



DECEMBER 2023



### Hark, the Herald Angels Sing

Every once in a while, I enjoy doing research into the background of the hymns we sing, especially the Christmas hymns. I found the following online regarding the hymn – ***Hark, the Herald Angels Sing.***

Because of the credits in our Lutheran Service Book I knew the hymn was credited to Charles Wesley – one of the founders of the Methodist Church. I also knew that the tune of the hymn was composed by Felix Mendelssohn. But some other facts that I learned regarding this hymn you will find below.

The article was written by Kevin Mungons.

1. The original song was published as “Hark, How All the Welkin Rings” in the 1739 Wesley hymnal, *Hymns and Sacred Poems*. The second line, as written by Charles Wesley, read “Glory to the King of kings,” not “Glory to the newborn King.” And he originally wrote “Universal nature say,” not “With angelic host proclaim.”
2. “Welkin” is an old English word for “the expanse of the heavens.” Chaucer used it in *The Canterbury Tales*: “This day in mirth and revel to dispend, / Till on the welkin shone the starres bright.” It is likely that “welkin” was becoming obsolete even when Wesley used it in 1739.
3. The change from “welkin” to “herald angels” was made by George Whitfield. Doing this changed the meaning of Wesley’s metaphor. What was once a hymn about Heaven’s response to God’s redemption became a hymn about humanity’s response to God’s redemption.
4. The Wesleys weren’t too happy when people changed the words of their songs. In the preface to the 1780 edition of *Hymns and Sacred Poems*, John Wesley said, “Many gentlemen have done my brother and me (though without naming us) the honour to reprint many of our Hymns. Now they are perfectly welcome so to do, provided they print them just as they are. But I desire they would not attempt to mend them; for they really are not able. None of them is able to mend either the sense or the verse. Therefore, I must beg of them one of these two favours; either to let them stand just as they are, to take them for better or worse; or to add the true reading in the margin, or at the bottom of the page; that we may no longer be accountable either for the nonsense or for the doggerel of other men.”
5. Charles Wesley originally intended this hymn to be sung to the same tune as the

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Easter hymn “Christ the Lord Is Risen Today.” This is an intriguing idea. In Wesley’s mind, Christ’s birth was inexplicably connected to His death and resurrection—a point Wesley wanted to clarify by using the same tune for both songs.

6. The tune we usually associate with “Hark! The Herald” was written by Felix Mendelssohn in 1840—and it was not intended as a sacred song. Mendelssohn wrote it to commemorate the four hundredth anniversary of Gutengberg’s printing press (No. 2 “Vaterland, in deinen Gauen” from *Festgesang zum Gutenbergfest*).
7. Wesley’s carol made a famous television appearance in 1965, serving as the climax to *A Charlie Brown Christmas*.

**Hark, How All the Welkin Rings:  
A Hymn for Christmas Day  
[Original version, 1739]**

NOTE: When Mendelssohn’s tune was used, two verses were put together with a refrain added as in our current *Lutheran Service Book*.

**Wesley’s version**

**Lutheran Service Book version**

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <p>1. <i>Hark, how all the welkin rings,<br/>“Glory to the King of kings;<br/>Peace on earth, and mercy mild,<br/>God and sinners reconcil’d!”</i></p>             | <p><i>Hark! The herald angels sing<br/>Glory to the newborn King<br/>Peace on earth and mercy mild<br/>God and sinners reconciled!</i></p>        |
| <p>2. <i>Joyful, all ye nations, rise,<br/>Join the triumph of the skies;<br/>Universal nature say,<br/>“Christ the Lord is born to-day!”</i></p>                  | <p><i>Joyful, all ye nations, rise,<br/>Join the triumph of the skies<br/>With the angelic host proclaim<br/>Christ is born in Bethlehem!</i></p> |
| <p>3. <i>Christ, by highest Heaven ador’d,<br/>Christ, the everlasting Lord:<br/>Late in time behold him come,<br/>Offspring of a virgin’s womb!</i></p>           | <p><i>same as LSB 380 v. 2</i></p>  |
| <p>4. <i>Veil’d in flesh, the Godhead see,<br/>Hail th’ incarnate Deity!<br/>Pleas’d as man with men to appear,<br/>Jesus, our Immanuel here!</i></p>              | <p><i>Veiled in flesh the Godhead see,<br/>Hail the incarnate Deity!<br/>Pleased as Man with man to dwell,<br/>Jesus, our Immanuel!</i></p>       |
| <p>5. <i>Hail, the heavenly Prince of Peace,<br/>Hail, the Sun of Righteousness!<br/>Light and life to all he brings,<br/>Risen with healing in his wings.</i></p> | <p><i>Same as LSB 380 v. 3</i></p>  |
| <p>6. <i>Mild he lays his glory by,<br/>Born that man no more may die;<br/>Born to raise the sons of earth;<br/>Born to give them second birth.</i></p>            | <p><i>Same as LSB 380 v. 3</i></p>  |
| <p>7. <i>Come, desire of nations, come,</i></p>  | <p><i>Not used in LSB 380</i></p>   |

