

Hymns

Session 1

- **Opening Prayer**

Lord God, as we begin our study of popular hymns, open our ears and hearts to the music of your Spirit. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen

- **Opening Discussion**

- What makes hymns different than secular songs?
- Do hymns sound better to you in a sanctuary? Why or why not?
- What instruments work best with hymns?
- Are hymns better for you when you participate or when you listen to “professionals”?

- **Background on United Methodist Church Hymnals**

- *First edition*
 - *1989 (approved by the 1988 UMC General Conference)*
 - *First hymnal after the 1968 merger of Methodist (“English Methodists”) and Evangelical United Brethren (“German or Dutch Methodists”) Churches – just weeks after MLK was assassinated*
 - *First substantial revision since the 1870s*
 - *Based on Revised Standard Version of the Bible*
 - *Replaced The Methodist Hymnal (1966)*
- What things do you find in the hymnal?
 - *Orders of Worship*
 - *Sacramental Services*
 - *Communion*
 - *Baptism*
 - *Hymns*
 - *What’s the first hymn? O For a Thousand Tongues to Sing (1739 – Charles Wesley)*
 - *What is the most recently-composed hymn? Hymn of Promise (1986 – Natalie Sleeth)*
 - *What 1984 hymn by Amy Grant and Michael W. Smith is in it? Thy Word*
 - *Psalter (responsive readings/singings of Psalms)*
 - *General Services / Acts of Worship*
 - *Marriage*
 - *Death and Resurrection*
 - *Morning and Evening Praise and Prayer*
 - *Affirmations of Faith*
 - *Prayers of Confession, Assurance, and Pardon*
 - *The Lord’s Prayer*
 - *Amens (How many different musical versions? 8)*
 - *Indexes*
 - *Acknowledgements for included copyrighted material*
 - *Composers/Arrangers/Authors/Translators/Sources*
 - *Scripture*
 - *Services/Psalter/Acts of Worship*
 - *Hymns*
 - *Metrical (have a choir member or other musician in the group explain references like “LM with Refrain” and “CM with Repeat”)*

- *Tune Names*
 - *Topics and Categories*
 - *First Lines and Common Titles*
- What ethnicities are covered in the hymns? *Dozens from Afro-American, African Latino, Asian-American, and Native American*
- How are page numbers handled? *They aren't. References are by hymn/psalter/section rather than page*
- Other reflections?
- **John Wesley's 7 Directions for Singing (page vii in UMC Hymnal)**
 - Read aloud, pausing after each to ask for applicability today.
 - How are we doing with this as a congregation?
- **UMC Favorite Hymns**
 - 2010 UMC Official Facebook Page survey
 - 1500 respondents
 - Have members guess which ones were on the list...
 1. Here I Am, Lord
 2. How Great Thou Art
 3. [Amazing Grace](#)
 4. [Hymn of Promise](#)
 5. [In the Garden](#)
 6. [Lord of the Dance](#)
 7. [It is Well with My Soul](#)
 8. [Be Thou My Vision](#)
 9. [Great is Thy Faithfulness](#)
 10. [Blessed Assurance](#); Because He Lives (tie)
 11. [The Old Rugged Cross](#)
 12. [Holy, Holy, Holy!](#)
 13. [O for a Thousand Tongues to Sing](#)
 14. Spirit Song
 15. Victory in Jesus
 16. Pass it On
 17. [What a Friend We Have in Jesus](#)
 18. [Christ the Lord is Risen Today](#)
 19. Lord, You Have Come to the Lakeshore
 20. [Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee](#); [Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing](#) (tie)
- **Prolific Hymn Authors**
 - Charles Wesley
 - Wrote over 6500 hymns
 - 51 are in the UMC Hymnal (in addition to 8 poems and 6 responses)
 - John Wesley
 - Wrote 4 in UMC Hymnal
 - Others:
 - Bach (contributed to 13 in UMC Hymnal) 1685-1750 classical composer [e.g., music-Savior of the Nations Come]
 - Fred Pratt Green (18) 1903-2000 British minister [e.g., Seek the Lord]
 - Jane Marshall (22) 1924-2019 American composer [What Gift Can We Bring]
 - Lowell Mason (15) 1792-1872 American music director and banker [music-O For a Thousand Tongues to Sing]
 - Richard Proulx (20) 1937-2010 American composer [many canticles]

