

SINGING THE FAITH

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CARL SCHALK

SINGING

the FAITH

A Short Introduction to Christian Hymnody


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FOREWORD

This little book is an introduction to the story of Christian hymnody in the Western Church. It will not answer every question one might raise. It will, however, guide the reader through the contributions, conflicts, and questions which arose through the successive periods in the development of Christian song from the Old Testament through the twentieth century. Implicitly and explicitly it raises pertinent questions and points to areas worthy of further exploration.

The chief purpose of Christian hymnody in the Church's public worship has always been to proclaim the good news of the Gospel. That Gospel is centered in the life, death, and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ. Christian hymnody proclaims the Gospel in "many and various ways." Martin Luther describes this proclamatory function in the first hymn in the first collection of Lutheran hymns in 1524.

*Dear Christians, one and all, rejoice
With exultation springing,
And with united heart and voice
And holy rapture singing,
Proclaim the wonders God has done,
How his right hand the victory won,
What price our ransom cost him.*¹

1. From the so-called *Achtliederbuch* of 1524. See page 35.

One contemporary poet expresses the hymn's purpose this way.

*Rise, shine, you people! Christ the Lord has entered
Our human story; God in him is centered.
He comes to us, by death and sin surrounded,
with grace unbounded.*

We respond in faith in this hymn's final stanza by proclaiming that good news to all the world.

*Tell how the Father sent his Son to save us.
Tell of the Son, who life and freedom gave us.
Tell how the Spirit calls from every nation
His new creation.²*

It may be helpful to remember that the Church's song is—first and foremost—the *Church's* song. As such the Church has, from its beginning, carefully guarded its song so that what the Church proclaims it sings, and what it sings is always consonant with its proclamation. It is helpful to remember that the word “orthodox”—from two Greek words “ortho” (right or correct) and “doxa” (to praise)—means simply “to praise rightly.” That Church's song has developed and evolved over the centuries. It has embraced new forms, new words, new music, and rejected others throughout its history. Yet that song has always found ways to remain rooted in its history and practice, yet always open to the new.

This little book is an introduction to that story.

Carl Schalk
Distinguished Professor of Church Music Emeritus
Concordia University Chicago

2. See Ronald A. Klug's “Rise, shine, you people” in many current hymn books.

EXODUS 15:20-21

וְרַחַמֵּי תוֹחַתְּ אֲחֵיכֶנָּה מִיָּרֵמ תִּקְנֶתוּ כ
מִישָׁנֶה־לְכָךְ וְאַצִּיתוּ הַדְּבִיב וְיִתְהַחַדָּא
תִּלְחַמְבוּ מִיַּפְתֵּיב הַיְרַחֵא

הַוְהִיל וּרְיֵשׁ מִיָּרֵמ מְהֵל נַעֲתוּ אֵכ
מִיַּיב הַמָּר וּבְכֹחַ סוּס הַאֲגֵיב הַאֲגֵיב

Then the prophet Miriam, Aaron's sister, took a tambourine in her hand; and all the women went out after her with tambourines and dancing.

And Miriam sang to them: "Sing to the LORD, for he has triumphed gloriously; the horse and rider he has thrown into the sea."

(New Revised Standard Version)

I THE OLD TESTAMENT

The story of Christian song reaches back far beyond the story of the beginnings of Christianity itself. Its roots are found centuries before, in the time of what is today known as the Old Testament. We begin this short introduction to Christian song with a look at the song of the Old Testament.

Miriam's Song

The oldest “song” recorded in the Old Testament scriptures for which we have the actual words is, arguably, Miriam’s Song from the Book of Exodus, which dates from between the sixth and fifth centuries BCE. It was sung after Moses had led the children of Israel out of Egypt and through the Red or Reed Sea. This text includes what has been considered one of the oldest poetic couplets in the Old Testament:

Then the prophet Miriam, Aaron's sister, took a tambourine in her hand; and all the women went out after her with tambourines and dancing.