*Fix in us thy humble home;  
Rise, the woman's conquering seed,  
Bruise in us the serpent's head.*

8. *Now display thy saving power,  
Ruin'd nature now restore;  
Now in mystic union join  
Thine to ours, and ours o thine.* *Not used in LSB 380*

9. *Adam's likeness, Lord, efface,  
Stamp thy image in its place.  
Second Adam from above,  
Reinstate us in thy love.* *Not used in LSB 380*

10. *Let us thee, though lost, regain,  
Thee, the life, the inner man:  
O, to all thyself impart,  
Form'd in each believing heart.* *Not used in LSB 380*

As I continued researching this hymn for the December newsletter, I came across this idea by Kristi Hill as she was writing about Hark, the Herald Angels Sing for her article in [Hymn Study](#). This is what she wrote:

**“Hark! The Heralds Angels Sing”** is one of my favorite carols because of the incredibly rich text:

*“Hark! The Herald Angels Sing  
Glory to the newborn King  
Peace on earth and mercy mild  
God and sinners reconciled”*

When I am teaching this carol to my students,

I have them put one hand as high up as possible, representing God.

I have them put the other hand as low as possible, representing themselves as sinners — desperately separated from a holy God.

As we sing the word “reconciled,” we bring our hands together with a loud clap to represent the restoration of our relationship with God — *because of the birth, life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ*.

It is accessible theology, even for the youngest child.

As you sing this carol this year, take a moment and think about the concept of *reconciliation*. Understanding the restoration of the separation of God and man because of innate sin is crucial to our theology as Christians, and it can be beautifully taught through this carol.

*Merry Christmas and a Blessed New Year*

In Christ,  
Pastor Craig Mathews

**MISSIONAL CIRCUIT CONVOCATION**

January 22, 2024  
Concordia Lutheran Church  
Sarasota, FL

**FOCUS:** To be led by the Holy Spirit to discover the next church plant in our circuit.

**WHY?:**

FLGA District leadership is pursuing plans to plant ten churches in our District. In addition, our circuit is in the midst of one of the fastest growing areas in North America.

Spirit led congregations can lead the way in planting the Gospel in our communities even in the face of many other challenges before us.

Therefore, we are creating a circuit convocation to bring the body of Christ together and have God speak through His church as we seek to plant the Gospel.

**WHO is Invited?:**

Any and All congregational members who have a heart for mission and growing God's Church.

**RSVP** to Pastor Davie Dahlke of Lakeside Lutheran Church in Venice at :  
Pastordavid@lakesidelutheran.net

## Prayer Requests

**Please pray for:**

**Shut-ins:** Rita Kaufman and Dorothy Sinowetski.

**Healing for members:** Jean Cote, Ed & Jan DeTrow, Don Garay, Mike & Judy Guastella, Jane Harty, Steven Horvath, Marva Jonas, Chuck & Elaine Malecki, Lillian Miles, Colette Nagel, Tom & Sue Poyer, Jim & Bonnie Schluentz, Joyce Schneider, Bob Varone, and Pauline Vickey.

**Friends and relatives:** Family & friends of Bill Bowers, Dorothy Swanson (sister of a friend of Kitty Hill, had heart valve replacement surgery, 11/21/23), Barbara George, Mikayla Hacksunda, Daniel & Michelle Kalstrup, Dave McMullan, Esther Murphy, Rob Powers, Becky Rurade, Laurie Steinke, and Wava Zeitlow.