- Gary Alan Smith (18) 1947- American Senior Music Editor at Abingdon Press [Good Christian Friends Rejoice]
- William Farley Smith (29) 1941-1997 American UMC minister [music-Go, Tell It On The Mountain]
- Isaac Watts (15) 1674-1748 English Congregational minister [Joy to the World]
- Ralph Vaughn Williams (22) 1872-1958 English composer [music-All Creatures of Our God and King]
- Charles Webb (20) [harmony-Let There Be Peace on Earth]
- Carlton Raymond Young (44) [harmony-On Eagle's Wings]

References for material:

- *The United Methodist Hymnal*
- *Then Sings My Soul: 150 of the World's Greatest Hymn Stories*
 - Used for historical information on many of the hymns

Italics imply important points or example answers the leader can convey

Session 2

- **Opening Prayer**

Heavenly Father, it is truly well with our souls and we praise your holy name for it! Amen.

- ***It Is Well with My Soul (Hymn #377 in The UMC Hymnal)***

- 1873 – Horatio G. Spafford (1828-1888)

- *History*

- 1870 - lost 4-year-old son to scarlet fever
- 1871 - lost fortune in great Chicago fire
- 1873 - lost four daughters when their ship (Ville du Havre) sank;
Horatio wrote the hymn while sailing over spot where the ship sank (some accounts say he wrote it later)
- 1880 - lost 4-year-old son named after prior son, also to scarlet fever
- 1881 – Horatio and wife Anna moved to Jerusalem to lead the “American Colony” to help the needy, regardless of religion
- 1888 – Horatio died
- 1923 – Anna died; one of the prayers spoken at her service was:

Life is eternal and love is immortal;

And death is only a horizon;

And a horizon is nothing,

Save the limit of our sight!

- <sing>

- What is Spafford saying in verse 1?

- What is the point of the repetition of “It is well with my soul”?
- Is he saying “It is well” because that’s how he feels, or that’s how he wants to feel?

- What strikes you as important in verse 2? *Sin not in part but the whole*

- In verse 3, what does Stafford mean by “haste the day when my faith shall be sight”?

- How has the history behind the hymn altered its message to you?

- How does the music (titled by Philip Bliss after the Ville du Havre ship) affect the hymn?

- ***All Hail the Power of Jesus’ Name (154 & 155)***

- 1779 – Rev. Edward Perronet (1721-1792)

- *History*

- *Grandson of Protestant couple who fled Catholic France*
- *Father was Anglican priest, and so was he*
- *Worked with John and Charles Wesley, but had a falling-out with them*
 - *Didn’t like to preach in front of John Wesley*
 - *On one occasion, when prompted by Wesley to preach, Perronet said he would deliver the greatest sermon ever preached, and then read Jesus’ Sermon on the Mount and sat down*
 - *Disagreed with Wesley on certain Church of England practices, including the Anglican directive that the Eucharist only be administered by priests*
 - *John Wesley removed All Hail from Methodist hymnals*
- *Retell the story about Rev. E.P. Scott (mid-1800s) playing the hymn on his violin when confronted by a tribe with spears in India – and how they were moved by it [ref: Then Sings My Soul]*

- <sing both [Coronation](#) and [Diadem](#) versions>

- What musical attributes of each version call to you?

