



HYMNS FOR OUR TIME



Lisle Ryder



FOREWORD

While the restrictions of lock downs during the Covid pandemic may have been a negative experience for so many,I found that the time gained provided creative opportunity.

I had already written some three of these hymns but found stimulus to draft some more. This has continued since

They largely reflect prayerful concern for climate and the environment and for our place in God's creation.

You are welcome to reproduce them with acknowledgement.

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AFTER PANDEMIC

To God we offer thanks
for medicine and for carers,
for all who've kept in touch,
in prayer been burden sharers.
Through all the skills and gifts
by which you set us free
from scourges of disease
may we now thankful be.

- | | |
|---|--|
| <p>2 In grief we still lament
the cost of many losses
in life and work and health,
with bearing all these crosses.
Not destitute of hope
in you our God we trust
as guide through days to come
in new life to adjust.</p> <p>3 All praise to God of all
with whom we share this planet.
May we be one with them,
respecting every limit.
Each insect, beast or bird
from which disease derives –
we must respect their space
that we and they may thrive.</p> | <p>4 Dear Jesus you've been here
through times of isolation,
in us to hold real hope,
restoring motivation.
Then arms outstretched once more,
set free from all regrets,
we'll open wide the door
to welcome back our guests.</p> <p>5 We meet again in joy
refreshed upon our journey.
As we move on from here
with Christ who shows us mercy,
there's much that we can learn
as we survive the test –
in prayer we can discern
how care is best expressed.</p> |
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Tune: Nun danket

*What a joy it was to meet again after the Covid lockdowns.
Verse 4 expresses how we felt at Holy Rood House.*

ANOTHER COUNTRY

I vow to you our country, all earthly things below
to cleanse what we as humans have done to nature's show.
Our rivers are polluted, and air that creatures breathe.
Discarded waste and effluent now cloak both land and sea.
The climate's been disrupted, affecting food supplies,
and all of God's creation, is raising piteous cries

But there's another country, I've heard of long ago
a garden full of beauty, where nature's free to grow
with seas and skies of freshness, with land that's lush and clean.
We have what God now gives us, to bring back what has been.
So we should be resourceful and with a firm intent
restore our lovely country, to such as we have dreamt.

Tune: Thaxted

Note

'I vow to thee my country' was written by Sir Cecil Spring-Rice just over 100 years ago as a patriotic hymn following the First World War with all its suffering and sacrifice.

These new words represent a different suffering, that of nature, and another sacrifice, that of God's creation. We are part of that nature involved and responsible as were our forefathers for the suffering and sacrifice of Christ.

The melody was adapted by Gustav Holst from his Planets Suite, though the original melody related not to our Earth but to Jupiter.

As we pray 'Thy Kingdom come on earth as it is in heaven', it presents a challenge for each of us to play a part in restoring our lovely country.

MELTING FROZEN JEWELS

God's bountiful creation,
our hearts with wonder fill,
held now in contemplation
with mind and body still.
Diversity of creatures,
varieties of plants
for our delight displayed here
that we may be entranced.

- | | |
|--|---|
| 2 Among the host of creatures
just who am I but one?
Yet you and I together
the world have overrun.
We've stained its glorious beauty,
good habitats are lost,
exploited or polluted
at devastating cost. | 4 It's not too late God shows us,
and science also tells,
to change our ways of living
pollutants to dispel.
Jesus, in mercy lead us
consumers of excess
from fouling our surroundings
to making do with less. |
| 3 Our planet's overheating
through burning fossil fuels;
all round the seas are rising
from melting frozen jewels.
Where will the plants and creatures
find refuge to survive?
Without their diverse presence
have we the will to thrive? | 5 Earth, air and seas defiled,
God calls us to restore
for future generations
to wonder at once more.
Diversity of creatures,
varieties of plants
for their delight renewed there
that they may be entranced. |

*Tune 7676D: Ewing, Hatherop Castle,
Aurelia, etc.*

GOD IN DIVERSITY

Behold the varied colours in the sky:
within the forms of clouds see golds and greys.
Each day they change before the gazing eye –
from dawn to dusk they constantly amaze.

Evolving through the spangled universe
our God of love creates them so diverse.

- 2 Above the atmosphere the heavens display
a host of stars and planets, comets too;
a spread of constellations in array
where distant galaxies are born anew.

Evolving through the spangled universe
our God of love creates them so diverse.

- 3 Around us spreads the natural world of plants;
some creatures hidden, some with colours bright,
as through the changing seasons they enhance
a range of habitats for our delight.

Evolving through the spangled universe
our God of love creates them so diverse.

- 4 We too are creatures in God's image made
of varied colour, race, ethnicities.
Let's live in harmony and unafraid
to fête our different personalities.

Evolving through the spangled universe
our God of love creates us so diverse.

- 5 Dear God of many attributes we learn
from what our Saviour Jesus taught and showed.
In reaching out to those whom many spurn
he drew them to your fold, a blessed abode.

With them we seek the joys of paradise
where all are held within the love of Christ.

Tune: Sibelius, Finlandia

*If we struggle to accept our diverse expressions
of personality within cultures and beliefs
maybe we can understand these in the wider context of God's creation.*

WITH EVERY CREATURE SING

Let all of us with every creature sing,
praise to our God!
Above us in the air
may we all be aware
of birds and bees in flight,
whether by day or night.
Sing with one voice to celebrate the life
of creatures all!