### ***The Measure of Our Generosity***

If you open up the Small Catechism, you'll find a shortened version of the Third Commandment: "Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy." But if you look up the list of the Ten Commandments in Exodus, you'll find the full version:

Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days you shall labor, and do all your work, but the seventh day is a Sabbath to the LORD your God. On it you shall not do any work, you, or your son, or your daughter, your male servant, or your female servant, or your livestock, or the sojourner who is within your gates. For in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested on the seventh day. Therefore the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy. (Ex. 20:8–11)

Why did Luther shorten this commandment for the Small Catechism? Was it so that the kids wouldn't have so much to memorize? No, it was because Luther knew that all the details of the Third Commandment were part of the "shadow" of the Old Testament (Col. 2:16). Or as St. Paul puts it, there is "letter" in the Old Testament law and "spirit" (2 Cor. 3:6). The details of not working on Saturday were fulfilled by Christ. That part of the Sabbath regulation no longer applies. But the spirit of the law does remain: We need to dedicate sufficient time each week to hearing God's Word and giving it honor and respect. Or as Luther sums it up in the Small Catechism's explanation to the Third Commandment: "We should fear and love God so that we do not despise preaching and His Word but hold it sacred and gladly hear and learn it."

The same sort of analysis applies to our giving. In the Old Testament, God commanded the Israelites to give a tenth of their income to the Levites so that those men could dedicate their lives to serving in God's house, teaching the people, conducting worship, etc. In the New Testament, there is a rigid requirement listed about handing in your tax forms to church to make sure you've given enough. But the mandate to have a full-time ministry, which is the spirit of that law concerning tithing to the Levites, is right there in 1 Corinthians 9:14: "The Lord has ordained that those who preach the Gospel should make their living from the Gospel."

The New Testament church's job is significantly larger than the job of Old Testament Israel. We are commanded to preach the Gospel to all nations. There was only the temple to maintain in the Old Testament, but we have churches, schools, universities and seminaries, plus missionaries everywhere. So you tell me: Can we really undertake the work of the ministry if our giving doesn't even measure up to Old Testament levels of generosity?



Treasurer's  
Report

Financial information is available to all members upon request.



# Bible Studies



**Sunday Morning Bible Study:** Bible study on Sunday mornings has resumed. Please join us after the morning service (and after a cup of coffee – approximately 10:30 a.m.). We will be using a study called “Exploring God’s Word: Old Testament.” Description below is from the CPH website:

*Understanding God’s Word often means looking at it from a fresh perspective – getting “the big picture” as well as the important details. Exploring God’s Word includes 12 individual sessions, maps, charts, a glossary, and a section of intriguing Bible facts. Exploring God’s Word helps you gain a broader understanding of what the Bible means when viewed as a whole – not simply as a collection of individual books.*

**Table Talk:** Table talk is a very informal Bible study now held on Thursday mornings at 9:30 AM, immediately after the 8:45 school chapel service. Participants come with any sort of question. We work to answer those questions from God’s Word and from our Lutheran Confessions. In doing that we all learn more about God’s Word and its application in our lives. We are currently focusing on the book of Exodus. One way or another there is always friendly and interesting discussion.

All are welcome and encouraged to come early to attend the chapel service. Who can’t be cheered by the sound of the children’s voices? There is always coffee and usually doughnuts. Please consider joining us! **Pastor Mathews** is leading the discussion; come and meet him.

## SERVING THE LORD

Interim Pastor     Rev. Craig Mathews

Office Admin Asst     Caitlin Tilton

Organist

Choir Director

Newsletter     Pat Finkenbine

School Admin     Wendy Horvath

Child Care Director     Debby Buel

School Admin Asst

### OFFICERS

President     Collins Sita

Vice President     James Kruse

Treasurer     Lucia Kruse

Secretary

### BOARDS

Head Elder

Christian Ed.

Human Care     Jean Cote

Outreach

Assimilation     Joyce Schneider

School Board     Catalina Bakas

Stewardship

Youth     Cherylann Galway

Financial

Secretary     Sherrie Keesee

Property Mgmt.     Steven Horvath

### GROUPS/GUILDS

Altar Guild     Catalina Bakas

Coffee Hour     Joyce Schneider

***The deadline for the January 2024 Newsletter is December 18th.  
PLEASE have all your submissions sent to patchas123@gmail.com  
OR drop them off at the church office by the date indicated above. Thank You!***

Once upon a time,  
A long, long time ago  
Begins the story of a baby  
That most of you should know.

His daddy's name was Joseph,  
And Mary was His mom,  
This babe was very special  
He was God's only Son.

Some angels came from heaven,  
And they began to sing  
To the shepherds in the fields below,  
"Glad tidings do we bring!"

A bright star lit the heavens,  
To light the magi's way  
To the baby in the manger,  
Who was born on Christmas day.

And all who gathered round Him,  
Rejoiced and praised His birth  
For the babe, the King, named Jesus,  
Is our Savior here on earth!