And Miriam sang to them: “Sing to the LORD, for he has triumphed gloriously; the horse and rider he has thrown into the sea.” (New Revised Standard Version)¹

1. There are two iterations of this song: the first attributed to Miriam (Exodus 15:20–21) and the longer account attributed to Moses (Exodus 1:1–18), sometimes referred to as the Song of the Sea. Most scholars agree that Miriam’s account is the older because of its brevity.

It was a simple song encouraging God's people to sing of the glorious triumph that God had won for them, how God had acted to rescue his people, and what God had done to save them.

This event, celebrated in song, was to become a pivotal event in the life of God's chosen people. The Exodus and its central role in the story of their salvation is remembered in the annual celebration of the Passover.

But there are other songs as well throughout the Old Testament which are worthy of further investigation. They include the following:

The Testament of Jacob (Genesis 49)

The Blessings of Moses (Deuteronomy 33)

The Song of Deborah and Barak (Judges 5:3–31)

David's Lamentation Over Saul and Jonathan (2 Samuel 1:19–27)
and Over Abner (2 Samuel 3:33–34)

The Last Words of David (2 Samuel 23:1–7)

David's Thanksgiving for Victory (2 Samuel 22)

The Song of Hannah (1 Samuel 2:1–10)

The Song of Habakkuk (Habakkuk 3)

Perhaps one of the best known of these songs is the Song of Hannah which finds echoes in the New Testament Song of Mary (the *Magnificat*) in Luke 1:46–55. Read them side by side; the similarities are striking. A closer examination of each of the citations above will bear fruit in a deeper understanding and appreciation of these Old Testament songs.

All of these songs speak in various ways of God's goodness and favor toward his chosen people. They were important vehicles through which God's people understood themselves, reminders that God had delivered them from their foes and would continue to do so. These songs would also play a significant role in the later evolution of Christian song in the Eastern Church as it developed a large-scale hymnic form—the *kanon*—in the early centuries of the Christian Church. (See chapter 3.)

The Book of Psalms

The most familiar of the Old Testament songs are those contained in the Book of Psalms, literally the “Book of Praises” (from the Hebrew *Tehillim* or “Praises”). Written over the centuries and collected for use

in the post-exilic temple, the collection as it has come to us was finally compiled and edited about the third century BCE. It is clear that these psalms were intended for singing in the temple worship—and later in the Jewish synagogue where they were interspersed between the recitation of Hebrew Scriptures—not, as is often the case today, for private devotional reading.

While popular opinion assumes that the Book of Psalms was written by King David, the collection itself suggests a wider authorship. Only about one half of the Psalms are specifically attributed to David, twelve are ascribed to Asaph, two to Solomon, and one each to Heman, Ethan, and Moses, while almost one third are anonymous. The Book of Psalms is divided into five “books” as follows:

Book I: 1–41

Book II: 42–72

Book III: 73–89

Book IV: 90–106

Book V: 107–150

Each of these concludes with a doxology similar to that found at the conclusion of Book I: *“Blessed be the Lord, the God of Israel, from everlasting to everlasting. Amen and Amen”* (Psalm 41:13). In Book V, Psalm 150 serves as the concluding doxology for the entire collection.

Psalms of Lament, Praise and Thanksgiving, and Instruction

There are three basic types of psalms: Psalms of Lament, Psalms of Praise and Thanksgiving, and Psalms of Instruction. Psalm 130 is an example of a Psalm of Lament or complaint. It begins as follows:

Out of the depths I cry to you, O LORD.

Lord, hear my voice! Let your ears be attentive to the voice of my supplications!

If you, O LORD, should mark iniquities, Lord, who could stand?

But the text soon turns from complaint to a note of hope, comfort, and promise, a turn which one sees in almost all such psalms of lament.

But there is forgiveness with you, so that you may be revered.

