

Chapter 7: Other Christadelphian Hymnals

The history of Christadelphian music that has been discussed has concentrated on music which is used by the entire ecclesia at their gatherings throughout each week. However, different hymn books are used by sections of the Christadelphian community such as the Sunday Schools and the Youth Groups. Over the years, various publications have been introduced to suit the specific needs of these groups.

The first known published Sunday School hymnal appeared in 1897, as recorded in *The Fraternal Visitor*. This book was published for the Suffolk Street section of the Christadelphian community and was titled *Hymns for use in the Christadelphian Sunday Schools*¹⁶⁰. Like the 1874 and 1903 Christadelphian hymn books, the 1897 Sunday School hymnal was eventually notated in tonic sol-fa as well as staff notation¹⁶¹. The new Sunday School hymn book was announced in April 1897, stating that it was compiled especially for children, and contained at least fifty hymns¹⁶². In the same announcement were details that Christadelphians in America had also recently published their own Sunday School hymnal, of which there are no known existing copies today¹⁶³.

The Suffolk St Sunday School hymnal of 1897 contained sixty hymns and ten anthems and came to be known as *The Sunday School Union Hymn Book*¹⁶⁴. Since 1897, two editions of the Union hymn books have been presented in various publications, in 1913 and in 1932. In all of the Sunday School Union hymn books, pages were embellished with cornices of flowers and leaves in an attempt to make the pages appealing to children. The 1913 edition of the hymn book had omitted ten anthems that were originally in the 1897 hymnal, and in 1936, the hymn book had a total of 137 hymns. Tonic sol-fa notation had also been removed for the 1936 edition. The preface to the 1913 hymn book was also reproduced in the 1936 edition and in subsequent reprintings. The comments included the following:

“The Hymns have been carefully chosen from various sources, and the many beautiful truths they express must have an uplifting influence upon all who use them, whether at home or in School . . . Every care has been exercised to respect copyright - but should there be any Hymns in this collection which are an infringement of copyright (inserted unwittingly) we trust this explanation will be accepted. In

¹⁶⁰ Morris, John. *With heart and voice - 10. Children's Praise*. *The Christadelphian*. Vol 127, No 1516, October 1990, 375.

¹⁶¹ Jones, Charles. *Sunday School hymn book with music*. *The Fraternal Visitor*. Vol XV, No 182, November 1900, 340.

¹⁶² Horsman, H. *New hymn books*. *The Fraternal Visitor*. Vol XII, No 139, April 1897, 111.

¹⁶³ Horsman, H. 111.

¹⁶⁴ Morris, J. 375.

confidence and hope we issue this volume, trusting that the blessing of our Heavenly Father will attend this endeavour to glorify His Name”¹⁶⁵.

The 1913 hymn book was considered to not only be suitable for Christadelphian children to sing at home or Sunday School, but also for adult class use, presumably at the Mutual Improvement Classes¹⁶⁶. Like the ecclesial hymn books, the Sunday School hymn books were published in conjunction with a magazine, known as *The Young Folks' Magazine* and by 1920, the 1913 hymn book was out of print¹⁶⁷. Many of the hymns issued in the 1913 and 1936 hymn books were written by Christadelphian members. *The Fraternal Visitor* noted that:

“many of the new hymns have been specially written by brethren and sisters for this work, and some of the tunes are new and suited to the words”¹⁶⁸.

Unfortunately, appropriate credit was not given to them and their names did not appear in the hymn books. Research is yet to be done on who wrote these hymns. As can be seen in the index in Appendices B and C, many of the 1913 and 1936 hymns remain without authors and composers, and it may be these hymns that are of Christadelphian origin. Some of the hymns that can be identified as being composed or written by Christadelphians were those that had already appeared in the 1903 hymn book, including the composers Mary Randles (LANGLAND BAY) and C. J. Caldicott (BLESSING and PRIMA LUCE). The aims for the hymn books were to find suitable music and words that would be appropriate for Sunday School scholars, such as hymn 61 from the 1936 *Sunday School Union Hymn Book*, shown in Example 13.

The texts of these hymns were considered appropriate if they contained sentiments that children would be able express, rather than a believer with understanding. The texts also imply behaviours, teaching children how to act. Example 1 shows this in saying “Oh what can little eyes do . . . these little eyes can upward look, and learn to read God’s holy book”. Through these hymns, children who did not have the understanding of a believer could be taught appropriate behaviour and doctrine. Many of the tunes were used for two sets of hymn words, so that children did not have to cope with learning a lot of new music. Later, the repetition of music became a problem and the repertoire needed to be expanded.

