

Hymns

The following lyrics to familiar tunes were written by Bill Levering.

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Written On Our Heart

to Rustington © 2012 Bill Levering

It's so hard to be obedient, even when we want to be.
All the rules and laws and standards stretch before us like the sea.
How can we, God's humble creatures, follow all and do our part?
God has placed the law within us. God has written on our heart.

When we pay attention closely we discover many wrongs.
We do note our sins morosely and know where the blame belongs.
It's a wonder that God's presence doesn't quickly just depart.
God has placed the law within us. God has written on our heart.

The true word of God is written in the life of Jesus Christ.
A new way has come before us: God wants us to be enticed.
Jesus calls us out of darkness, Jesus gives us a new start.
God has placed the law within us. God has written on our heart.

Punishment is not the high point, joy is the Creator's plan.
We are here to rediscover inner love that Christ began.
Join us brothers, sisters, join us in the dance of music, art.
God has placed the law within us. God has written on our heart.

O Perfect Love

Changes to make this wedding hymn inclusive

O perfect love, all human thought transcending,
Lowly we stand in prayer before thy throne,
That we may find a love that knows no ending
Reflecting care and peace that is your own.

O perfect life, bring forth our full assurance

Of tender charity and steadfast faith,
Of patient hope and quiet brave endurance
With childlike trust that fears not pain nor death.

Grant us the joy that brightens earthly sorrow.
Grant us the peace that calms all earthly strife.
Be with us now; help us to face tomorrow.
Show us the way to timeless love and life.

God, Bless Those Called to Lead

Tune: OLIVET

Text by Bill Levering and (mostly by) James Hart Brumm

God, bless those called to lead,
who dare to live our creed
and point toward you:
give our hearts clear, bright eyes
so selfish vision dies
and we might all arise
to share your view.

Bless those who share your Word
with we who have preferred
the status quo.
Help us hear prophecy
not as threats we must flee
but as the means to free
your Church to grow.

Bless Bob and Abby now.
Let us all share their vow
and walk your Way
together, fearful, bold,
on paths both new and old
until we all behold
your brighter day.

Bless all our differing gifts
and use our various rifts

to work as one.
May we feel order brace
our promise with your grace
as we take up the race
your saints all run.

"Come Thou Most Ancient of Days"
(to Italian Hymn)

This hymn is written as a fix to Come Thou Almighty King
(c) 2009 Bill Levering

Come Thou Most Ancient of Days,
Help us thy name to praise.
Hear us today: Creator glorious,
O'er all victorious, Come and reign over us
Hear us we pray.

Come Thou incarnate Son,
Bring us at last to the One.
Our prayers attend: Come and thy people bless
and give thy word success, vision of holiness
on us descend.

Come holy Comforter,
Thy sacred witness bear.
In this glad hour: Thou who almighty art,
Now rule in every heart, and ne'er from us depart,
Spirit of power.

To Thee, great One in Three, The highest praises be
For evermore. Thy sovereign majesty
May we in glory see, and to eternity
Love and adore.

"Lord We Gather Shaken And Trembling"

(to Let all Mortal Flesh Keep Silence)

(c) 2001 Bill Levering

This hymn was written for the Sunday following September 11, 2001.

Lord we gather shaken and trembling, many hearts are filled with fear.
Towers fall and cities are wasted, terror reigns and brings us here.
Hear our cry of anguish, Holy Lord. Make your way of peace gently clear.

Images of devastation haunt our view, invade our soul
Headlines flash new horrors and panics, we cry out to be made whole
Lift our hearts, O God of every land. Make your peace our heavenly goal.

In the midst of death and destruction, tune our hearts to hear your voice
Speak, though we are fearful and tearful, help us mourn, yet give us choice:
Help us choose the life of hope and of bright dawn. Someday, somewhere, we will rejoice.

"O Lord of Wholeness"

To St. Agnes (Jesus, the Very Thought of Thee)

(c) 2003 Bill Levering

This hymn was written when the invasion of Iraq was immanent.

O Lord of wholeness, you who healed
The leper and the blind,
We seek your truth to be revealed
To rescue heart and mind.

We pray for healing of our land;
We pray for ways of peace.
Help us to see what you demand
For worldly strife to cease.

We pray for stubborn hearts of pride
That cannot stand defeat.
May we, all sabers here deride

And from false war retreat.

Heal warring spirits, make them whole
Before new wounds are torn;
Guide speech and symbol, search our soul.
Let hope and peace be born

"We Gather Here for Joy"

to Come Sing o Church in Joy

(c) 2001 Bill Levering

This hymn was written on the occasion of the marriage of Bill Levering to Abigail Norton.

We gather here for joy, we gather here for love;
We gather in God's grace for blessings from above.
God joins our song.
We meet – creation and creator – all life long.

A man and woman join, so women, men rejoice;
For all the grace this union holds, we find a voice.
We lift our hearts,
And share thanksgiving for the life that God here starts.

This wedding is a sign that God is in the world,
A sign that hope and love will ever be unfurled.
Rejoice this day,
For banners of the holy bless us on our way.

"In Praise of Wondrous Human Love"

to "Amazing Grace"

(c) 2005 Bill Levering

In praise of wondrous human love
We join our voices here
In grateful celebration of

Connections bold and clear.

For partners, parents, gentle friends

We offer thanks and praise.

They catch our tears, they warm our hearts.

They hold us all our days.

We celebrate the freedom true

To choose our way of life.

To choose our love, our path, our health,

To even choose our strife.

We stand with people 'round the world

Who yearn to shape their fate.

We call our nation here and now

New justice to create.

"A Word of Peace"

to Brahms 1st Symphony, 4th Movement

(c)2006 Bill Levering

We stand together to sing a word of peace.

We stand for justice, that wars and hate would cease.

Our hearts have moved, our ears have heard the God of time and space.

Now filled with Spirit, fresh and true, we move out to run our holy race.

Send us refreshed, Lord, to spread kindness from this place.

Help us to act, Lord, to speak the words of grace.

We ask your blessings on all lands, on people everywhere.

Help all your children live and learn and help us to have the strength to care.

Here we have tasted the goodness of the Lord.

Here we have drunk from the fountain of God's word.

We join our hearts for what God imparts: a fullness none deny.

With saints before and future hopes we march to tomorrow, heads held high.