I wait for the LORD, my soul waits, and in his word I hope;

II THE NEW TESTAMENT

The New Testament reflects in various ways both the vigor and the content of early Christian worship. Among excerpts from creeds, prayers, doxologies, and benedictions of that time are numerous references to “hymns,” “psalms,” “odes,” and “songs.” The variety of terminology suggests that no one form of hymn was used exclusively.

The “hymn” referred to in 1 Corinthians 14:26 simply means a Christian song of some kind, while in Revelation 5:9a a Christian song is called a “new ode,” a term which had been used already in the Old Testament Book of Psalms (144:9). Considering the fluidity of these terms, one needs to be careful to not interpret the often-quoted passage from the apostle Paul regarding “psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs” (Ephesians 5:19) according to our present-day usage of those terms.

Although the Greek pagan religions at the time of the early New Testament gave a prominent place to hymns, it seems to have had little influence on Christian worship. Rather, it was the psalmody of the Old Testament, as it continued to be used in the Temple and then in the synagogue, which played the most important role in the development of early Christian song.

Psalms were an important part of Jewish worship. Most of the early Christians were Jews who continued to worship in the Temple at Jerusalem (Acts 2:46; 3:1; 5:12) and in the synagogues of Palestine and the Diaspora (Acts 6:9; 13:14; 14:1). Psalms were appointed for the days

of the week and for festival occasions, and there is some indication that all 150 psalms were read over a three-year period on the Sabbath.

Of the over three hundred passages from the Old Testament quoted in the New Testament, more than one third are from the Psalms. Jesus, being immersed in the *Tehillim*, could speak of the necessity of fulfilling what was spoken of in the Psalms as well as in Moses and the prophets (Luke 24:44). The hymn sung by Jesus and his disciples as they went out to the Mount of Olives after the Last Supper was most likely part of the *Hallel* (Psalms 113–118).

The “Lukan Psalms”

The continued importance and influence of the Old Testament psalm-odic style is nowhere more evident than in the three great lyrical songs surrounding the story of Christ’s birth. They are often referred to as the “Lukan Psalms.”

The first is Mary’s song which she sings on her visit to Elizabeth as she anticipates the birth of the Savior. It is known as the *Magnificat*, from the first word of the Latin translation.¹

My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior, for he has looked with favor on the lowliness of his servant. Surely, from now on all generations will call me blessed; for the Mighty One has done great things for me, and holy is his name. . . .
(Luke 1:46–55)

In succeeding centuries, the *Magnificat* established itself as the prescribed New Testament canticle for Vespers, or Evening Prayer.

The second of the Lukan Psalms is the song sung by Zacharias after the birth of his son John, who was to be John the Baptizer, the forerunner of Jesus Christ.

Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, for he has looked favorably on his people and redeemed them. He has raised up a mighty savior for us in the house of his servant David, as he spoke through the mouth of his holy prophets from of old, that we would be saved from our enemies and from the hand of all who hate us. Thus he has shown

1. The similarity between Mary’s song and the Song of Hannah in the Old Testament (1 Samuel 2:1–10) has often been remarked.

the mercy promised to our ancestors, and has remembered his holy covenant... (Luke 1:68–79)

Known as the *Benedictus*, this canticle has long been established in Matins, or Morning Prayer.

The third great song from Luke is Simeon's song, sung by the prophet Simeon when Mary and Joseph brought Jesus to the temple eight days after he was born to fulfill the Old Testament law for the rite of circumcision and the rite of purification of Mary.

Master, now you are dismissing your servant in peace, according to your word; for my eyes have seen your salvation, which you have prepared in the presence of all peoples, a light for revelation to the Gentiles and for glory to your people Israel. (Luke 2:29–32)

Known as the *Nunc dimittis*, this song has long been associated with the Office of Compline, or Night Prayer, and, in the Lutheran tradition, with Holy Communion.