Leanne Guenther



## DAY SCHOOL

*I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing. John 15:5*

It has been an exciting past month in 5th and 6th grade, they have been working hard in all of their classes. They have finished their first book report. In Math they are working on Fractions, Adding, Subtracting, Dividing and Multiplying. In History they are studying and learning all 50 states and Capitals. Science the class has been working on different rock forms and different types of Spiders. The class has been rehearsing for the First Thanksgiving Skit and all their songs for the performance. The 2nd quarter is almost over, and the kids are getting ready for the Christmas play coming up. They are all working hard and finishing all their work. The kids have built a couple of little robots and have made photographs using only the sun in class. It's been busy but fun and a blessing at the same time. —Mr. Don (Coach)

Third and Fourth graders have been reading a story together during Read Aloud time. The story helps them understand the importance of compassion and making the best of a circumstance. In Health, the third graders are learning bicycle safety. The fourth graders have covered the lymphatic system. They have learned about viruses, bacteria, and the value of keeping your immune system strong. In Arithmetic, the fourth graders have learned how to add fractions and mixed numbers. The third graders have been working on finding the unknown number and how to solve it. In Language, both grades have been learning when to apply commas with different types of rules. It has been a busy month with our Thanksgiving program. The class memorized their skit and played their parts well in it. We hope all of you enjoy your Thanksgiving with family and friends. —Ms. Fran and Ms. Emily

The K-2nd grade students have been learning about our county's history from the Pilgrims arriving in the New World and about the various Native American Tribes spread across our country. We have also been learning two step addition and subtraction as well as Reading chapter books by our 2nd graders. We are very proud of our students doing their Scarecrow Reports and completing their monthly Reading Logs. Our Thanksgiving Program was a great hit! We are so proud of our students learning and memorizing their songs and Thanksgiving poems. —Ms. Gina and Ms. Pam

### Upcoming events:

December 6, 2023, Getting Ready for Christmas Family Get Together with Spaghetti Dinner, Crafts and more. 5 pm

December 13, 2023, “Stellar Christmas” Shine Jesus’ Light Childrens Christmas Program. 4pm

December 15, 2023, PTL Sponsored Parents Night Out! From 6-9. Pizza dinner, popcorn, crafts, and movies.

December 21, 2023, Childrens Christmas Lunch starting at 11 am.





## CHILD CARE



Letters of the month: G & D

Numbers of the month: 9 & 10

Shape of the month: Square

Color of the month: Green

Bible Lesson: Jesus is Born!, For unto you is born a savior who is Christ the Lord.  
Luke 2:11

This month we are learning about Jesus's Birth, winter and Holiday Traditions.

What we are learning in VPK A... We will be continuing with the Tree study. We also will be talking about Christmas fun, traditions, gingerbread and peppermint. We also will be doing two weeks of Christmas spirit. The letters of this month G,J,&R. Merry Christmas from VPK A!

What we are learning in VPK B... We will be continuing with the Tree study. We also will be talking about Christmas fun, traditions, gingerbread and peppermint. We also will be doing two weeks of Christmas spirit. The letters of this month G,J,&R. Merry Christmas from VPK B!

Calendar days:

Christmas Luncheon Dec. 21

Christmas Break Dec. 22, 25, 26 - Child Care Closed



**REDEEMER LUTHERAN CHURCH,  
SCHOOL & CHILD CARE**

6970 Mineola Rd.  
Englewood, FL 34224

ADDRESS SERVICE  
REQUESTED - OPTION 1



**REDEEMER LUTHERAN CHURCH,  
SCHOOL & CHILD CARE**

6970 Mineola Rd.  
Englewood, FL 34224

**Church Phone: 941-475-2410**

Church Fax: 941-475-9726

Email: Church.Office@redeemerfl.com

**School Phone: 941-473-7998**

Email: School.Office@redeemerfl.com

**Child Care Phone: 941-475-2631**

Email: redeemerchildcare@gmail.com

**REDEEMER REPORTER**

Published monthly for members, associate members and visitors of Redeemer Lutheran Church. Redeemer is a member congregation of the Lutheran Church Missouri Synod. (LCMS).

**WORSHIP SERVICES:**

Divine Service: 9:15 am

Bible Study: 10:30 am



*The Redeemer Lutheran Church, School & Child Care Family are called into the service of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ by His command (Matthew 28:18-20) to:*

- ◆ *Disciple all nations, that is, all people;*
- ◆ *Baptize in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit;*
- ◆ *Proclaim the Gospel and teach His Word in its truth and purity; and*
- ◆ *Never be ashamed of the Gospel—it is the power of God unto salvation (Romans 1:16)*