

Written in the nineteenth century by Horatio Spafford after the loss of his daughters in a tragic sea accident, this hymn speaks to the one hope to which we can cling, giving voice to the many in our congregation who are suffering. As Tim Keller writes, "The opposite of joy is not sadness; it is hopelessness."

692 It Is Not Death to Die

Death is an enemy and a curse. It is the just and inescapable punishment for our rebellion against God. But those who have been redeemed by Christ know that death is also a doorway to eternal pleasures at God's right hand (Ps. 16:11). So we can gladly say with Paul, "To live is Christ, and to die is gain" (Phil. 1:21). Bob Kauflin

695 Almost Home

Originally inspired by the way that sailors sing together on the open sea, this hymn captures the deep longing that every heart feels for home. Woven throughout its verses is a constant thread of lifting the singer's eyes to heaven and the joy awaiting us

there. Each chorus encourages believers to press on, steadfast in the hope of the glorious prize. *Matt Boswell*

698 Shall We Gather at the River

When Robert Lowry, pastor of Hanson Place Baptist Church in Brooklyn, New York, wrote this hymn during a sweltering summer day in 1864, he probably had no idea it would be cherished by people all over the world. It envisions the river of life in Revelation 22:1 and asks the question, Shall we gather there? To which we wholeheartedly respond, “Yes!”

699 Nearer, My God, to Thee

This nineteenth-century hymn, inspired by Jacob’s dream in Genesis 28, is known as the last song the octet orchestra on RMS *Titanic* played before the ship sank and as the song sung by the crew and passengers of the SS *Valencia* as it sank off the Canadian coast in 1906. From state funerals to television, movies and artists such as Doris Day, the hymn’s fascination points to a deeper fear and need for peace at the heart of all humanity.

700 When We All Get to Heaven

The words of this hymn point us to beautiful promises. Jesus promised he was preparing a place for us and would return to take us there (John 14:2–3). It speaks of the way our trials on earth will give way to something much greater: “This light momentary affliction is preparing for us an eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison” (2 Cor. 4:17).

703 Abide with Me

This nineteenth-century hymn is a favorite of believers facing their own death or that of a loved one. Its poignancy is deepened when we realize that its author, the Scotch Anglican Henry Lyte, a skilled poet and musician, wrote the lyrics when facing his own impending death due to tuberculosis. His prayer for God to “abide with me” is answered by Christ, who is ever-present with his people by his Spirit.

706 Welcome Home

This song embraces the true assurance of the Christian: we hope confidently for our welcome home because of Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith. By looking back to his resurrection, as have the many saints who have gone before, we too can look forward to hearing the words of hope: “Well done, good servant, and wel-

come home.” For now we sing as strangers longing for a better country, imagined by C. S. Lewis as “Chapter One of the Great Story . . . which goes on forever: in which every chapter is better than the one before.”

707 The Day Thou Gavest, Lord, Is Ended

This is one of the beautiful evening hymns that come from the Evensong tradition of closing the day with worship. Keith Getty’s favorite performance of this song was at the funeral of Queen Elizabeth II, where was sung “So be it, Lord; thy throne shall never, like earth’s proud empires, pass away.”

711 Once in Royal David’s City

Cecil Frances Alexander was an Irish pastor’s wife who published this carol for children in 1848. It was part of a series of hymns on the Apostles’ Creed, based on the clause “who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the virgin Mary.” The hymn begins as many childhood stories do, with an invitation to look back “Once upon a time,” as it were, to a scene with two central figures. Together, we can sing this wondrous story.

715 O Come, O Come, Emmanuel

This is a medieval Latin hymn dating from the 800s. It was one of a series of antiphons sung each December, and it is not hard to imagine the mystical beauty of this hymn as it echoed off the walls of remote monasteries during the Middle Ages. The melody actually has French origins and is so stunning and perfectly matched to the words that it has been sung in every style of music imaginable.

716 Of the Father’s Love Begotten

A stunning Latin poem by Prudentius beginning “Corde natus ex parentis,” paired with the medieval plainchant melody *DIVINUM MYSTERIUM*, is the basis of this hymn. As you listen to or sing with this carol, see how fully it explains the mystery of the Christian gospel, drawing richly from the first three chapters of John.

717 Creator of the Starry Height

Written between the seventh and ninth centuries, this Latin hymn was traditionally sung during evenings in Advent. It reminds of the God of the stars, far beyond us, who went into the darkness and pain of this world to save a lost humanity. The sheer beauty of this

allows us to breathe and have hope during Advent, despite whatever we may face in the coming week.

718 Come, Thou Redeemer of the Earth

This hymn, written by Ambrose of Milan, dates back to the fourth century and is one of the earliest of all Christian hymns still in use today. Written at a time of doctrinal uncertainty, it helps us understand many of the theological pillars that undergird the Christian faith, and it is a beautiful invitation into the Advent and Christmas season.

719 Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence

This hymn, based on a liturgical declaration from the fifth century, speaks with ever fresh color into our moment in time. We can see the darkness pressing, pressing, pressing in all around this world. But the light does not just descend and make a little space in the shadows; he comes to clear the darkness completely away. We are small. Our flesh, our homes, our endeavors are so fragile. But the treasure that Christ has placed within his people is an inextinguishable, ever-growing light.

720 Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming

This German hymn, first published in 1599, was originally written with two verses that describe the fulfillment of the prophecy of Isaiah and reference the genealogies of Christ. It focuses on the rose sprouting from the rod of Jesse, and then in verse 2 explains the story to all of us, revealing the rose to be the Lord Jesus. This hymn has inspired art of all descriptions and remains a popular carol today.