Also among the Lukan Psalms is the "Song of the Angels" sung at the birth of Christ: "Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favors." (Luke 2:14.) In later centuries, it would be expanded to become the *Gloria in excelsis*, one of the five great songs of the Mass. The prominent place in liturgy held by these New Testament "psalms" is a testimony not only to the influence of the psalmodic tradition in early Christianity, but to the continuing importance it holds today.

Singing in the New Testament

The importance of singing in the New Testament is well documented. The account of the imprisonment of Paul and Silas, for example, says that

About midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God... (Acts 16:25)

And from the writings of Paul there is more evidence of the importance of Christian song as a vehicle for both praise and Christian teaching.

III THE EARLY CHURCH: GREEK HYMNODY

The fourth-century Christian historian Eusebius, in a quotation now attributed to Hippolytus of Rome (c. 170–235), asks:

Who does not know about . . . all the psalms and hymns that were written by faithful Christians from the beginning, which sing of the Christ as the Word of God and treat him as God?¹

This question reflects two important features of early Christian hymn. First, the writing of hymns by early Christians in the Eastern Mediterranean continued with great vitality in the years following the New Testament times. Second, the subject matter of this hymnody continued to be centered in the person of Christ. While initially these non-canonical hymns largely followed the poetic conventions and patterns of the Jewish psalms, they gradually came to adopt the ancient Greek meters such as iambic (u –) and anapest (u u –); a natural progression considering the cultural language was Greek.

There are many extra-biblical and post-New Testament references to Christian hymnody. One of the better known is that in the letter of Pliny, governor of Bithynia, written in the early second century, to the Roman emperor Trajan, in which Pliny remarks that

... On a stated day [the Christians] were accustomed to gather before daybreak and to sing responsively a song to Christ as to a God.

1. Eusebius, *Historia Ecclesiastica*, V, 28. See also Wesley Isenberg, "Hymns, Greek" in *Key Words in Church Music* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1978), 185–191.

While there is some uncertainty about the exact nature of that *carmen* or “song” (it could mean to sing a song, recite a poem, or even utter a religious formula), the statement’s significance lies in its reference to the song’s being sung in an alternating or responsive manner, and to the centrality of Christ as its subject. In the writings of Ignatius of Antioch (c. 110) there are several hymns which reflect in their thought and construction the Christological hymns of the New Testament. In Ignatius’s *Letter to the Ephesians* (7:2) is found the following:

There is one Physician
 who is both flesh and spirit,
 born and not yet born,
 who is God in man,
 who lives in death,
 both of Mary and of God,
 first possible and then impossible,
 Jesus Christ our Lord.

And in his *Letter to Polycarp* (3:2), Ignatius writes:

Wait for him who is above seasons,
 timeless, invisible,
 who for our sake became visible,
 who cannot be touched,
 who could suffer,
 who for our sake accepted sniggering,
 who in every way endured
 for our sake.

Other examples may be found in such collections as the *Odes of Solomon* (late first to early second century), referred to earlier in this book, written in the style of the Old Testament psalms; in the *Epistle to Diognetus* (c. 170); and in the *Didache* (first century), which contains a Eucharistic “hymn” of unusual beauty:

As this piece [of bread] was scattered over the hills and then brought together and made one, so let your Church be brought together from the ends of the earth into your Kingdom. For yours is the glory and the power through Jesus Christ forever.

Various gnostic groups, who rejected the Old Testament and sought to replace faith with knowledge (*gnosis*), also wrote many hymns, usually in Greek meters, to promote their particular understandings and teachings. Bardesanes (c. 154–222) is supposed to have written an entire gnostic psalter. Other gnostic writings include two hymns in the third-century *Acts of Thomas*, and the apocryphal *Acts of John* (also third century) which contains a “Hymn to Christ.”

