

PAUL ROREM

SINGING CHURCH HISTORY

INTRODUCING THE CHRISTIAN STORY
THROUGH HYMN TEXTS



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Introducing the Christian Story through Hymn Texts

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POSTLUDE

HYMN TEXTS CAN guide us not only through church history but also through the church year, as well as into basic Christian doctrine and ecumenical awareness. Materials from this book could be used for various topics, once put in a different order.

Hymns for the Church Year

Certain hymn texts presented above in their original contexts and thus in historical sequence could also accompany and enrich the liturgical seasons from Advent through Pentecost. The main suggestions here are followed in each season by other options, with some ideas for the Sundays after Pentecost as well.

Advent: “Savior of the Nations, Come,” St. Ambrose, fourth century, ELW 263, LSB 332. “Wake, Awake,” P. Nicolai, 1599, ELW 436, LSB 516. “All Earth Is Hopeful; *Toda la tierra*,” Alberto Taulé, World Christianity, ELW 266. “Come Now, O Prince of Peace; *Ososõ, ososõ*,” Geonyong Lee, World Christianity, ELW 247.

Christmas: “Of the Father’s Love Begotten,” Prudentius, fifth century, ELW 295, LSB 384. “Lo, How a Rose E’er Blooming,” late medieval, ELW 272, LSB 359.

Epiphany: “The Only Son from Heaven,” Elisabeth Cruciger, sixteenth century, ELW 309, LSB 402. “Hail Thee, Festival Day,” Fortunatus, sixth century, ELW 394, LSB 489.

Lent: “Jesus, the Very Thought of You” and “O Jesus, Joy of Loving Hearts,” attr. Bernard of Clairvaux, twelfth century, ELW 754 and ELW 658, LSB 554. “Oh, Love, How Deep, How Broad, How High,” attr. Thomas à Kempis, fifteenth century, ELW 322, LSB 544. “There in God’s Garden,” tr. Erik Routley, World Christianity, ELW 342.

Palm Sunday: "All Glory, Laud, and Honor," Theodulph of Orléans, ninth century, ELW 344, LSB 442.

Good Friday: "O Sacred Head, Now Wounded," attr. Bernard of Clairvaux, twelfth century, ELW 351–52, LSB 449–50. "Jesus, Remember Me," Taizé, World Christianity, ELW 616.

Easter: "Come, You Faithful" and "The Day of Resurrection," John of Damascus, eighth century, ELW 363 and 361, LSB 487 and 478. "Christ Jesus Lay in Death's Strong Bands," Martin Luther, sixteenth century, ELW 370, LSB 458, and related prior hymns. "Christ Has Arisen, Alleluia; *Mfurahini, haleluya*," Bernard Kyamanywa, World Christianity, ELW 364 and LSB 466.

Pentecost: "Creator Spirit," Rhabanus Maurus, ninth century, ELW 577–78, LSB 498–99. "Come Holy Ghost, God and Lord," Martin Luther, sixteenth century, ELW 395, LSB 497. "Gracious Spirit, Heed Our Pleading; *Njoo kwetu, Roho mwema*," Wilson Niwagila, World Christianity, ELW 401.

Trinity: "All Glory Be to God on High," Nikolaus Decius, sixteenth century, ELW 410, LSB 947. "We All Believe in One True God," Martin Luther, sixteenth century, ELW 411, LSB 953–54.

Ordinary Time, Sundays after Pentecost, thematic and chronological order:

General: the *Te Deum*, early medieval, ELW 228, LSB 223–25.

Creation: "All Creatures, Worship God Most High," St. Francis, thirteenth century, ELW 835. "Many and Great, O God; *Wakantanka taku nitawa*," Joseph R. Renville, World Christianity, ELW 837.

Justification: "Dear Christians, One and All, Rejoice," Martin Luther, sixteenth century, ELW 594, LSB 556. "That Priceless Grace," Emmanuel F. Y. Grantson, World Christianity, ELW 591.

Sanctification: "Love Divine, All Loves Excelling," Charles Wesley, eighteenth century, ELW 631, LSB 700.

Racial Justice: “Lift Every Voice and Sing,” Johnson brothers, ca. 1900, ELW 841, LSB 964.

Social Causes: “God of Grace and God of Glory,” Harry Emerson Fosdick, mid-twentieth century, ELW 705, LSB 850. “Jesu, Jesu, Fill Us with Your Love,” Tom Colvin, World Christianity, ELW 708 and LSB 980. “For the Troubles and the Sufferings of the World; *Pelas dores deste mundo*” Rodolfo Gaede Neto, World Christianity, *All Creation Sings*, 1051.