723 Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus

This hymn appeared in Charles Wesley's book of eighteen Christmas songs in 1745, and it is one of my three favorite hymns today. The song captures how centuries of waiting, longing, and weeping find ultimate resolution in Christ: "Israel's strength and consolation / Hope of all the earth thou art / Dear desire of every nation / Joy of every longing heart."

724 Come Now, O Prince of Peace

This song was originally written for an ecumenical service of prayer for peace, reconciliation, and the reunification of North and South Korea by Korean composer Geonyong Lee, who was professor of music at Seoul

National University. It was translated by Marion Pope, a missionary to Korea from the United Church of Canada.

725 Hark the Glad Sound, the Savior Comes

This eighteenth-century carol was inspired by Isaiah 61 and the manner in which the prophesied Christ child would come. It is profitable to consider how Advent hymns condense and rehearse over seven hundred prophecies about the Messiah from the Old Testament, and how they can be sung with anticipatory joy. (Philip Doddridge was most famous for the primal lyrical setting of the hymn "O Happy Day!")

726 Savior of the Nations, Come

One of the oldest surviving Latin hymns, by a master of the craft, Ambrose of Milan, translated into German by another master, Martin Luther, and later into English, this text rhetorically beckons Jesus to make this place his home. At the time it was important for Ambrose to affirm both Jesus' divine conception and his earthly mother. It also speaks of the ultimate victory of Jesus and his rightful place as ruler of heaven.

727 Sing We the Song of Emmanuel

This increasingly popular modern carol captures something of the excitement of the birth of Jesus, finishing with the importance of going to tell the news that Christ has made a way to be reconciled with God. The Gloria refrain works equally well in a traditional or a more contemporary context.

729 He Is Making All Things Right

This song is an infectious celebration of Christ, capturing the unfolding grace of God throughout history as he works to reconcile mankind to himself. As we strive to reflect his righteousness through acts of mercy and compassion, we also wait eagerly for Christ's return, when he will finally make all things right. The hymn stirs us with anticipation, reminding us that the full restoration of creation is yet to come, while in the meantime we live in the hope of his perfect justice and peace.

734 What Child Is This

This is one of the great haunting English folk melodies, GREENSLEEVES. I love thinking about this carol as a conversation about faith, starting with the question "What child is this?" Perhaps as you encounter

the Christmas story this year, we encourage you to ask questions and perhaps follow with more questions to understand the one who claims to be the babe, the Son of Mary.

735 Magnificat (My Soul Will Magnify the Lord)

This is a more intricate setting of the Magnificat (the other, more accessible congregational version in this hymnal is “Tell Out, My Soul, the Greatness of the Lord”). The Magnificat is one of the most extraordinary songs in all of history. Recorded in Luke 1, it mirrors the Song of Hannah in 1 Samuel 2, displaying the profound faith of the virgin Mary, who would have been a young teenage girl at the time. It also highlights how deeply Mary knew the Scriptures, allowing her to respond in such a biblically rich way to the most shocking of news.

737 Silent Night! Holy Night!

First performed on Christmas Eve 1818, accompanied by a guitar (because the church organ was broken), these words by priest Joseph Mohr and melody by Franz Gruber have become one of the best-loved carols in the world. The music perfectly creates a moment that seamlessly matches the emotion of the text in a way that continues to feel fresh and moving no matter how many times we sing it.

740 From the Squalor of a Borrowed Stable (Immanuel)

Here we have a Christmas song focusing on the life, death, resurrection, and return of Christ, but especially on his humanity. In stark, humble contrast to our often sanitized portrayals, this hymn highlights Christ’s poverty, compassion, empathy, betrayal, suffering, and deep determination to win for the sake of all his people. This carol, as it opens up the themes of squalor to scandal, should make us all feel both less and more comfortable in daily anticipation of Christ’s return in the final verse.

742 In the Fullness of Time

Using a direct quote from Galatians 4:4, this hymn explores the indescribable “holy moment” in time when God became a man. The Great I Am, who dwells outside of space and time, stepped inside of his creation, in the person of Jesus, to save it. The song ends with a new setting of “Holy, Holy, Holy” that captures the transcendent nature of the incarnation.

745 Christmas Sanctus (Holy, Holy, Holy)

The melody of Holy, Holy, Holy remains one of the most elegant in church history. Inspired by its beauty, Matt Papa and Matt Boswell have crafted new lyrics for the Christmas season, celebrating Christ’s holiness revealed in the incarnation. This fresh text allows a timeless tune to echo with the wonder and joy of Christmas.

748 O Savior of Our Fallen Race

We learned of the text of this early medieval Latin carol from a friend. The musical riches of church history, from which we can draw, never cease to amaze us! Kristyn slightly altered the beautiful translation of Gilbert E. Doan Jr., with the aim of shaping the song into more of a missional prayer that emphasizes Christ’s return. The new tune is dedicated to the memory of our friend Chip Stam (1953–2011).

750 Who Is He in Yonder Stall?

This question-and-answer hymn takes us through many phases of Jesus’ ministry: his humble birth, temptation in the wilderness, healing ministry, mourning of Lazarus, triumphal entry, prayer in the garden, death on the cross, resurrection from the grave, and ascension to the throne. Who is this figure? He is the King of glory, and we worship humbly at his feet.