Three Early Christian Hymns

The following two hymns are of particular importance since they are probably the oldest hymns from this period which are still in use today. The first is *Phos hilaron*, often referred to as the “Candle Lighting” hymn. (See the complete Greek text together with a widely used English translation at the beginning of this chapter.) This hymn was sung as the daylight faded from sight and as the lamps were lit, reminding the early Christians of Christ, the Light of the world, who comes into the darkness of our night bringing light and healing to a world ensnared by sin. This text was attested to be of unknown origin as early as the fourth century by St. Basil.

Perhaps the best-known metrical version of this text is that of Robert Bridges (1884–1930), usually sung to a French psalter tune from the sixteenth century.

*O gladsome Light, O Grace
Of God the Father's face,
Eternal splendor wearing,
Celestial, holy, blest,
Our Savior and our guest,
Joyful in your appearing.
Day has not faded quite,
We see the evening light,
Our evening hymn outpouring,
Father, incarnate Son,
Who our salvation won,
Spirit of both adoring.*

IV THE MEDIEVAL PERIOD: LATIN HYMNODY

Three important developments in the first millennium helped shape the character, direction, and use of hymnody in Western Christianity.

The first was the gradual establishment of the basic structures which were to shape Christian worship from its beginnings. These structures, including the basic shape of the Mass, the Church Year, a system of appointed readings, and an ordered use of the Psalter, were not simply external to worship, but developed from worship itself. By the middle of the first millennium, these structures were well on their way to a mature development. They would provide the context in which Christian hymnody would continue to develop and flourish.

The second development was the rise of monasticism and monastic communities. Begun as early as the fourth or fifth centuries, their importance was central to the development of hymnody in the Western Church. Strophic hymnody, whose texts typically were metered and had multiple verses, had little, if any, place in the Mass itself—the great “hymns” of the Mass (*Kyrie, Gloria, Credo, Sanctus, Agnus Dei*) were prose hymns. It was in the Divine Office (also known as Daily Office or Liturgy of the Hours) as celebrated in various monastic communities where the strophic hymn was to flourish. The four elements of the Divine Office were the singing of Psalms, the reading of Scripture, prayer, and the singing of hymns and canticles.¹

1. While the various monastic communities were ordered in somewhat different ways, the Rule of St. Benedict, written for the monastery at Monte Cassino founded by Benedict of Nursia in 529 CE, provided the basic referent.

The third and most immediate development was a body of Christian hymnody that was born in the midst of theological controversy—in both the Eastern and Western Church. In the East it was Gnosticism, discussed in chapter 3, that was the catalyst. In the West it was the Arian Controversy.

Arius (250 or 256–336 CE), a presbyter in Alexandria, Egypt, promulgated the view that Christ, the second person of the Trinity, was, in some sense, not fully God, not equal with the Father. In a lyric reminiscent of the style of some of the New Testament “songs,” Arius writes:

We praise him as without beginning, because of him who has a beginning. And adore him as everlasting, because of him who in time has come to be. He that is without beginning, made the Son a beginning of things originated; and advanced him as Son to himself by adoption. He has nothing proper to God in proper substance. For he is not equal, nor one in essence with him. Wise is God, for he is the teacher of wisdom.²

Arius’s view was ultimately rejected by the Council of Nicaea (325 CE), the first Ecumenical Council of the Church, which declared this view as heterodox. The Council affirmed, in the words of the Nicene Creed, that Jesus Christ was indeed “God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten not made, of one being with the Father through whom all things were made.” That expression of the Council was to have a specific significance for the future of hymnody in the Church. Giving shape to that significance would fall to Ambrose of Milan.

Ambrose of Milan

It was Ambrose (340–397), bishop of Milan, generally acknowledged as the father of Western Christian hymnody, who established the basic form of the Western hymn. By the time of Ambrose, Rome had achieved a dominant position in the Church, and Latin was the language of the day. Ambrose’s hymns were strophic, each strophe consisting of four lines of eight syllables per line (8.8.8.8.), in iambic tetrameter.

2. F. Forrester Church and Terrence J. Mulry, eds., *Earliest Christian Hymns* (New York: Macmillan Publishing Company, 1988), 181.

