

## Hymnology

**#559 “Lead us, heavenly Father, lead us** (Dulce carmen) first appeared in the 1871 edition of the *Hymnal*, matched with this tune. The words first appeared in James Edmeston’s *Sacred Lyrics*, vol. 2 (London, 1821), with the title “Hymn, Written for the Children of the London Orphan Asylum.” It was included in *Psalms and Hymns* (London, 1858), a collection published by the Baptist Church. This popular hymn has been translated into many languages including Latin. The tune appeared in print, with no composer’s name attached in Samuel Webbe, the Elder’s *An Essay on the Church Plain Chant* (London, 1782). It was given in quasi-plainsong notation and associated with the text “Tantum ergo sacramentum.” It was also included in Samuel Webbe, the Elder, and Samuel Webbe, the Younger’s *A Collection of Motetts or Antiphons* (London, 1792) but with modern notation. The tune has been known by a variety of other names including Alleluia Dulce Carmen, Corinth, Gloria Patri, St. Werbergh’s, and Lebanon.

**#397 “Now thank we all our God”** (Nun danket alle Gott): This “German Te Deum,” as it has been called, transcends all national, language and denominational boundaries. For example, it had become so familiar in the English-speaking world that no one in 1945 ever questioned the protocol of celebrating victory over Nazi Germany by singing this hymn. Paradoxically, it originated within the havoc and ruin of the Thirty Years War and was appropriately sung to celebrate the Peace of Westphalia on 10 December 1648 that brought that war to an end. The hymn, however, had more humble origins. It has been matched with this tune since the mid-seventeenth century. It originated as a hymn for family table-grace. Its author was Martin Rinckart, archdeacon in Eilenburg, Saxony. In the late nineteenth century it was reported that an original manuscript of the hymn, owned by a descendant of Rinckart, indicated that the hymn was written by Rinckart for his children to sing. It was dated 24 June 1630. The first two stanzas are based on Ecclesiasticus 50: 22-24. The music first appeared in Johann Cruger’s *Praxis Pietatis Melica*, 3<sup>rd</sup> edition (Berlin, 1647) where it was set to Rinckart’s Nun danket alle Gott.

**#657 “Love divine, all loves excelling”** (Hyfrydol): This text was no. 9 in Charles Wesley’s anonymous *Hymns for Those that Seek and Those that Have Redemption in the Blood of Jesus Christ* (London, 1747). The tune Hyfrydol was composed by Rowland Hugh Prichard about 1830 when he was only twenty years old and it was published in a three-part version in his *Cyfaill y Cantorion* (Llanidoes, 1844) [The Singer’s Friend]. It then appeared in *Halewiah Drachefn* (Carmarthen, 1855) [Hallelujah Again]. Hyfrydol became widely popular after its inclusion in *Alexander’s Hymns No. 3* (New York, 1915). The tune appears in the third of Vaughan Williams’s *Three Preludes on Welsh Hymns for Organ* (1920), where it receives a strong, dissonant treatment that must disturb many singers’ understanding of the nature of what is, on one reading, a placid hymn.

**#416 “For the beauty of the earth”** (Lucerna Laudoniae): the words for this hymn were written by Folliot Sandford Pierpoint and blushed in Orby Shipley’s *Lyra Eucharistica* (London, 1864). It first appeared in an Episcopal hymnal in 1916. *The English Hymnal* uses all eight of the original stanzas and places it among the Eucharistic hymns. It is widely used in England as a children’s hymn, this text because it became a favorite for flower services in England. At these services, held on the afternoon of the fourth Sunday in Lent (“mothering Sunday”), children would present their mothers with bouquets of wildflowers picked the day

before. The refrain of the hymn, which is taken from the Eucharistic prayer in the *Book of Common Prayer*, has been subject to a variety of alterations. #538 “God of mercy, God of grace” (Lucerna Laudoniae) is a hymn based on Psalm 67. The tune was composed for use with this text in *Revised Church Hymnary* (London, 1927). It appeared there with an attribution to Edward Arthur, a pseudonym for the composer because he was also the editor of the hymnal! The tune name means “Lantern of the Lothians,” referring either to a Franciscan monastery at Haddington, East Lothian, destroyed in 1355, or to the fifteenth-century church which replaced it. The nave of the latter survives as part of St. Mary’s Church.

**#376 “Joyful, joyful, we adore thee”** (Hymn to Joy): The many metaphors from nature in this text reflect a love of creation, characteristic of its author, Henry van Dyke. While on a preaching visit to Williams College in 1907, he presented the text to the president of the college, James Garfield, at breakfast with these words: “Here is a hymn for you. Your mountains [the Berkshires] were my inspiration. It must be sung to the tune of Beethoven’s “Hymn to Joy.” The text was published in *The Poems of Henry van Dyke* (New York, 1911). Van Dyke was the chairman of the committee that prepared the Presbyterian *Book of Common Worship* (Philadelphia, 1905). Beethoven’s famous *Ode to Joy* was incorporated in the finale of his Ninth Symphony, Op. 125, first performed at the Theater an der Wein, Vienna, on 7 May 1824. The original German text “Freude, schöner Götterfunken, Tochter aus Elysium” was by J.C.F. von Schiller, who had died in 1805, and the great choral hymn was a flavor of the large-scale public demonstrations of the French Revolutionary period. Sketches of the tune have been found in various forms in Beethoven’s sketchbooks as far back as 1797, and an earlier version had been the song “Gegenliebe” which had formed the theme for the last movement of his Choral Fantasia, Op. 80 (1808). The *Ode to Joy* is now the official anthem of the European Community.

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