751 O Little Town of Bethlehem

Philadelphia pastor Phillips Brooks’s visit to Bethlehem inspired this plaintive hymn. In 1868 Brooks wrote the lyrics and passed them along to the church’s organist, Lewis Redner, who composed the melody. It was first sung by a group of six Sunday school teachers and thirty-six children.

752 O Little Town of Bethlehem

See hymn 751.

753 Angels We Have Heard on High

This hymn has one of the most joyful and well-written choruses ever composed. The lyrical journey shines a light on the reality of incarnation in a way that refreshes the soul each time we sing it.

754 Fullness of Grace

This selection was part of a song cycle we wrote inspired by John 1. Wherever you are on the journey of faith, we recommend reading through John 1—its

beauty and wonder help all of us begin to comprehend the mystery of the Christian faith, that “from his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace.”

755 Love Came Down at Christmas

Christina Rossetti’s stunning poem, like all her work, combines beautiful truth with vulnerability and acute observation. “Love shall be our token | love to God and all men” is a reminder to care for the needs of others.

756 O Children, Come

Here is another hymn we wrote for our Irish Christmas concerts. It was inspired by the American roots traditions and has been performed by bluegrass and African American vocal groups alike (there is even a rap version). It is most commonly used in church contexts as a call-and-response or children’s hymn.

759 Thou Didst Leave Thy Throne

This beautiful devotional hymn was written by Emily Elliot, niece of Charlotte Elliot (who wrote “Just as I Am”). Originally written for children to explain Christmas, the irregular tune builds throughout and then has one of the most beautiful choruses, which, like “Just as I Am,” asks each of us to commit all that we are in return to the Lord Jesus. “O come to my heart, Lord Jesus, there is room in my heart for thee.”

761 Thou Who Wast Rich

The death of John and Betty Stam electrified the Christian world. Upon hearing of the deaths of the Stams, Frank Houghton wrote this hymn, which was inspired by 2 Corinthians 8:9, “Though he was rich, yet for your sake he became poor.” This hymn challenged people to go to the mission field in China and led over four hundred people to leave the comfort of their lives to sacrifice everything for the cause of Christ and be part of the extraordinary work happening there. As you experience this hymn, think also of the humble missionaries who brought the stories of Jesus to China and of the many millions today who have vigorous dynamic faith because of it.

762 Joy Has Dawned

Stuart Townend and I wrote this hymn back in 2004. Stuart wanted to draw out parts of the Christmas story, such as the gifts of the magi, that are not particularly present in other Christmas hymns. Melodically,

we wanted to give this carol the same feel people might expect from the classic Christmas songs they grew up singing in church.

763 Angels, from the Realms of Glory

Another hymn by nineteenth-century Scottish hymn writer James Montgomery, this selection offers an interesting insight into his priorities, which are so helpful to us as we think beyond just pretty nativity pictures to the rough and radical reality of incarnation. Montgomery believed the gospel spoke loudly against the slave trade, as shown in the original fifth verse:

Sinners, wrung with true repentance,
Doomed for guilt to endless pains,
Justice now revokes the sentence,
Mercy calls you—break your chains.

As we consider at Christmas and Epiphany the reality of the people to whom Jesus appeared, let us think of what this message is for all of those around us in our lives.

764 While Shepherds Watched Their Flocks by Night

English writers Nahum Tate and Nicholas Brady created a whole set of Psalm paraphrases in 1696, with revisions in 1698; then, to go along with their psalter, they released a supplement in 1700, including this paraphrase of Luke 2:8–15. Hymnologist J. R. Watson observed that this paraphrase “carries the story with unobtrusive strength and a grand simplicity.”

765 The First Noel

This is a popular English carol and Cornish folk song that walks us through the whole story of Christmas with a rousing chorus. The most famous Cornish folk songs are often sea shanties, but this chorus is a great way for a community to sing and celebrate together the story of Christmas.

766 The Race That Long in Darkness Pined

For a long time the Scots were opposed to singing hymns in corporate worship—that is, anything not coming directly from the Bible, such as the Psalms—so this text was crafted to serve as a singable paraphrase of Isaiah 9:2–8. Truly, there is something especially edifying about putting Scripture on our lips, especially this prophecy of a great Savior who delivers us from darkness.

767 For to Us a Child Is Born

Drawing from the prophecy in Isaiah, this hymn proclaims the arrival of the long-awaited Messiah. The beautiful lyrics highlight the divine nature of Jesus as Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, and Prince of Peace.

769 Infant Holy, Infant Lowly

The earliest trace of this carol is found in a collection assembled by Polish priest Michal Mioduszewski in 1838; it comes to us in English through the work of London-based educator and editor Edith Reed. Much of its charm comes from its tight rhymes and short repetitions.

770 This Is the Truth Sent from Above

Draw near and listen to the gospel story as told through this traditional English carol: God created man and woman, but humanity lived as slaves to sin—that is, until a Redeemer came with good news and a pathway to salvation.

771 All My Heart This Night Rejoices

This carol is by the masterful German Lutheran hymn writer Paul Gerhardt and composer Johann Georg Ebeling. It is one of the most complete Christmas hymns in terms of how it tells the whole story of “The Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world.”

772 Good Christian Men, Rejoice

Finding its origin in the fourteenth-century carol “In dulci júbilo,” this hymn is a challenge to everyone to respond to the Christmas story, and to do it through celebration. Often loved as a choral work, it is filled with the joy and discovery of the Christmas story.