¹⁶⁵ *Preface to 1913 Edition*. *Christadelphian Sunday School Union Hymn Book*. Birmingham: Christadelphian Literature Society, 1936.

¹⁶⁶ *The Sunday School Union Hymn Book*. *The Fraternal Visitor*. Vol XXVIII, No 330, March, 1913, 72.

¹⁶⁷ *Sunday School Hymn-Book*. *The Fraternal Visitor*. Vol XXXV, No 413, February 1920, 40.

¹⁶⁸ *The Sunday School Union Hymn Book*. *The Fraternal Visitor*. Vol XXVIII, No 330, March, 1913, 72.

Example 13. "We come O Lord to bless Thee" from 1936 Sunday School Union Hymn Book. Reference nos. Appendix B, 1077 and Appendix C, M117¹⁶⁹.



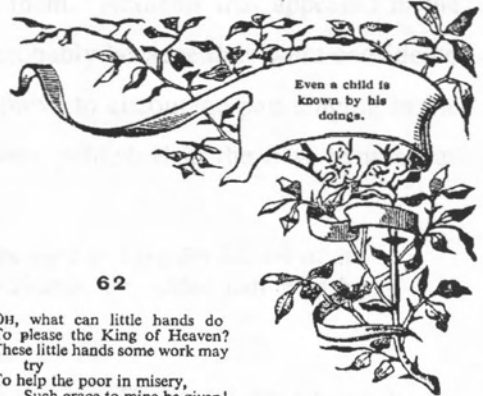
61

We come, O Lord, to bless Thee,
In this our Sunday School,
Our hearts are light, our faces
bright,
And as in worship we unite,
Love is our golden rule.

With gladness, Lord, we wel-
come,
The hour we gather here.
It is indeed a holy place
Where those who love Thee seek
Thy face,
And feel Thy presence near.

We meet our faithful teachers,
And read Thy precious Word;
And then Thy glorious truth we
learn,
And more of Thy great love
discern,
From lessons well prepared.

Help us, O Lord, to practise,
What here we learn of Thee,
And like Thy dear obedient Son,
The race with joy and patience
run
Until His face we see.



62

Oh, what can little hands do
To please the King of Heaven?
These little hands some work may
try
To help the poor in misery,
Such grace to mine be given!

Oh, what can little eyes do
To please the King of Heaven?
These little eyes can upward look,
And learn to read God's holy
book,
Such grace to mine be given!

Oh, what can little lips do
To please the King of Heaven?
These little lips can sing and pray,
And gentle words of kindness
say,
Such grace to mine be given!

Oh, what can little hearts do
To please the King of Heaven?
These hearts, if God His blessing
send,
Can love and trust the children's
Friend,
Such grace to mine be given

After the reunion between Temperance Hall and Suffolk St Christadelphians had taken place, a youth hymn book was published in 1952. This was done not only for young people but also for Sunday School students. John Carter, who was editor of *The Christadelphian* at the time, set up a committee to compile a suitable praise book, and the result was the *Christadelphian Youth Hymnal*. Many hymns were composed or written by Christadelphian members for this publication, with the hymns being specifically for "young people not yet in Christ"¹⁷⁰. The hymns were divided into sections under the following subjects:

- Hymns about God: Praising; Thanking; Praying; Thinking.
- Hymns about Jesus Christ: His Birth and Childhood; His Ministry; His Death; His Rising from the Dead; His Coming Again; His Reign on Earth.
- God's Work in History.
- Learning and Living: The Scriptures; Duty; Truth About Ourselves; Parting; The Seasons.

The compilers of the hymn book noted that Sunday School

"teachers will find the book an instrument for spiritual education" and that "this Hymn Book will provide young people with an ample choice for their varying needs in Sunday Schools and Young People's Classes, on special occasions and in the family circle"¹⁷¹.

¹⁶⁹ Audio example 13. "We come O Lord". 1 verse played by R. Hocking on pipe organ.

¹⁷⁰ Preface to *Christadelphian Youth Hymnal*. Birmingham: The Christadelphian, 1952.

¹⁷¹ Preface, 1952.

One of the important musical features of this hymnal was the addition of vocal parts on top of the melody, for the children to learn. Prior to this, children probably only learnt hymn melodies, as this was considered difficult enough for them. Anthems that appeared in the earliest Sunday School hymn book had been omitted, probably because they were considered to be too hard for children to sing. Now there was a move to encourage part singing in the Sunday School and Youth Groups, and these parts were published in the new hymnal, as shown in Example 14. The compilers stated that:

“this is an innovation, and in many schools it may be used as a regular feature of the singing, but where only singing in unison is practicable, the added part may be disregarded”¹⁷².

