Summer Hymn Sing, August 2, 2020

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TRUSTING IN THE PROMISES OF GOD



Perhaps because this hymn is so well known, its language sounds vaguely scriptural; but while there are various biblical uses of "stand" and "promise(s)," the two words are never combined. The confidence here is similar to that of "My Hope Is Built on Nothing Less" (see no. 353).



35 Praise Ye the Lord, the Almighty



This very strong 17th-century German hymn employs many phrases from the psalms, especially Psalms 150 and 103:1–6. It did not receive an effective English translation until the mid-19th century, but has remained popular ever since, thanks in part to its stirring tune.

Great Is Thy Faithfulness



*Or "Great is thy faithfulness, O God, Creator."

Written as a meditation on Lamentations 3:22–23, this text is one of the few hymns among the 1200 poems by this Methodist writer and pastor that has gained much currency. The tune that appears here was composed especially for these words, and the pairing has proved enduring.





Addressing the first two stanzas to the singers of the hymn and the last three to God, this free paraphrase of Psalm 104 recasts the psalmist's imagery with baroque verve. Though it was first published in England, the tune has been more popular in North America than there.

Guide Me, O Thou Great Jehovah 65



Few Welsh hymns are as well known or loved as this 18th-century text that did not gain its popular tune until the early 20th century. In both its original text and in English translation, it is a stirring hymn of pilgrimage filled with vivid imagery from Hebrew Scripture.

71 Surely, It Is God Who Saves Me



This text is a slightly altered form of an adaptation of Isaiah 12:2–6 that appears as a canticle for Morning Prayer in the 1979 Book of Common Prayer of the Episcopal Church. This selection is identified there as The First Song of Isaiah, a title that influenced the tune name.

GOD'S COVENANT WITH ISRAEL





The opening line here could equally well have been a courtier's lament for a secret affair, but it soon becomes a path into a vivid and poignant reflection on Christ's Passion. This 17th-century text is beautifully embraced by its sensitive and lyrical 20th-century tune.

Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus



With its opening "Come," this hymn sounds the note of entreaty and invitation that characterizes the Advent season (from the Latin adventus = "coming"). Its blending of memory and hope helps us to give voice to our present faith as we stand between the past and the future.

Jesus, Jesus, O What a Wonderful Child 126



Specific sources for the words and the music of this piece from the African American heritage remain uncertain. The predictable rhymes suggest that, like "Jesus, the Light of the World" (see no. 127), it may have originated as a reflection on an existing Christmas carol.

What Wondrous Love Is This 215



With its ballad-like repetitions before and after each stanza's central narrative lines, this meditative text needs performance in order to be effective. Its haunting melody proves the means of convincing us that the only adequate response to "wondrous love" is to "sing on."

In the Bulb There Is a Flower

Hymn of Promise



- 1 In the bulb there is a flow - er; in the seed, an ap-ple tree;
- 2 There's a song in ev-ery si-lence, seek-ing word and mel-o-dy;
- is our be-gin-ning; in our time, in-fin-i-ty; our end



a hid-den prom - ise: but - ter - flies will soon be free! co - coons, there's a dawn in ev-ery dark-ness, bring-ing hope to you and me. our doubt there is be - liev - ing; in our life, e - ter - ni - ty.



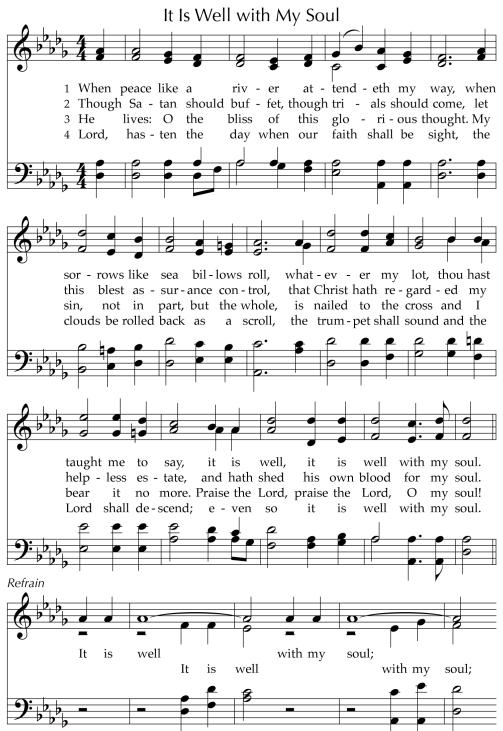
and snow of win - ter there's a spring that waits to be, the cold will come the fu - ture; what it holds, From the past mys-ter - y, our death, a res - ur - rec - tion; at the last, vic - to - ry,



un - til its sea - son, some-thing God a - lone can un - re-vealed

The writing of this hymn was spurred by a line from the poet T. S. Eliot: "In my end is my beginning." Shortly after this piece was completed, the author/composer's husband was diagnosed with what proved to be a terminal malignancy, and the original anthem version of this hymn was sung at his funeral.

840 When Peace like a River



This text is a remarkable expression of faith born of grief. The author, an active Presbyterian layman who had just lost four daughters in a tragic shipwreck, wrote it while sailing to Paris to meet his wife, who had survived. The tune was named for the ship that sank.

TRUSTING IN THE PROMISES OF GOD



We Are One in the Spirit

They'll Know We Are Christians by Our Love



- the Spir it; We are one in we are one Lord;
- We will walk with each oth er; we will walk hand in hand:
- 3 We will work with each oth er; we will work side by side;
- 4 All praise to the Fa-ther, from whom all things come,



the Spir - it; in in the Lord, we one we are one will walk with each oth - er; we will walk hand in we side by will work with each oth - er; we will work side, praise to Christ Je - sus, God's Son,



and we pray that all u - ni - ty may one day be re - stored: and to - geth - er we'll spread the news that God is in our land: and we'll guard hu-man dig - ni - ty and save hu-man pride: and all praise to the Spir - it, who makes one:



And they'll know we are Chris-tians by our love, by our



love; yes, they'll know we are Chris-tians by our love.

A parish priest at St. Brendan's on the South Side of Chicago in the 1960s was very involved in the local Civil Rights movement and needed something for his youth choir to sing at ecumenical, interracial events. Finding nothing, he wrote this song in a single day.

Precious Lord, Take My Hand



This black gospel song, like much hymnody, sprang out of the author's deep personal loss (the death of his wife and newborn son), yet it has brought solace to many. He thought his fingers were playing new music, but they unlocked a deep memory of a tune almost a century old.

465 What a Friend We Have in Jesus



This text was written by an Irish-born immigrant to Canada to comfort his mother in Ireland when she was going through a time of special sorrow. The role of prayer as a source of strength and consolation is underscored by its repeated use as a rhyme word in all three stanzas.