773 It Came upon the Midnight Clear

A man who goes between two hostile armies and negotiates a peace represents very dimly and remotely the Divine Mediation in Jesus Christ. On the Divine side, this does not represent the fact at all. For God has no hostility towards his creatures; the enmity is all on one side, and the fearful chasm and antagonism between the Divine nature and human nature do not require any treaty-making or going between, that God may understand us, and be made placable towards us. . . . He is peace-maker in that he opens between both the streams and courses through which the Divine

Peace flows to man and reconciles him, so to say, under the omnipotence of the Divine Love. Edmund H. Sears

776 In the Bleak Midwinter

Here is one of our most plaintive carols, partly because of the haunting melody by Gustav Holst. Penned by English poet Christina Rossetti, the lyrics first appeared in 1872. The last verse says it all: “What can I give him, poor as I am? / If I were a shepherd I would bring him a lamb; / If I were a wise man I would do my part, / Yet what I can I give him? Give my heart.”

778 O Holy Night

There is something powerful and majestic about this French carol, a favorite among many, in the way it declares “Fall on your knees!” “Behold your King!” and “Christ is the Lord!” Its visual language is a play of light, with shining stars, a breaking morn, beaming faith, and glowing hearts, and its antislavery stance still applies to us now, as we sing of God’s freeing people of physical and spiritual bondage.

779 Hark! the Herald Angels Sing

This beloved carol imagines all of humanity as it joins with the angels to glorify Christ the newborn King. Initially penned by Charles Wesley and included in his 1739 Methodist hymnal, it began as “Hark, how all the welkin rings,” but George Whitefield did us all a favor by changing the words to “Hark! the herald angels sing.” It was combined with the music of Felix Mendelssohn by English composer E. H. Cummings to become one of the most awe-inspiring expressions of the gospel ever written.

780 Joy to the World

With its triumphant cadence and rousing spirit, this carol was written by the man commonly called the Liberator of the English Hymn, Isaac Watts. This hymn, intended as a setting of Psalm 98, speaking of the second coming of Jesus, was published in 1719. Since then it has become America’s best-loved carol, as it encapsulates the joy of the season like nothing else—and was not even originally considered a Christmas song!

781 O Come, All Ye Faithful

This Christmas call to worship was almost certainly written by John Francis Wade, an artist who created

beautiful manuscripts decorated with exquisite floral images. His hymn “Adeste Fideles” remained a Latin masterpiece for a hundred years before being translated into English by Frederick Oakeley. For congregational and a cappella purposes, this carol sings beautifully and is one of the most recognizable refrains in church music.

784 As with Gladness Men of Old

Here we have the only well-known Epiphany or Christmas carol that tells the story of the magi but does not talk about three kings or wise men! It is a powerful carol that reminds us how it is not the size of our gifts that matters but rather the offering of our lives to the Lord Jesus. Verse 4 is one of my favorites in all hymnody.

785 Brightest and Best of the Sons of the Morning

Reginald Heber is one of my favorite hymn poets (he wrote hymns such as “Holy, Holy, Holy”). He tells the story of the wise men in such a beautiful way as he prays that God would “dawn on our darkness and lend us thine aid.” This might be one of the most compelling Christmas lyrics ever, one that probably needs to be known better, as it reminds us, “Richer by far is the heart’s adoration, dearer to God are the prayers of the poor.”

786 Behold, the Word (Very God of Very God)

This new carol was written by Joel Stamolius, one of the writers involved in our Hymn Writing Collective. The hymn reflects on the awe and mystery of John 1:14, which tells of how the Word of God became flesh and dwelt among us in Christ Jesus. The creating, sustaining, and redeeming Word of God took on the form of a tiny infant in Bethlehem—fully human yet, as the Nicene Creed declares, “Light of Light” and “very God of very God.”

788 How Brightly Shines the Morning Star

Here we find a robust and majestic hymn about the descent of Christ from heavenly realms to humble earth by Lutheran pastor Philipp Nicolai, interpreted via the pen of Anglican priest William Mercer, and harmonized multiple times by the greatest of all Lutheran composers, Johann Sebastian Bach, representing some of the highest craft in hymn writing. This particular harmonization comes from Bach’s Cantata BWV 36.

790 We Three Kings

Part of this carol’s unique quality is in the way it was written for a pageant, the verses representing different characters, and the music being reminiscent of an almost Middle Eastern sound. It ended up being included in carol books because of its magnetic simplicity and popularity, and also because of its use of biblical texts from both Old and New Testament.

794 Go Tell It on the Mountain

This African American spiritual and Christmas carol was first collected and published by teachers at Hampton University, with these verses added by John Wesley Work II, who collected spirituals and taught at Fisk University. Its Great Commission emphasis makes it unique among carols.

802 All Glory, Laud, and Honor

This medieval hymn was originally a Latin text (78 couplets), and we sing it to a German melody that dates back to 1619. I love to sing it on Palm Sunday week, as we begin that week and think of all the traditions for hundreds of years that we have maintained to allow us to approach Holy Week.

803 Hosanna, Loud Hosanna

The author of this hymn wrote it for children and adults alike to participate in the joy and celebration of singing “Hosanna” and reliving the triumphal entry. What makes it more remarkable is how the author herself lost both parents at a young age and was raised by various carers, and then lived in pain and disability. Use this song as a chance to incorporate children into the service: “The children sang their praises, the simplest and the best.”

804 Ride On! Ride On in Majesty

In this Palm Sunday hymn the melody sounds really ceremonial and is fun and easy to sing, but the lyrics are what are really challenging. Setting up confident, strident phrases against the reality of what Christ was about to suffer, it uses lines and drama in a way that is both uncomfortable and powerful.