- What visual imagery comes to mind when you read these lyrics?
- Why do you think this hymn is so popular?
- ***Silent Night, Holy Night (239)***
 - *1818 – Father Joseph Mohr (1792-1848)*
 - *History*
 - *December 24, 1818*
 - *Church organ was broken*
 - *Composed acapella hymn with organist (Franz Gruber)*
 - *Sang together as a duet on Christmas Eve with Gruber on the guitar*
 - *Spread through Austria by the organ repairman as “Tiroler Volkslied” or “Tyrolean Folk Song”*
 - *Popularized by Strasser children, folk singers who performed before the Austrian king and queen*
 - *1838 – first published in the German hymnbook “Catholic song and prayer book for public and domestic worship, initially for the use of the Catholic clergy in the Kingdom of Saxony”*
 - *1849 – first published in America in a Methodist hymnal*
 - [<sing>](#)
 - What are your earliest memories of this hymn?
 - Custom at many churches to sing one verse acapella.
 - Also done by Kelly Clarkson, Trisha Yearwood, and Reba McEntire ([YouTube recording](#)).
 - Harkens back to the hymn’s roots
 - How does this affect your experience of the hymn?
 - Why don’t we sing *Silent Night* outside of the Christmas Eve service?
 - If you had to pick a single theme for *Silent Night*, what would it be?
 - What contradictions do you find between the title and the lyrics? *Night...Light, Silent...Heavenly host & angels sing*
 - Do you think the contradiction is accidental or intentional?

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Session 3

- **Opening Prayer**

Dear Lord, it is with joyful hearts that we come to you today, as we stand on your eternal promises to us. Amen.

- **Standing on the Promises (374)**

- 1886 – Russell Kelso Carter (1849-1928)
- History
 - Strong Christian parents
 - Attended Pennsylvania Military Academy cadet prayer-meetings at the age of 15
 - Continued to waffle in faith in his teens and early adulthood,
 - Carter “lived the up-and-down experience so familiar to the average church member”
 - Was this your experience in early adulthood?
 - Carter felt like he wasn’t willing to pay the price God required
 - What price do you think you owe God?
 - Serious heart condition, close to death at the age of 30
 - Had a “come to Jesus” moment in his mother’s room
 - Had faith in “God’s healing promises” and was anointed by Dr. Cullis and professed to be healed
 - 1886 – suffered additional health issues, including malaria in 1888, and chronic weakness for the rest of his life
 - In California, promoted various bogus medical devices, and tried some himself
 - Preached and became a doctor
 - Theorized that Cain was the literal son of the serpent
 - Picked up by white supremacists and the KKK
- <sing> - first two verses
- What imagery stands out for you in the lyrics?
- Why do you think Carter chose these images?

- **Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee (89)**

- 1907 – Henry van Dyke (1852-1933)
- History
 - Well-credentialed man...
 - Presbyterian pastor
 - (student and professor) Princeton and Princeton Theological Seminary
 - US Ambassador to the Netherlands and Luxembourg
 - Lt. Commander in Navy Chaplains Corps in WWI
 - President of National Institute of Arts and Letters
 - Chairman of committee that compiled Presbyterian book of worship
- Does it surprise you that many of these hymn authors have extensive credentials beyond the field of music? Why or why not?
- <sing> - first two verses
- How does setting hymns to classical music affect your view of them?
 - Do you think the original classical music composers would approve?
- *Then Sings My Soul* book author (Robert J. Morgan) recalls this hymn as providing therapy for a bout of depression he had
 - How might these verses, or those of other hymns, be therapeutic to you?
- Wrote “Time Is” poem, the second section was read at Princess Diana’s funeral...

*Time is
Too slow for those who Wait,
Too swift for those who Fear,
Too long for those who Grieve,
Too short for those who Rejoice,
But for those who Love,
Time is not.*

- *His friend, Hellen Keller recalls what van Dyke said: "I'm not an optimist,' says Dr. van Dyke, 'there's too much evil in the world and in me. Nor am I a pessimist; there is too much good in the world and in God. So I am just a meliorist, believing that He wills to make the world better, and trying to do my bit to help and wishing that it were more.'"*

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Session 4

- **Opening Prayer**

Dear Lord, you truly are great among all, and your grace is nothing short of amazing. In your son's name we pray. Amen.