Global Awareness: “We Are Marching in the Light; *Siyahamba*,” South African, World Christianity, ELW 866.

Hymns for Catechetical/Doctrinal Overview

For Lutheran catechesis, Martin Luther’s own hymn settings have long been attached to the various sections of his *Small Catechism*. These hymns could survey Christian teaching all by themselves, although some are less familiar than others. For a wider range of hymn writers and of specific topics, the list below is merely a suggested starting point. For a much larger array, see Philip H. Pfatteicher, *The People’s Theology: Classic Hymns and Christian Formation* (Chicago: GIA Publications, 2020).

Martin Luther’s Catechetical Hymns

Perhaps most of Luther’s hymns could be considered catechetical, but the 1543 Wittenberg hymnal paired specific hymns with sections of the catechism, as mentioned above in the chapter on Luther. Robin Leaver has presented these hymns, plus an introductory hymn and a concluding one, in his excellent book *Luther’s Liturgical Music*, under the heading of “Musical Catechesis.” Robin A. Leaver, *Luther’s Liturgical Music: Principles and Implications* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2007), 107–69.

Introduction. "Lord, Keep Us Steadfast in Your Word," ELW 517, LSB 655, LW 53: 304–305.

The Ten Commandments. "These are the Holy Ten Commands," LSB 581, LW 53: 277–79. See also the shorter "Man, Wouldst Thou Live All Blissfully?," LW 53: 280–281.

The Creed. "We All Believe in One True God," ELW 411, LSB 953–53, LW 53: 271–273.

The Lord's Prayer. "Our Father, God in Heaven Above," ELW 746–77, LSB 766, LW 53: 295–298.

Baptism. "To Jordan Came the Christ, Our Lord," LSB 406, LBW 79, LW 53: 299–301.

Repentance. "Out of the Depths I Cry to You," ELW 600, LSB 607, LW 53: 221–224.

The Lord's Supper. "Jesus Christ, Our Blessed Savior," LSB 627, LW 53: 249–251; *All Creation Sings*, 963.

Conclusion. "Dear Christians, One and All, Rejoice," ELW 594, LSB 556, LW 53: 217–220.

Various Other Hymns for Doctrinal Overview

God/Trinity. Besides hymnic versions of the Creed, "We Praise You, O God" (the *Te Deum*), early medieval, ELW 228, LSB 223–25, 939–41. "All Glory Be to God on High," Nikolaus Decius, sixteenth century, ELW 310, LSB 947.

Creation. "All Creatures, Worship God Most High," St. Francis, thirteenth century, ELW 835. "Many and Great, O God; *Wakantanka taku nitawa*," Joseph R. Renville, World Christianity, ELW 837.

Law/Repentance. See the Luther hymns mentioned, "These are the Holy Ten Commands" (LSB 581) and "Out of the Depths I Cry to You" (ELW 600, LSB 607).

Incarnation, Birth, and Epiphany. Advent: "Savior of the Nations, Come," St. Ambrose, fourth century, ELW 263,

LSB 332; “All Earth Is Hopeful; *Toda la tierra*,” Alberto Taulé, World Christianity, ELW 266. Christmas: “Of the Father’s Love Begotten,” Prudentius, fifth century, ELW 295, LSB 384. Epiphany: “The Only Son from Heaven,” Elisabeth Cruciger, sixteenth century, ELW 309, LSB 402.

Incarnation, Suffering, and Death. “Oh, Love, How Deep, How Broad, How High,” attr. Thomas à Kempis, fifteenth century, ELW 322, LSB 544. “There in God’s Garden,” tr. Erik Routley, World Christianity, ELW 342. “O Sacred Head, Now Wounded,” attr. Bernard of Clairvaux, twelfth century, ELW 351, LSB 449–450.

Resurrection. “The Day of Resurrection!” and “Come, You Faithful, Raise the Strain,” John of Damascus, eighth century, ELW 361 and LSB 478, ELW 363 and LSB 487. “Christ Jesus Lay in Death’s Strong Bands,” Martin Luther, sixteenth century, ELW 370, LSB 458. “Christ Has Arisen, Alleluia; *Mfurahini, haleluya*,” Bernard Kyamanywa, World Christianity, ELW 364 and LSB 466.

Holy Spirit. “Creator Spirit, Heavenly Dove” and “Come, Holy Ghost, Creator Blest,” Attr. Rhabanus Maurus, ninth century, ELW 577–78 and LSB 498–499. “Gracious Spirit, Heed Our Pleading; *Njoo kwetu, Roho mwema*,” Wilson Niwagila, World Christianity, ELW 401.