805 Gethsemane

This came from a study on the darkest moment in human history, and it allows a moment for us to consider the torture and the cost of the forgiveness

of our sin. It can be used for a Maundy Thursday service or as a prelude to a Good Friday hymn such as “The Power of the Cross” or “O Sacred Head, Now Wounded.” It could also be used as a helpful meditative piece during communion.

806 There Is a Green Hill

This song was originally written for children and was part of Cecil Frances Alexander’s *Hymns for Little Children*—a collection that included “All Things Bright and Beautiful” and “Once in Royal David’s City.” A beautiful song for children and adults alike, it reminds us that “There was no other good enough to pay the price of sin.”

807 My Song Is Love Unknown

Written by controversial Puritan Samuel Crossman, this takes us on a stunning journey through Christ’s life and death. The tune by English composer John Ireland definitely makes for a more complex hymn tune, but nevertheless the hymn is one of the most powerful expressions of Christ’s death for each of his people.

810 Jesus Paid It All

In Isaiah the Lord describes our sin as being as red as scarlet. Red is a color used often to describe sin and guilt in the Bible. Red dye in a cloth could never be removed. But the Lord goes on to say that our sins would become as white as snow. This image is used in the Bible to describe purity and being clean. Only Jesus, through his death on the cross, could make us pure again from the red stain of sin and make our hearts white like snow. He took our red stains on himself so that we could be made pure.

811 O Sacred Head, Now Wounded

This timeless German hymn is used most often during communion. It is based on a medieval poem by Arnulf of Leuven, abbot of Villers, Belgium, in the thirteenth century. The music is known as the Passion Chorale, written by Hans Leo Hassler in the seventeenth century and harmonized by Bach in his *St. Matthew Passion*. It is a challenging meditation on Christ’s sufferings, unparalleled in its beauty.

812 See the Destined Day Arise

Written in Latin in the sixth century, translated into English in the nineteenth, and updated in the twenty-first, this classic hymn steeps us in the wonders of

the crucifixion, but not for pity—through the cross we find renewal and pardon, and because of this we respond in praise.

814 Go to Dark Gethsemane

James Montgomery’s narrative text places us in the midst of Christ’s movement toward the crucifixion. The writer asks us to watch Jesus in the garden, as with his disciples, “one bitter hour,” to observe his trial, to mark his journey to the cross, to hear him cry “It is finished,” and to witness his death—and then to rejoice at his glorious rising.

815 Stricken, Smitten, and Afflicted

This crucifixion hymn by Thomas Kelly was first published in Dublin in 1804. The hymn, largely inspired by Isaiah 53 (it begins by quoting Isaiah 53:4), is presented as though all of us participating were observing the events of the cross. The German folk tune, with its dark minor melody, sets up lyrics including Christ’s suffering, betrayal, insults, grief, and the disowning of his cause by friends. The hymn’s somber tone makes it perfect for Lent, Good Friday, Communion, and times of mourning the deep suffering in our world. Nothing—but nothing—speaks to these moments more completely than the cross.

816 We Sing the Praise of Him Who Died

Thomas Kelly’s strident confidence (he was Irish) in the darkest of moments because of Jesus shines through again in this hymn. The first line sets up the apparent contradiction, then each verse, packed with biblical images, helps us understand how that contradiction speaks to our different vulnerabilities—firstly our sin, then our guilt, gloom, bitterness, weakness, terror, and ultimately death.

817 What Wondrous Love Is This

An old American folk song accompanies a beautiful, soulful lament of Christ’s passion. The timeless melody is so sublime that it captures both the sadness and something of the mystery and wonder of the story. I always feel it conveys something of the perseverance of the Christian life in our darkest moments.

818 When I Survey the Wondrous Cross

Here we have one of the most important hymns in history. It was radical at the time because many

churches were still restricted to singing only the Psalms; being able to offer a bold depiction of the cross as a congregational song helped to brand Isaac Watts as a pioneering hymn writer. Verse 2 is inspired by Galatians 6:14: “Forbid it, Lord, that I should boast, save in the death of Christ my Lord. All the vain things that charm me most, I sacrifice them to his blood.”

821 The Power of the Cross

This composition was a study of the sufferings of Christ, which afforded us time to consider his sufferings, especially what they mean for forgiveness and ultimately the new life they offer: “O to see my name written in the wounds, for through your suffering I am free!”

825 Christ the Lord Is Risen Today

This is probably the greatest Easter hymn ever written, initially subtitled “Hymn for Easter Day.” We sing it every Easter Sunday. Interestingly, its two greatest distinctives were not by Charles Wesley—the alleluia comes from its associated tune, and the original concept and structure are based on a fourteenth-century Latin hymn, “Surrexit Christus Hodie.” I love the joy it brings and the explosive sense Wesley provides to help us express the freedom, hope, and fullness of life that Christ’s resurrection brings.

826 Because He Lives

This hymn by Bill and Gloria Gaither was written in a season of uncertainty in the culture of the time. I love how it focuses on the way Christ’s resurrection gives us hope for the moment-by-moment concerns of everyday life—healing, our families, our final wars and pains, facing tomorrow, the fears of life. It builds with a beautiful finish of “I’ll see the lights of glory, and I’ll know he reigns.”

828 Christ Arose

This is an old gospel hymn by Robert Lowry. His ability to write short, hooky tunes (“Shall We Gather,” “Nothing but the Blood,” “I Need Thee”) was incredible (all the more incredible given how little time he dedicated to it). This hymn was written quickly in response to the emotion of the resurrection story, in particular the moment of discovery of the resurrection, and it basically has two “hooks.” The first, like a dirge, is reflecting on the apparent tragedy of Christ’s birth, whereas the chorus is a jubilant celebration of the resurrection.