2 Let all of us with every creature sing,
praise to our God!
Across the tamed terrain
farmed now for stock and grain;
may woodland also thrive
and wildlife too survive.
Sing with one voice lest any be extinct,
protect them all!

3 Let all of us with every creature sing,
praise to our God!
Over the oceans wide
with rise and fall of tide
may all the plankton bloom
for fishes to consume.
Sing with one voice to celebrate the life
of creatures all!

4 Let all of us with every creature sing,
praise to our God!
There deep within the earth,
in darkness comes new birth,
beneath the tread of boots
among the worms and roots.
Sing with one voice lest any be extinct,
protect them all!

5 Let all of us with every creature sing,
praise to our God!
May we now play our part,
together taking heart;
remembering all God gave,
all creatures here to save.
Sing with one voice to celebrate the life
of creatures all!

Tune: Luckington

GOLDEN LEAVES

Dropped golden leaves
all glowing from the ground.
Upon the tree -
there you were once the crown.

2 Fly, fly dear birds
as you must needs migrate,
yet come back safe
once more to procreate.

3 Weep, weep you clouds
with rain to fill the lakes,
yet not our homes
to flood, with us displaced.

4 Blow gently winds
to cleanse the air for breath,
never too fierce
lest storms cause loss and death.

*5 Come close dear God
embark within the boat,
keep migrants safe
from harm, their craft afloat.

*6 We fallen souls
who've spoiled the sea and air
must turn around,
the harm we've done repair.

7 Encourage us
who surely have enough
to share with those
for whom these times are tough.

8 May we be held
with all that you have made,
at one in Christ
with creatures all arrayed.

or 8 Your crown of thorns
now has a golden hue;
from near and far
all hearts are drawn to you.

Tune: Song 46, Orlando Gibbons

GOD IN ALL

1

Our God who lives, flows in waters,
drifts in clouds and glows in snow,
silver flashing fish in shallows,
darts in darkness round the rocks,
blooms afresh as showers bring flowers,
freshens scent for bugs and bees.
Here we live together woven,
one with God in wonder held.

2

Our God who lives, moves with breezes,
flies in skies and travels far,
floats with owls to quarter meadows,
dives with gannets in the surf.
on the wing with birds migrating
swallows, swifts and butterflies;
Though they fly in all directions,
God is with them as they fly.

3

Our God lives, alert and watching
over newborn in the nest,
keeps them warm with fur or feather,
crouches, pounces on the hunt,
scuttles, burrows, refuge seeking,
fox and mouse, God lives in each.
On the ground we are together,
held by God in pain or joy.

4

Our God dies, entombed with Jesus,
from the earth he on us breathes
autumn scents from leaves decaying,
whiffs of springtime gifting life.
Grubs and worms soil overturning;
naught is wasted, all made new.
Like all creatures we are mortal,
as with Christ we die and live.

5

God lives anew, now arising,
swelling oceans, winds astir,
croaks to us as frogs are courting,
calls to us in curlew's song,
shines from corals colours gleaming,
rests in shade of leaves above.
Called to serve your living creatures
guide us God to tend and care.

6

Holy Spirit ever moving,
always leading, out ahead.
Come let's find what wisdom's showing,
lightly tread among what's spread,
gaze in wonder and amazement,
serve and share the gifts of life.
God who raises Christ in glory
lift us all to praise and sing.

*Tunes: 8787.D Abbot's Leigh, Blaenwern,
Hyfrydol*

AFTER TRAUMA

1 (Exodus)

Into the wild as slaves they had fled
with nothing to drink without any bread.
For what were they chosen? where to be led?
As if they'd been punished, with feelings of dread.

*As out in the desert God was revealed,
later in exile no longer concealed.
With two on the road their Jesus was risen,
so open your heart be ready to listen.*

2 (Exile)

Banished to Babylon without shalom.
Mount Zion laid waste their God had no home.
Oppressed and bereft to whom could they pray?
And could it be true what prophets did say?

3 (Crucifixion)

Mary was weeping there in deep loss,
her firstborn and God's now dead on the cross.
His friends were dispersed their spirits all numb.
With Jesus now gone could his kingdom come?

4 (Last night)

Feeling knocked down all hope has been lost,
no more in control you're counting the cost.
Awake in the night it isn't a dream,
the trauma is real you're ready to scream.

Tune: Light up the fire (Colours of day...)

*As so many struggle with post traumatic stress this
hymn sets the experience in the context of scripture*

A LIFE BEYOND

Beyond life's span how might we be?
Where would eternal life be found?
What will it mean for you and me,
with all to whom in love we're bound?

- 2 Imagination's upward climb
may scan and search horizons vast –
beyond all distance, mass and time.
How will we feel when death has passed?
- 3 At one in all we've ever met,
to know the hurts and wrongs of life;
will we feel burdened by regret
and anguished in eternal strife?
- 4 In Jesus Christ may we abide,
his healing touch puts all to right.
So reconciled with all who've died
we'll be at one in shared delight.
- 5 Enfolded in our God's embrace
at peace, with laughs and joys to share,
we shall be held by Christ with grace
to dwell in love and beauty there.

*Possible LM tunes:
Tallis Canon, Melcombe, Song 34*