The vocal parts have not been reproduced in this format in any Christadelphian hymn books since this publication. Mr Denis Crosby is noted in the Preface as arranging some of these “duets” as well as contributing some of the melodies from other sources. Example 2 shows an arrangement of PROMISE in three parts, with the melody being in *Ist Voice*. The other two parts contain mainly leaps, with some being up to an octave. All three parts are set in a vocal range of middle C to soprano G, indicating that the parts were written for children and not young adults as implied by the title *Youth Hymnal*.

Some of the Christadelphian composers and writers that were represented in the 1952 hymnal included Louis George Sargent, Catherine Alexandra Morgan and Doris Martindale. Sargent (1899-1971) had been editor of *The Christadelphian* from 1962 to 1969 and also played a significant role in compiling the hymnal. Previously to this, he had submitted many articles and poetry to the journal for publication, and had served as Literary Editor from 1939 on. Sargent amended many of the hymn texts for the youth hymnal as well as writing four hymns for the publication. These hymns were: no. 17 “High over lashing waves our God is throned”; no. 70 “Jesus, who gathered in tenderness the children”; no. 74 “Was it for me thy flesh was wounded sore”; and no. 23 “Who gave the horse a thund’rous mane”.

Doris Martindale (1898-1960) contributed the Christmas hymn, no. 63 “Angels did sing on Bethl’ems hill”, which was coupled with the joyous medieval VULPIUS tune; and no. 140 “When the Lord Jesus was here”. She belonged to Leicester ecclesia and regularly participated in their singing classes. Martindale had worked in *The Christadelphian* office from 1939 as the editor’s secretary, with a shorthand speed of 200 words per minute. She remained with *The Christadelphian* for 23 years, eventually dying of cancer in hospital.

¹⁷² Preface, 1952.

Example 14 . PROMISE by an unknown Christadelphian member, with text "a rose shall bloom" by William Osborne, also a Christadelphian member. Vocal parts arranged by Denis Crosby. Reference nos Appendix B, 7 and Appendix C, S332¹⁷³.

(92)
 PROMISE
 Rather quietly. $\text{♩} = 96$.
 Irregular.
 1st VOICE.
 2nd VOICE.
 3rd VOICE.

Isaiah xxxv

mf. A rose shall bloom in the lonely place,
 A wild shall echo with sounds of joy,
 For heav'n's own gladness its bounds shall grace,
 And forms angelic their songs employ.

p. And Lebanon's cedars shall rustle their boughs,
 And fan their leaves in the scented air:

cr. And Carmel and Sharon shall pay their vows,
f. And shout, for the glory of God is there.

p. The blind shall see, and the deaf shall hear,
mf. The dumb shall raise their notes for Him;

f. The lame shall leap like the unharmed deer,
 And the thirsty shall drink of the living stream.

ff. The ransomed of God shall return to Him
 With a chorus of joy to a gladsome lay;
 No eye with a tear of grief shall be dim,
 For sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

Other hymns were supplied by Catherine Alexandra Morgan (1900-1964) including no. 64 "Angels o'er the sleeping earth"; no. 78 "Lone Mary comes at early morn"; and no. 141 "Lord, our parting do Thou brighten". Like Sargent, many of Morgan's poems appeared in print in *The Christadelphian*. Sargent actually described Morgan as "a writer of graceful verse which always reflected the love of nature"¹⁷⁴. She had originally been a headmistress at a church school but was forced to give up the position when she became a Christadelphian. Morgan wrote many articles and supplied illustrations for children's magazines as well as publishing a Christadelphian children's book titled *Beside the Brook* in 1947. Cowlshaw records that while she was in hospital, dying from lung cancer, she wrote her last poem and drew her last illustration "in time for the next Path", as she said¹⁷⁵. Many of the hymns from the youth hymnal are still currently sung as they were included in the 1964 hymn book, although the actual *Christadelphian Youth Hymnal* is not in use anymore.

¹⁷³ Audio example 14. PROMISE. 1 verse, played by R. Hocking.

¹⁷⁴ Cowlshaw, 17.

¹⁷⁵ Cowlshaw, 17.