More importantly, he introduced the practice of concluding most of his hymns with a Trinitarian doxology, not only affirming the confession of the Council of Nicaea, but also incorporating a Trinitarian affirmation into the very shape of the Church's hymnody. The Church would sing what it confessed.

Four extant hymns generally attributed to Ambrose are *Veni, redemptor gentium*; *Aeterne rerum conditor*; *Deus, creator omnium*; and *Iam surgit hora tertia*. Probably the best-known is *Veni, redemptor gentium*, translated from the Latin into German by Martin Luther³ some 1,200 years later. It is still widely sung today in English as "Savior of the nations, come," and has long been the appointed Hymn of the Day for Advent 1 in Lutheran use.

1. *Veni, redemptor gentium,
ostende partum Virginis;
miretur omne saeculum:
talīs decet partus Deum.*

The hymn concludes with this Trinitarian doxology:

8. *Sit, Christe, rex piissime,
tibi Patrique gloria,
cum Spiritu Paraclito,
in sempiterna saecula.*

As with this Ambrosian doxology, many written by other authors in the ensuing years placed their doxological affirmation clearly in the context of the specific liturgical season, festival, or celebration for which it was intended. The great Christmas hymn of Coelius Sedulius (d. c. 450) "From East to West, from shore to shore" concludes with a specific Christmas doxology.

*All glory for this blessed morn
To God the Father ever be;
All praise to Thee, O Virgin-born,
All praise, O Holy Ghost, to Thee.*

3. Luther's German translation ("Nun komm, der Heiden Heiland") curiously consists of four lines of seven syllables per line, a quirk continued in later English translations.

V THE REFORMATION: LUTHER and THE CHORALE

The tradition of the Church's song during the Middle Ages had been perpetuated chiefly through the hymns, canticles, and psalmody regularly sung in the daily Office in a variety of monastic communities. The Western Church found little place for hymnody in the celebration of the Mass, with some scattered exceptions.¹ By the early sixteenth century the spoken Mass had largely become the norm, the people occupying themselves in their private devotions while the priest simultaneously conducted the Mass.

Martin Luther (1483–1546), in contrast to other early reformers, continued to affirm the importance of the Mass, stating that

It is not now nor ever has been our intention to abolish the liturgical service of God.²

Actually, the Mass is retained among us and celebrated with the greater reverence. Almost all the customary ceremony are retained, except that German hymns are interspersed here and there among the parts sung in Latin.³

1. See Anthony Ruff, OSB, *Sacred Music and Liturgical Reform* (Chicago / Mundelein, Illinois: Hillenbrand Books / Liturgy Training Publications, 2007), 567–573.

2. Martin Luther, “An Order of Service and Communion for the Church at Wittenberg” (1523), Ulrich S. Leupold, ed., *Luther's Works, American Edition: Liturgy and Hymns* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1968) Vol. 53:20. Hereafter called *Luther's Works*.

3. Theodore G. Tappert, ed., *The Book of Concord* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1959), Augsburg Confession, XXIV 1, p. 56.

And regarding the ancient chants of the Church, Luther remarked:

Let the chants in the Sunday Mass and Vespers be retained; they are quite good and are taken from Scripture.⁴

Luther sought to restore the congregation to its rightful place in singing the faith of the Church. The vehicle for this purpose was what is usually referred to as the *Lutheran chorale*. Its texts and melodies derived from a variety of sources, many of which had their roots in the traditional chant of the Church. Like the earlier chant, the chorales were sung by the congregation in unison and without accompaniment. The texts of the chorales were forthright in proclaiming the good news of the Gospel, and their simple but robust melodies were musical expressions of that same faith.

The hymns which emerged in early Lutheranism were intended to help the congregation participate in singing the liturgy in the context of the Church Year. They were not simply lyric expressions in search of a place to be sung in worship.