- **How Great Thou Art (77)**

- 1885 – Carl Boberg (1859-1940)
- History
 - Original “O Store Gud” (“O Mighty God”) written as a poem
 - Stuart Hine, an English missionary in Russia, translated/expanded it and set it to a Swedish melody
 - Inspired by the Carpathian Mountains (among other things)
 - Dr. J. Edwin Orr brought it to America from tribesmen in India
 - George Beverly Shea brought it to Billy Graham Crusades
 - Estimated he's sung live before more people than anyone else in history due to the Crusades
- <sing> - first two verses
- 2nd to *Amazing Grace* in favorite hymns by *Christianity Today* survey in 2001
 - Why do you think it's so popular?
- How does its choice of pronouns affect the hymn? (14 first persons plus 4 in the chorus)
- What theological themes does the hymn cover? *Nature/creation, sacrifice, resurrection, salvation*
- How does the folk melody add or detract from the hymn?
- What do you think are the best occasions to sing this hymn?
- When do you find your soul singing?

- **Amazing Grace (378)**

- 1779 – John Newton (1725-1807)
- History
 - Went to sea early with his father, a shipbuilder
 - Mother was a nonconformist (Free Church person / Protestant Christian not conforming to Church of England – like Methodists)
 - 1743 – impressed into service in the Royal Navy; deserted and flogged with 8 dozen lashes
 - 1745 – left by his shipmates in West Africa and became a slave of Princess Peye in Sierra Leone
 - 1748 – rescued by British sea captain of the Greyhound, enlisted by Newton's father to find him
 - Had a spiritual conversion aboard the Greyhound during his return when the ship was battered by a storm, but later claimed his real conversion came several years later
 - Captain of several slave trade ships
 - Converted to Christianity and renounced slave trade as an abolitionist
 - 1757 – lay minister applied to be a priest in the Church of England as well as with the Methodists, Independents, and Presbyterians
 - 1764 – Church of England priest and a very popular preacher among Anglicans and Nonconformists alike
 - 1772 – wrote *Amazing Grace* lyrics to illustrate a 1773 New Year's Day sermon on 1 Chron 17:16-17 (“Then King David went and sat in the Lord's presence. He asked: Who am I, Lord God, and of what significance is my family that you have brought me this far? But even this was too small in your eyes, God. You have spoken about the future of your servant's dynasty and have chosen me as an important person, Lord God.”)
 - 1779 – published as a hymn; no music appeared in early hymnals; sung to ~20 different tunes

- 1792 – Dr. of Divinity at College of New Jersey (now Princeton)
- Lived to see Britain’s abolition of African slaves in 1807
- 1835 – American composer William Walker set it to the tune of “New Britain” – today’s version
- <sing> - first two verses
- Verse 5 is rarely included in hymnals, the UMC Hymnal being a noted exception.
 - Why do you think this is the case?
- The original verse 6 is also rarely included. It reads:

*The earth shall soon dissolve like snow,
The sun forbear to shine;
But God, who call’d me here below,
Will be for ever mine.*

 - Why do you think it gets excluded?
- Do you have any important memories of this hymn?
- Do you have a favorite verse?
- Verse 6 in the UMC hymnal was later added as an example of the 19th century process of “floating” or borrowing stanzas and refrains from other sources
- Why do you think this hymn is so popular?
- Can a hymn be overdone to the point of wearing it out?

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Session 5

- **Opening Prayer**

Precious Lord, your assurance through your son's sacrifice on that old rugged cross is truly blessed. In His holy name we pray. Amen.