832 Christ Is Risen, He Is Risen Indeed

The oldest liturgy in Christianity is the “Paschal Greeting,” where we respond to “Christ is Risen” with “He is risen indeed.” This a wonderful liturgy for your Easter morning greetings whether with friends and family or at church. It joins us with Christians all over the world and throughout history as we align ourselves with the most decisive moment in history.

833 One Day When Heaven Was Filled

This hymn includes the whole gospel story and is often sung on Easter Sunday. Each verse then breaks down one aspect of Jesus’ life. It also inspired the modern worship song “Glorious Day,” as performed originally by Casting Crowns.

Living, he loved me;
Dying, he saved me;
Buried, he carried my sin far away;
Rising, he justified freely forever;
One day he’s coming—oh, glorious day.

834 Rise My Soul, the Lord Is Risen

The title of this celebratory new Easter hymn finds inspiration from George Herbert’s seventeenth-century poem “Rise, Heart, Thy Lord Is Risen.” It considers how the resurrection impacts the emotional well-being of the soul by navigating the themes of shame and sorrow, as well as courage and hope.

835 The Day of Resurrection

This hymn is one of the oldest Easter hymns in circulation, written by St. John of Damascus in the eighth century. It is a really useful Easter hymn as it helps us understand how the Old Testament prophecies connect to the Easter story; it is easy to pick up, as it uses the same tune as “I Sing the Mighty Power of God.”

836 Resurrection Hymn (See, What a Morning)

Creating a sense of drama is often a huge part of creating a song. In this song Stuart seeks to create a moment akin to the moment when people first discovered that Christ had risen from the dead. This hymn begins with the sense of Easter morning, then narrows in on the turnaround with Mary before creating a Trinitarian celebration in the final verse. I love singing this song at early morning Easter celebrations.

838 All Sufficient Merit

The modern hymn from Shane & Shane highlights the contrast between human insufficiency and Christ's perfect righteousness, emphasizing that his merit alone secures our standing before God. It reflects on the futility of striving for salvation through personal effort and celebrates instead the finished work of Jesus. The rich, gospel-centered lyrics invite worshipers to rest in Christ's righteousness, rejoicing in the unearned inheritance of his salvation.

839 He Is Lord

This simple song came out of the budding praise and worship movement in the United States, when folklike songs were often very simple, easy to sing, and easy to remember. This one carries a simple but foundational affirmation of Jesus as risen Lord, echoing the iconic words of Philippians 2:10–11.

840 I Serve a Risen Savior (He Lives)

From the earliest Christian hymns in history to those of the past twenty years, there is a long tradition of "protest hymns"—hymns that speak against false ideas or gradually moving trends away from biblical Christianity. Although "He Lives" is thought of as an old-fashioned, simple gospel song, it came as a protest to such unbelief by Alfred Ackley, graduate of the Royal Academy of Music and Westminster Theological Seminary. So, when you sing it, sing with the conviction of one believing with courage and determination.

841 Thine Be the Glory

This incredible tune is by Handel, from his oratorio *Judas Macabbeaus*. He actually believed the melody would be more famous after his death than his other tunes, and it certainly is a rousing tune. We use it for Easter Sunday every year, and it is also popular at weddings and funerals. Part of this is because of the infectious lyrics matched with it, based on two New Testament passages that tells us that our risen, conquering Son "gives us the victory" and that "death has lost its sting."

842 The Strife Is O'er, the Battle Done

This seventeenth-century Latin hymn tells the story of Easter as a battle. It is a great hymn in how it brings spiritual warfare more fully into our spiritual thinking and worship, and it is particularly moving when sung in the context of a struggle with deep illness (it

is useful at a funeral) or when thinking of believers in the persecuted church.

846 Look, Ye Saints, the Sight Is Glorious

The hymn is based on Revelation 7:9–15 and is often used during Ascension. In addition to the melody in this hymnal, we often sing it to the same tune as "Angels, from the Realms of Glory" also, and it is a glorious picture of that time after Jesus rose from the dead when he sat down on his throne at the right hand of God. What an amazing thought: whatever our sins, Jesus pleads for us.

847 Join All the Glorious Names

This hymn showcases many of the names of Jesus to allow us different reasons for praising our God, while also reminding us that all of those reasons combined are "too poor to speak his worth, too poor to set my Savior forth." My favorite verse is the third one, which makes it such a beautiful option for Ascension.

848 Hail the Day That Sees Him Rise

This powerful ascension hymn is a really exciting tune with "alleluia" echoes, which make it easy to sing with a younger congregation; you could also try singing it antiphonally (even just the middle verse). It works for Easter, Ascension, Pentecost, or Trinity Sunday.

849 Across the Lands

This song of ours has become associated often with the Ascension season. Originally written for the new release of the *Operation World* CD and prayer book, this hymn begins with echoes of John 1 and looks at how God speaks. It tells the incredible story of the gospel from creation, to Christ's birth, life, and death, and then to the day when he will call people from all nations around the world, as from each "tribe and tongue and nation" he will lead sinners home.

852 Ascend Thy Throne, Almighty King

The full extent of the reign of Christ is surely impossible to comprehend, but Benjamin Beddome has painted us a compelling picture: millions (or billions) of souls bow at the throne, rebellious hearts are brought low by grace, all peoples and kingdoms on earth and the angelic host of heaven praise the great Redeemer. This is probably the most magnificent scene any of us could hope to experience.