The most recent Birmingham publication of hymns for Sunday School is *Sing to the Lord*, issued in 1978. The problems with producing hymn books for young children and young adults is addressed in the preface to *Sing to the Lord*:

“The compilation of a hymn book has always been a difficult enterprise, since the expression of worship in song is a highly individual matter in which tastes may differ widely. The difficulty has latterly been increased by the emergence of a type of music and song which appeals to the younger generation but is not readily understood or appreciated by the older.”¹⁷⁶

Even with the acknowledgment that youth and children are attracted to different styles of music, the hymn book that was produced was made in accordance with traditional texts and tunes. This was regardless of the fact that the younger generation were to use it, at Sunday School, not the older. The tastes of the older generation were preferred, because their chosen music types and qualities were considered suitable for singing praise to God¹⁷⁷. *Sing to the Lord* is essentially a book with hymn styled tunes and texts, like its predecessors. However, it does contain some songs with simpler texts and actions that very young children, who are unable to read, can memorise and enjoy. The aims of these youth and children hymnals were to provide appropriate language for unbelievers to express themselves, with types of music and texts that were enjoyable to sing and easy to learn. These hymn books were not considered to be suitable for use in the Memorial Meeting, due to their simplicity in texts and tunes, and basic subject matter. Consequently they were used at Sunday Schools, Mutual Improvement Classes and youth group activities.

Other publications that are used in Christadelphian circles, particularly within Sydney, consist of those compiled by Cherry Clementson and published by the Hoddesdon ecclesia, in England. Some of these publications include *Sing Hosanna* volumes 1-4, and *Praise the Lord*, first published 1993, with a revised edition released in 2000. These books are for use within the main events of the ecclesia, such as the Memorial Meeting, but are generally only used by less conservative groups. The publications contain a mixture of Christian songs, some composed by Christadelphians; well known hymns that haven't been used in Christadelphian circles before, for example “Tell Out My Soul”; Taize pieces for meditation, Jewish styled songs and anthems¹⁷⁸. Although these books contain hymns and other items similar to those in the *Christadelphian Hymn Book*, the publications are generally thought of as only containing songs, so therefore are a bit lighter in significance and considered appropriate for young people's use. This may be due to the introduction of guitar chord charts for many of the songs, widening the choice of accompaniment instruments. Guitars, drums and similar instruments are seen by

¹⁷⁶ Nicholls, A. *Sing to the Lord*. *The Christadelphian*. Vol 116, No 1377, March 1979, 104.

¹⁷⁷ Nicholls, March 1979, 104.

¹⁷⁸ Examples of pieces that appear in *Praise the Lord* are found on audio examples 15, 16 and 17.

many members to have informal associations and link these instruments to styles of music such as popular music and other secular forms that are generally unaccepted by many for use in worship.

Many of the traditional church hymns have been modernised, so that the texts can reach a wider audience, but this has been inconsistent in its application. For example in the 1993 version of *Praise the Lord*, the traditional language of *Thee* and *Thou* in Charlotte Elliott's "Just as I am" have been replaced with *You* and *Your*, so that the text becomes:

Just as I am, without one plea
But that your blood was shed for me,
And that you bid me come to you,

However, the text of the last verse reads:

Just as I am, thou wilt receive,
Wilt welcome, pardon, cleanse, relieve;
Because thy promise I believe,

There are many musical errors within these books including incorrect guitar chords, harmonies and rhythms. In the 2000 version of *Praise the Lord*, a lot of inconsistencies and errors have been corrected, including *Just as I am*. Many ecclesias in Sydney have embraced the use of *Praise the Lord* as it presents different styles of music and texts, but the publication has not been equally popular worldwide¹⁷⁹. A review of *Praise the Lord* negatively titled "Moody and Sankey revisited", written by Reg Carr, appeared in *The Testimony* magazine. This review began with the paragraph:

"Every now and then – though happily not too often – a publication crops up for review where adverse critical comment simply cannot be avoided, notwithstanding its merits and the sincerity of its producers. Such a publication is *Praise the Lord*, the 'Hoddesdon hymn-book': good in parts, its faults nevertheless give grounds for overriding concern."¹⁸⁰

It is mainly the texts that are criticised in Carr's review for their superficiality and doctrinal errors, with some texts being doctrinally ambiguous in regards to the teaching of the Trinity, heaven-going and other such ideas that are unacceptable to Christadelphians¹⁸¹. Carr notes that:

¹⁷⁹ This can be seen in the results of a Sydney ecclesial survey, detailed in Chapter 8.

¹⁸⁰ Carr, Reg. *Moody and Sankey revisited*. *The Testimony*. Vol 63, No 756, December 1993, 455.