- **Blessed Assurance, Jesus is Mine (369)**

- 1873 – Frances (Franny) Crosby (1820-1915)
- History
 - Poet and prolific hymnist
 - She wrote more than 8000 hymns and gospel songs
 - Also wrote *To God Be the Glory [great things He hath done]*
 - She used more than 200 pseudonyms to get multiple hymns in the same hymnal since some publishers were reticent to include so many from one person
 - Suffered from congenital blindness
 - How might being blind affect someone in the music profession?
 - Crosby said: "It seemed intended by the blessed providence of God that I should be blind all my life, and I thank him for the dispensation. If perfect earthly sight were offered me tomorrow I would not accept it. I might not have sung hymns to the praise of God if I had been distracted by the beautiful and interesting things about me."
 - Tradition says she was a member of the John Street Methodist Episcopal Church in Manhattan – oldest Methodist congregation in North America (founded in 1766); however, records indicate her attending various churches/denominations (Episcopal, Dutch Reformed, Methodist Episcopal, Presbyterian)
 - Starting at the age of 10, memorized five chapters of the Bible each week
 - Advocate for the blind
 - First woman to speak on the Senate floor
 - Studied and taught at New York Institute for the Blind
- <sing> - first two verses
- Review the information on her visiting Phoebe Knapp at her parent's estate in *Then Sings My Soul*.
- Crosby wrote the lyrics to Knapp's tune
 - Knowing a little more about Phoebe, what strikes you about the lyrics?
- Publishers typically paid \$1/\$2 for lyrics; either the music composer or publisher retained the rights
 - Is a hymn's music or lyrics more important to you? Why?

- **The Old Rugged Cross (p.275/#504)**

- 1779 – George Bennard (1873-1958)
- History
 - Born in Youngstown, OH and soon moved to Michigan and then to Iowa
 - Active in Salvation Army, preaching in US and Canada
 - What experiences do you have with the Salvation Army besides their stores and donation buckets at Christmas?
 - Founded in 1865 in London as a church whose theology derives from Methodism
 - Church titles use military names (e.g., ministers are "officers")
 - Ordained an Episcopal Methodist minister
- <sing> - first two verses
- In his inspiration for the hymn, Bennard felt the cross became less a symbol and more an embodiment of John 3:16

- What do you think he meant by this?
- Reading the lyrics, how would you describe Bennard's feelings toward the cross?
 - Is this the way you view the cross?
- ***Precious Lord, Take My Hand (p.289/#474)***
 - *1932 – Thomas Andrew Dorsey (1899-1993)*
 - *History*
 - *African-American composer*
 - *Often confused with Tommy Dorsey*
 - *Wrote about 3000 songs, many of them gospel*
 - *Grew up in Georgia and moved to Chicago (known as "Georgia Tom" blues career)*
 - *Called "The Father of Gospel Music"*
 - *Music director at Chicago's Pilgrim Baptist Church for 50 years*
 - *1932 – wife died in childbirth and son died the next day*
 - *Chicago holds an annual gospel music festival in Dorsey's honor*
 - [sing](#) - first two verses
 - *This was MLK's favorite song, and he requested Dorsey play it for him on the eve of his assassination*
 - *Mahalia Jackson sang it at MLK's funeral*
 - *Aretha Franklin sang it at Mahalia Jackson's funeral*
 - Do you have any specific memories of this hymn?
 - What lyrics speak to you most strongly?

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Session 6

- **Opening Prayer**

Dear Lord, while we typically don't sing carols throughout the year, we carry the songs of your angels in our hearts and praise you for the joy you brought to the world in your Son. It is in His name we pray. Amen.

- **Christmas Hymns**

- What are your favorite Christmas albums?
- What makes a hymn be considered as a Christmas "carol"?
- Would you prefer Christmas music played in stores during the holidays be Christian, secular, both, or none?
- What are your experiences with caroling?