Justification. “Dear Christians, One and All, Rejoice,” Martin Luther, sixteenth century, ELW 594, LSB 556. “That Priceless Grace,” Emmanuel F. Y. Grantson, World Christianity, ELW 591.

Sanctification. “Love Divine, All Loves Excelling,” Charles Wesley, eighteenth century, ELW 631, LSB 700.

[For repentance, baptism, Lord’s Supper, see Luther’s catechetical hymns above.]

Lord's Supper, general. "Grains of Wheat; *Una espiga*," Cesáreo Gabaráin, World Christianity, *With One Voice* 708.

Lord's Supper, Divine Liturgy (Orthodox). "Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence," Greek liturgy, fifth century, ELW 490, LSB 621.

Lord's Supper, the Mass (Roman Catholic). "Thee We Adore," Thomas Aquinas, thirteenth century, ELW 476, LSB 640.

Justice, Peace. "God of Grace and God of Glory," Harry Emerson Fosdick, twentieth century, ELW 706, LSB 850. "Jesu, Jesu, Fill Us with Your Love," Tom Colvin, World Christianity, ELW 708 and LSB 980. "For the Troubles and the Sufferings of the World; *Pelas dores deste mundo*" Rodolfo Gaede Neto, World Christianity, *All Creation Sings* 1051.

Discipleship, Vocation. "You Have Come Down to the Lakeshore; *Tú has venido a la orilla*," Cesáreo Gabaráin, World Christianity, ELW 817. "The Lord Now Sends Us Forth," World Christianity, ELW 538.

Witness. "Oh, for a Thousand Tongues to Sing," Charles Wesley, eighteenth century, ELW 886. "Let Us Talents and Tongues Employ," Fred Kaan, World Christianity, ELW 674.

Hymns for Ecumenical Awareness

Hymn texts can also increase our ecumenical awareness of other Christian communities. It is interesting to note which hymns by Martin Luther or other distinctively Lutheran hymns are included in various denominational hymnals. For example, a Roman Catholic hymnal such as *Choral Praise*, 3rd ed. (Portland, OR: OCP, 2012), approved by the US Conference of Bishops, has Catholics singing Luther's "Mighty Fortress" and Martin Rinckhart's "Now Thank We All Our God," plus Watts, C. Wesley, Thomas Dorsey, and spirituals galore. The chronological presentations in this book have touched on representative hymns from several denominations, often with distinctive doctrinal emphases.

An Eastern Orthodox emphasis on Christ as the meeting point of the human and the divine, in the incarnation and in the resurrection, is represented by John of Damascus, especially in his Easter hymns “The Day of Resurrection!” (ELW 361, LSB 478) and “Come, You Faithful, Raise the Strain” (ELW 363, LSB 487). See chapter three above.

The distinctive Roman Catholic doctrine of transubstantiation regarding Christ’s presence in the bread and wine is apparent in “Thee, We Adore” (ELW 476, LSB 640). See the section on Thomas Aquinas in chapter five.

The Reformed tradition (Presbyterians, for example) is naturally part of chapter seven on the Reformation, at least in the brief conclusion about the Geneva Psalter. The stress in some Reformed circles historically on singing only scriptural words, especially the Psalms, is also mentioned in chapter nine. The obvious example would be Psalm 100 in “All People That on Earth Do Dwell” (ELW 883, LSB 791).

The Moravian Brethren emphasis on Christ’s suffering and specific wounds was mentioned in chapter eight on Pietists and in chapter nine on John Wesley’s translation of von Zinzendorf’s “Jesus, Your Blood and Righteousness” (LBW 302, LSB 563).

The Methodists have always stressed holiness, as presented in chapter nine. This emphasis on sanctification and some early disputes about it are glimpsed in Charles Wesley’s “Love Divine, All Loves Excelling” (ELW 631, LSB 700).

For background to American Evangelicals, see Fanny Crosby’s “Blessed Assurance” (ELW 638) in chapter ten. Several related hymns and hymn writers in that chapter are good representatives of the non-denominational revivals of the nineteenth century.

African American churches (chapter eleven) of many different denominations sing “Lift Every Voice and Sing” (ELW 841, LSB 964) and identify with it, as well as Thomas A. Dorsey’s more individual “Precious Lord” (ELW 73, LSB 739).

Finally, the World Christianity phenomenon in chapter twelve is well represented by “Siyahamba” (ELW 866). Just as it crossed linguistic lines, from South Africa’s Zulu/Xhosa to Swedish and then to English and other languages, so it and other examples of global hymns cross many denominational distinctions in the ecumenical church today.