853 I Greet Thee, Who My Sure Redeemer Art

This hymn was possibly written by John Calvin or one of his contemporaries during a time of radical rethinking of how we understand our life, faith, and salvation. It was also a time of persecution, and I love the second verse, which reminds us of the gospel and our trust in God, who is reigning:

Thou art the King of mercy and of grace,
Reigning omnipotent in ev'ry place:
So come, O King, and our whole being sway;
Shine on us with the light of thy pure day.

854 Hail the Day That Christ Arose

Christ's ascension to the Father's right hand is an event whose significance is often overlooked in the story of the gospel. But Jesus' return bodily to heaven set in motion a number of crucial events. The Holy Spirit could now be poured out (John 15:26; Acts 1:5). Jesus would intercede for us at the throne (Rom. 8:34). His sovereign reign would be vindicated (Phil. 1:9–11). And he would prepare a place for all those he redeemed, whom he would claim as his bride when he returned (John 14:3; 1 Thess. 4:16–17). Hallelujah! His grace will lead us safely home. *Bob Kauflin*

855 The Head That Once Was Crowned

This hymn was written by uncompromising Irish preacher and hymn writer Thomas Kelly. He was banned by his bishop for his strident preaching of gospel truths, and you can detect the wonder, the passion in each of his hymns. This hymn marvels at the juxtaposition of a head crowned with thorns in suffering now crowned with honor and glory at the right hand of the Father. The suffering servant is the everlasting king!

856 Praise Him! Praise Him!

I love the infectious passion and joy of Fanny Crosby. She once said, "It seemed intended by the blessed providence of God that I should be blind all my life, and I thank him for the dispensation. If perfect earthly sight were offered me tomorrow, I would not accept it." This hymn (like "Blessed Assurance," "To God Be the Glory," and many others) has that infectiousness! It starts with his greatness, then his love on the cross, but peaks with "Jesus, Savior, reigneth forever and ever. Crown him! Crown him! Prophet and Priest and King!"

857 Revive Us Again

This Scottish hymn, by minister William Paton Mackay in 1863, was inspired by his own journey of returning to renewed faith. Despite his own successful life, the witness of people on their deathbeds challenged him to study his Bible and return to the faith of his parents. It reflects a wider movement that was taking place in Scotland at the time; as we sing it, it is a prayer both for us in our own lethargy and for the culture around us.

858 Rejoice, the Lord Is King

This astounding hymn of celebration by Charles Wesley can also be used as an opening hymn. The key verse that helps us understand the Ascension season is verse 2:

Our Savior, Jesus, reigns,
The God of truth and love;
When he had purged our stains,
He took his seat above.

What a thought! It is almost too much to comprehend. Lift up your heart today.

862 Come Down, O Love Divine

This is one of the most stunningly beautiful hymns ever written, as it focuses on the life-altering effects of a heart consumed by the Holy Spirit's fire. Initially an Italian poem, "Discendi Amor Santo," by the medieval mystic poet Bianco da Siena, it was translated by Littledale and set to a melody by English composer Vaughan Williams.

Oh let it freely burn,
Till earthly passions turn
To dust and ashes in its heat consuming.

863 Come, Holy Ghost, Our Hearts Inspire

Wesley's hymn is one of the most beautiful prayers for living the Christian life. In the first half he makes a connection to all the prophets and those who have gone before. The hymn also illustrates how the proof of the Spirit's work in our lives is seen in how we live.

864 O Breath of Life

Written by Bessie Porter Head, a young girl from Belfast who eventually worked in Wales before becoming a missionary to South Africa and later to America, this

hymn expresses her deep passion for world missions and revival. It serves as a heartfelt plea for spiritual renewal and a longing for the church to be equipped to spread the light of Christ:

Revive us, Lord! Is zeal abating
While harvest fields are vast and ripe?
Revive us, Lord, the world is waiting;
Equip Your church to spread the light.

865 Holy Spirit, Living Breath of God

We wrote this hymn as a pleading prayer for the Spirit to transform our lives. It begins by looking at our inward life in verse 1 and opens to our outward expressions through the fruits of the Spirit in verse 2. Then in the final verse it builds outward again toward the church, but, just when it is expected to finish big, instead it prays that God would “lead us on the road of sacrifice”—the ultimate goal for anyone walking the Christian life, “that in unity the face of Christ will be clear for all the world to see.”

867 O Thou Who Camest from Above

Written by Charles Wesley, this selection is filled with glorious imagery on how the Holy Spirit can work in our lives. It is based on Leviticus 6:13: “Fire shall be kept burning on the altar continually; it shall not go out.” I have used this hymn often as a prayer for the Christian daily life.

868 Spirit of the Living God

This simple song was written by Daniel Iverson during an evangelistic crusade about one hundred years ago. Its simplicity has helped many people as we ask the Lord in worship to break down so many of the barriers that we put up in the daily grind of living.

870 Breathe on Me, Breath of God

This is one of the most simple yet profound prayers for the Holy Spirit simply to make us more like Jesus—that we would love what he loves and do what he does, until our will is like his and ultimately we live with him in perfect life. Try to sing this one in harmony and let the voices ring out.

878 Glorious Things of Thee Are Spoken

This magnificent hymn by John Newton opens by quoting Psalm 87:3, and it was inspired in large part by

Isaiah 33:20–21, which asks readers to “Behold Zion”—not the hill in Jerusalem where the temple once stood, but the heavenly Jerusalem, “where no ship with oars can go,” featuring streams with living waters.