- **Angels We Have Heard on High (238)**

- 1862 – James Chadwick (1813-1882)
- History
 - Derivative of the traditional French carol "Les Anges dans nos campagnes" (literally "the angels in our countryside")
 - Roman Catholic priest and bishop
 - Professor and eventually President at Ushaw College in England
 - Set to the tune of "Gloria" – French carol arranged by Edward Shippen Barnes
- <sing> - first two verses
- What's your favorite part of the music?
- Do you like the 16-note "Glo" in Gloria? Why?
- Based on Luke 2 (read Luke 2:8-19)
 - "Gloria in excelsis Deo!" is the first line of what the angels sing in Luke 2:14
 - What are your thoughts on angels, in the Bible and in present day?
- Who do you think is speaking in each of the verses?
- Do you have any specific memories attached to this hymn?

- **Joy to the World (246)**

- 1719 – Isaac Watts (1674-1748)
- History
 - Nonconformist family (father twice jailed for non-Anglican beliefs)
 - English Congregational minister and prolific hymn writer (~750 hymns) in London
 - Also wrote "When I Survey the Wondrous Cross" and "Our God, Our Help in Ages Past"
 - Monument in Westminster Abbey honoring Watts
 - Present tune arranged by Lowell Mason in 1848 using Handel's Messiah
 - First 4 notes are the same as the Messiah's "Lift up your heads"
 - With what professional recordings are you most familiar?
- <sing> - first two verses
- Watts frequently adapted Psalms to hymns from a Christian perspective
 - This is an interpretation of Psalm 98 (have a group member read aloud)
 - What do the lyrics and the psalm have in common?
 - What is the Christian perspective here?
- Stanza 3 is frequently omitted from hymnals
 - What do you think is Watts's intent with the phrase "far as the curse is found"?
- Most published hymn in North America since the 20th century

- Why do you think it's so popular?

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Session 7

- **Opening Prayer**

Dear Lord, whether night or day, we know you are with us. Thanks for never leaving us in the dark, but always shining your light in our lives. In Jesus' name. Amen.

- **O Holy Night (not in UMC Hymnal)**

- 1847 (possibly 1843) – Placide Cappeau (1808-1877)

- History

- French wine merchant and poet
- Asked by the priest in Roquemaure to write a Christmas poem
- Wrote it in a carriage on the way to Paris based on Luke 2
- Original French version is titled “Cantique de Noel” = “Christmas carols”
- Asked composer Adolphe Adam to write the music
- Legend claims...

- Cappeau was an atheist who subsequently denounced the church and joined a socialist movement
- Composer Adam was Jewish (something that has been disputed recently)
- Banned for more than 20 years by the Catholic Church in France

- If legend is true, how does it impact your perspective on the hymn?

- Can secular artists unwittingly or intentionally further the Christian cause?

- More legend...

- First song broadcast live on the radio on December 21, 1906 by Canadian inventor Reginald Fessenden (Thomas Edison protégé)

- Popularized in USA by John Sullivan Dwight in mid-1850s

- American musicologist and transcendentalist
- He revised the 3rd verse...

- Original French translation:

The Redeemer

Has broken every hindrance:

The earth is free and the sky is open.

He sees a Brother where he was only a slave;

Love unites those chained with iron.

Who will tell Him our gratitude?

It is for all of us that He is born,

May He suffer and die.

People up, sing your deliverance!

- Dwight's translation:

Truly, he taught us to love one another; his law is love and his gospel is peace.

Chains shall he break, for the slave is our brother; and in his name all oppression shall cease.

- Increased popularity, especially in the North, during Civil War

- <sing> - two verses

- What are your thoughts on the tune?

- What recordings of this hymn come to mind?

- Are you familiar with the last two verses?

- Which phrases in the lyrics stand out to you?