Chorales for the Mass

Luther sought to return the Church's song to the people in part by reconnecting the people with their musical heritage of chant which had been largely coopted over the centuries by monastic choirs. In the early years of the Reformation there emerge five chorales, one for each of the five parts of the Ordinary of the Mass (*Kyrie, Gloria, Credo, Sanctus, and Agnus Dei*). Some had been developing in the years before the Reformation, most largely based on the liturgical chants, but now simplified for singing by the congregation and with texts which paraphrased the prose texts of the Ordinary of the Mass. These five chorales were:

Kyrie, Gott Vater in Ewigkeit (Kyrie, God Father in heaven above), developed from the chant *Kyrie fons bonitatis*

Allein Gott in der Hoeh sei Ehr (All glory be to God on high), already circulating in the fifteenth century in a Low German version

4. *Luther's Works*, 53:13.

Wir glauben all an einen Gott (We all believe in one true God),
Luther's paraphrase of the Nicene Creed set to his own tune

Isaiah dem Propheten dasz geschah (Isaiah in a vision did of old),
Luther's text with a melody based a Sanctus chant *In Dominicus
Adventus et Quadragesimae*

Christe, du Lamm Gottes (O Christ, thou Lamb of God), a melody
from Braunschweig

These chorales enabled the congregation to sing the liturgy in a textual and melodic form uniquely suited for congregational singing.

Other Sources of the Early Chorales

Beside the liturgical chant of the Church, there were a number of other sources from which the early Reformation drew and which contributed to the growing body of congregational song, including the following.

Pre-Reformation hymns based on gradual and sequence chants

These include "Gelobet seist du, Jesu Christ," based on the Christmas sequence *Grates nunc omnes*; the Easter *Leise*, "Christ ist erstanden," based on the Easter sequence *Victimae paschali laudes*; and "Komm, Heiliger Geist, Herre Gott," patterned after the Pentecost sequence *Veni, Sancte Spiritus*. These pre-Reformation hymns were sung at processions, pilgrimages, and the major festivals with which they were associated.

Latin office hymns

The chant melody of Ambrose's *Veni, redemptor gentium*, mentioned in chapter 4, is a case in point. This melody was the basis for four hymn tunes and texts which developed at the time of the Reformation: "Nun komm, der Heiden Heiland" (Savior of the nations, come); "Erhalt uns, Herr, bei deinem Wort" (Lord, keep us steadfast in your Word); "Verleih uns Frieden gnädiglich" (Grant peace, we pray, in mercy, Lord); and "Christe, der du bist Tag und Licht" (O Christ, you are the light and day). Note how the first line of each of these tunes is derived from the chant melody.

Carl Schalk's vast experience as a teacher, author, musicologist, and composer makes him uniquely qualified to present this compact but insightful history of Christian hymnody in the Western Church. In it he guides the reader through the contributions, conflicts, and questions which arose through the successive periods in the development of Christian song from the Old Testament through the twentieth century.



CARL SCHALK is Distinguished Professor of Music Emeritus at Concordia University Chicago, where he taught graduate and undergraduate courses in church music between 1965 and 1994. The Master of Church Music program he pioneered there produced some 140 graduates serving throughout the church.

Dr. Schalk has advanced degrees from the Eastman School of Music of the University of Rochester and Concordia Seminary, St. Louis. He has served as a frequent workshop and conference lecturer, and as a member of

the Inter-Lutheran Commission on Worship, Hymn Music Committee, which prepared the *Lutheran Book of Worship* (1978). He is a Fellow of the Hymn Society of the United States and Canada and was made an Honorary Life Member of the Association of Lutheran Church Musicians.

Dr. Schalk has written a significant number of books, among them *First Person Singular: Reflections on Worship, Liturgy, and Children* (MorningStar) and *Music in Early Lutheranism* and *Key Words in Church Music* (Concordia), as well as countless contributions to a wide array of periodicals. His numerous choral compositions are published by several publishers, and he has written over eighty hymn tunes and carols.



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