¹⁸¹ For details of unacceptable doctrines, see Appendix A *Doctrines to be rejected*.

“If at least some degree of literary merit had been a criterion for hymns to be included in this anthology, then all the trite, or repetitious, or sickly sentimental hymns would have been automatically ruled out.”¹⁸²

He faults the publishers for using evangelical composers like Graham Kendrick, instead of using suitable Christadelphian composers and authors, whom he lists as including Roy Standeven, Jean Galbraith, Edith Ladson, Catherine Macdonald, Lou Sargent, William Watkins and Eustace Williams¹⁸³. Carr only finds twenty of the original 130 hymns in *Praise the Lord* worthwhile additions to the Christadelphian repertoire and ends the review by saying:

“As it stands, *Praise the Lord* will certainly divide rather than unite. It may perhaps serve as a rallying-point for a liberal minority; but by the discerning it will be seen as a flawed and undesirable feature of a mixed community which, if this kind of hymn-singing became the norm, would be in grave danger of slipping back to where it came from. No doubt Moody and Sankey, the popular evangelical hymn book compilers of the nineteenth century, would have been pleased with many parts of *Praise the Lord*; but should we be, who have left such shallowness for the deeper, fuller and more enduring things of the Truth?”¹⁸⁴

For a book that got so negative a review, five thousand copies were sold, with a reprint appearing in 1996. A revised version, consisting of the original 130 songs from *Praise the Lord* 1993, 70 songs from the *Sing Hosanna* series and 100 new songs was released in 2000, which many people have already begun to purchase and use.

In Australia, there has been a move by individuals to push Christadelphian-composed hymns. Generally speaking for conferences, youth conferences and bible schools (events which occur every couple of years), advertisements asking for new songs and hymns are circulated. These new hymns are then sung at the event, and usually forgotten afterwards. However, some of these hymns have been published, but these publications such as *Hymns of Praise* (1986) and *Hymns from Christadelphian Conferences and Youth Conferences* (1984) are not really used in individual ecclesias. The reasons could be due to the poor quality compositions that are found in these publications. The hymns are difficult to sing and are not very memorable, with awkward phrase shaping and melodic intervals. It is hoped that some of the good compositions recently published by Christadelphian composers will be included in the 2000 *Christadelphian Hymn Book*. The most prolific composer here is Ian Hyndman, from ~~Brisbane~~, Australia.

¹⁸² Carr, 456.

¹⁸³ Carr, 456.

¹⁸⁴ Carr, 458.

Example 15. O CHRIST OUR LORD, WHOSE BEAUTY by Ian Hyndman, with text by Jean Galbraith¹⁸⁵.

1980 CONFERENCE

O CHRIST OUR LORD, WHOSE BEAUTY

Ian Hyndman (Beechworth, Vic.)

O Christ our Lord, whose beauty
Shines on our feeble ways,
Transform our path of duty
Into a path of praise;
Light in our hearts the wonder
Of fellowship with thee,
That no temptation sunder
Those whom thou madest free.

But, strong in thee abiding —
Not in our strength, but thine,
Wholly in thee confiding,
Weak branches of thy vine —
Bring forth thy fruit of healing,
The fruit thou madest fair,
The truth of God revealing,
And show thy beauty there.

Without thy strength we falter,
And all our love seems vain
Who fear thy path of loving
May be a path of pain;
But see, ahead is dawning
Light after evenfall,
When, brighter than the morning,
God shall be all in all.

Jean Galbraith, Tyers, Vic.

The aims with all of these hymnals has been to present an alternative to the *Christadelphian Hymn Book*, for differing reasons. Alternatives were needed for non-members, such as children and the youth, so that they may have appropriate hymns that they can understand, with accessible music, whether it be through its simplicity and ease of learning, or through the

¹⁸⁵ Hyndman, Ian. O CHRIST OUR LORD, WHOSE BEAUTY. Text by Jean Galbraith. From Hymns from Christadelphian Conferences and Youth Conferences, 1957-1984.

style of music. However, members also needed alternatives to the *Christadelphian Hymn Book*, with music and text that was more appealing, due to its accessibility in music styles and in text formats. Christadelphian composers and authors have also presented their works in separate publications so that members, who are dissatisfied with singing hymns by non-Christadelphians, can sing without any misgivings about the hymns' origins. However, these alternative publications have been accepted in less ecclesias than those who accept the *Christadelphian Hymn Book*, and used only as a supplement to the *Christadelphian Hymn Book*.