- **Good King Wenceslas (not in UMC Hymnal)**

- 1854 – John Mason Neale (1818-1866)
- History
 - Anglican priest
 - English church restorer
 - Disliked “modern” hymns by Isaac Watts (*Joy to the World*) and worked to restore hymns to their medieval roots
 - Set to 13th century Finnish spring carol
 - Also wrote “Good Christian Men Rejoice,” “O Come, O Come Emmanuel” and “All Glory, Laud, and Honor”
- <sing> - first two verses
- History of the real Wenceslas
 - Patron saint of Czechoslovakia
 - Seized Bohemian dukedom from mother in 921 (later Roman Emperor Otto posthumously conferred on him the ‘regal dignity and title’ – thus is referred in legend as a ‘king’)
 - Built churches and ministered to the poor
 - Murdered by brother on way to church in 935
- “Feast of Stephen” is the day after Christmas
- What are your impressions of the music and lyrics?
- Odd lines end in single syllable “masculine” rhymes; even lines end in double syllable “feminine” rhymes
 - Branded as “doggerel” by some for its irregular rhyming
- Was Neale successful in bringing back a traditional medieval feel?

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Session 8

- **Opening Prayer**

Heavenly Father, as we complete our study of popular hymns and carols, we pray that you keep your song in our heart, and show us ways to sing your praises with the angels to all whom we meet. In Christ's name we pray. Amen.

- **Read Luke 2:1-21**

- **Hark! The Herald Angels Sing (240)**

- 1739 – Charles Wesley (1707-1788)

- History

- John Wesley's prolific brother – writing over 6500 hymns
- 18th child (of 19) of Samuel and Susanna Wesley, 9 died as infants
- Ordained into the Anglican Church along with John, their brother Samuel, and their father
- Fathered organist and composer Samuel Wesley ("the English Mozart") and grandfather to organist and composer Samuel Sebastian Wesley ("Samuel" was the name of his father and older brother)
- Formed the "Holy Club" at Oxford, joined by his brother John and friend George Whitefield
- Went with John to Georgia in 1735 and returned a year later
- Experienced religious conversion on May 21, 1738 – John's Aldersgate experience was three days later
- With John and George Whitefield, evangelized across Britain as part of the Methodist revival movement
- Unlike John, opposed to breaking from the Anglican Church and criticized John's ordination of American priests
- Against modification of his lyrics – calling some revisions "nonsense or doggerel"
 - 1753 – George Whitefield published the modified version we know today, including changing "welkin" to "angels"
- In what ways might the modification of hymns trouble you, if at all?
- 1856 - William Cummings set to 1840 tune by Mendelssohn
- One of the "Great Four Anglican Hymns" in 19th century Anglican and Protestant hymnals along with:
- All Praise to Thee, my God, this Night
- Lo! He Comes With Clouds Descending (also by C. Wesley)
- Rock of Ages, Cleft for Me

- <sing> - first two verses

- Other frequently sung UMC hymns written by Charles Wesley include:

- Christ the Lord Is Risen Today
- Come, Thou Long Expected Jesus
- O for a Thousand Tongues to Sing

- What memories do you have of "Hark! The Herald Angels Sing"?

- Are there any lyrics which strike you as particularly intriguing? "Sun" of Righteousness (rather than "Son"); "veiled in flesh the Godhead see"; "pleased with us in flesh to dwell"

- Why do you think this hymn is so popular?

- **It Came Upon the Midnight Clear (218)**

- 1849 – Edmund Hamilton Sears (1810-1876)

- History

- *Studied at Harvard Divinity School*
 - *Unitarian minister in Massachusetts*
 - *Written as Civil War approached*
 - *Richard Storrs Willis wrote tune the next year to accompany lyrics*
 - <sing> - first two verses
 - There is no explicit mention of Jesus
 - Where do you find Jesus in this carol?
 - What images do you draw from the lyrics?
 - Where do you see the influence of the approaching Civil War?
 - Where do you find comfort in this hymn?
 - What are your favorite memories or recordings of this carol?
-

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