879 Lo, He Comes with Clouds Descending

Wesley’s hymn anticipates the coming of the kingdom. Theatrical machinery and a cast of thousands make of this hymn something of a biblical spectacular, attending the descent of Christ at the last day.
Madeleine Forell Marshall & Janet Todd

881 There Is a Higher Throne

Inspired by Revelation 7, this was the first hymn that we wrote together. It is our hope and comfort that behind the fragile curtain of this world there is a higher throne—and the King of kings is seated on it. Within the shadows of this world he is not asleep or distant but is our light and the Lord of all things. The earth is not as it should be, but one day every eye will see and recognize the Lord’s justice, compassion, and wisdom and will bow before him. For his children there is the hope of hunger satisfied and tears wiped away by the merciful hand of their Father. This is the truth we wake up to every morning, and it is his rule and gospel we proclaim to the world.

882 My Lord, What a Morning

An early version of this spiritual appeared in 1867, but its more recognizable form was transcribed from the students at Hampton University a few years later. This is an interesting case in which “morning” could also be understood as “mourning.” We see glimpses of that prophetic day in Matthew 24:29–31, when “the stars will fall from heaven,” and in Amos 8:9–10, when God says, “I will darken the earth in broad daylight. I will turn your feasts into mourning.”

883 When This Passing World Is Done

Soon the Bridegroom will come, and we shall be with him, and like him, and God shall wipe away all tears from our eyes. I burst through all the cobwebs of present things, and, his Spirit anointing my eyes, look at Jesus as one beside me. Soon we shall see him as he is; then our trials shall be done. Remember that Jesus for us is all our righteousness before a holy God, and Jesus in us is all our strength in an ungodly world.
Robert Murray M’Cheyne

884 On Jordan's Stormy Banks I Stand

In the book of Exodus, we read of how God called the children of Israel away from the slavery of Egypt to the promise of a new land, where they would be free to live and worship him. They would have to cross the Jordan River to find it—and here we find the theme of this hymn! Just as the Israelites looked over the Jordan and longed for the Promised Land, we long for our forever home in heaven.

The tune, written by Christopher Miner in the mid-1990s, made this one of the most loved hymns to emerge from the returned hymn movement in Reformed University Fellowship groups of the early 2000s, and it was first recorded on *Pilgrim Days: Indelible Grace II* (2002). *Chris Fenner & Kevin Twit*

887 Soon and Very Soon

André Crouch's modern-day spiritual echoes the promises of Revelation 21:4, pointing to a day when "Death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain." We look especially to Revelation 22:20, where Jesus assures us, "Surely I am coming soon," and to which we respond, "Amen! Come, Lord Jesus!"

889 The Lord Almighty Reigns

Did you know that the last song of the Bible is a wedding song? One day the church will gather like a bride, and Christ will be the groom. Our forever home together with him will begin with a great wedding feast! The Bible describes us as wearing white clothing because we will be holy and pure through Christ's sacrifice on the cross for us. We will sing "Hallelujah," which means "Praise the Lord."

Heaven is a real place, greater than the most perfect day or place you can imagine, and it stretches out forever before us. God is inviting all of us everywhere to come, to come to the wedding and celebrate with him. His word tells us that all who trust in Jesus as Lord and Savior will have the right clothes, seats at the table, and their voices in the great choir. Are you ready for the feast?

891 There Is a Hope

There are many things we say we "hope" might happen without knowing for sure whether they will. Christian hope is different because it is certain. Whenever we go in this life, he will always be with us. When we come to the end of this life, he will take us home. All the Lord has promised will be done. Remember-

ing this as we walk into every day makes our faith in Christ strong and full of life.

894 We Will Feast in the House of Zion

In a season of loss God gave me his comfort through the words of Psalm 126 and Isaiah 30 and an abiding hope for the future that I could sing in my own words. This song sings of a future glory: the healing and restoration that is ours in Jesus Christ. The song has given me an increase of joy and confidence that God will finish the healing work he has begun. When I sing "We Will Feast," I am reminded that God has been faithful to me through all the changes of my life, and I have heard this echoed in stories of people in our community many times over. *Sandra McCracken*

896 Where Shall I Be When the First Trumpet Sounds?

This apocalyptic spiritual comes from the deep American South (Alabama and Mississippi) and is given here as adapted and published by the Reverend C. P. Jones, cofounder of the Church of Christ (Holiness). In a sermon delivered in 1930, Jones declared, "Let us trim our lamps and replenish them and go to meet the Bridegroom. Let us heed the watchman down the road who ever and anon runs back and says to us, 'He is coming!' It is not a false alarm. The watchman would have us ready."

899 Is He Worthy?

This masterpiece is based on the apostle John's vision of a dramatic scene that takes place before the throne of God in the fifth chapter of Revelation. This prayerful call and response from Andrew Peterson and Ben Shive addresses the darkness of our world and reminds us of our hope in the finished work of Christ.

900 Hallelujah Chorus

The "Hallelujah" chorus is truly the only fitting way to conclude this hymnal. Just after writing the most widely known work from the oratorio *Messiah*, composer George Frideric Handel was reported to have said, "I did think I saw heaven open." Celebrating the sovereignty of Christ as "King of kings and Lord of lords," as described in the book of Revelation, the chorus powerfully declares Christ's reign. Traditionally, congregations stand during this majestic moment (a tradition that supposedly began with King George II). When we lead this with a choir, we invite the entire congregation to join us.

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COLOPHON

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The Sing! Hymnal is dedicated to the glory of God and for the strengthening of his church.