

More Songs from Hopewell Song List and Liner Notes

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Praise God (Doxology)

In May 2005, Louisa Papaccio, HRC's worship director, told me about her idea to set the doxology to a new melody, to help people hear the old words in a new way. I said I would work on it. A month later, while meeting at her home to plan the last service of the program year, she asked me how the doxology was going. I told her I didn't have anything, so we went on to something else. But a minute later, I stopped hearing Louisa's voice because a melody had come into my head. I grabbed my little tape recorder, quickly sang the tune, and returned to our discussion. But the music wouldn't leave me alone. So I moved to her piano, and the rest of the doxology wrote itself right there.

We sang "Praise God" for the first time at that late spring service and then continued singing it for the entire summer. By September, it had spread to churches across the United States. I was so pleased to tell Louisa this news and to present her with the sheet music and a dedication to her at the top.

Louisa passed away in October. Among the many beautiful pieces she had chosen for her memorial service was "Praise God." I feel Louisa's spirit in this music. Listen for her; she's there.

Praise God, praise God, praise God, from whom all blessings flow;
Praise him, praise him, praise him, all creatures here below;
Praise him above, ye heavenly host, praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.
Praise God, praise God, praise God, from whom all blessings flow.

Words by Thomas Ken, 1674
Music by LNW
CCLI song #4539641

Open Us Up

I had the honor of participating in the 200th General Synod of the Reformed Church of America this past June in Pella, Iowa. I wrote this song for the opening night service, whose theme was “The Holy Spirit Unites Us with Christ.” HRC’s pastor, Taylor Holbrook was the guest preacher. The scripture he chose was from Mark and spoke about the heavens being torn apart and the Holy Spirit descending upon us like a dove.

Oh that the heavens might, oh that the heavens might rip open wide
Tear us together, bridge this divide!
All that the spirit might, all that the spirit might breathe in this place
Unite every heart, restore us to grace.

Open us up, open us up, Holy Spirit;
Bring us your peace, we pray.
Open us up, open us up, Holy Spirit;
Live in our hearts today.
Open us up, open us up, Holy Spirit;
Come to us now, sweet dove.
Open us up, open us up, Holy Spirit;
Change us with your love, sweet dove.

Oh that the people, oh that the people might welcome this chance
To walk in the light and join in the dance!
All for the glory, all for the glory of Father and Son—
Oh Spirit divine, we beg you to come and

Open us up, open us up, Holy Spirit;
Bring us your peace, we pray.
Open us up, open us up, Holy Spirit;
Live in our hearts today.
Open us up, open us up, Holy Spirit;
Come to us now, sweet dove.
Open us up, open us up, Holy Spirit;
Change us with your love, sweet dove.

Oh that the heavens might, oh that the heavens might rip open wide . . .

Words and music by LNW
CCLI Song # 4800181

Blessed Rest

Written for The Gathering, HRC's contemporary service

"Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest."

Alarm clock rings, six in the morning, wake up fast, jump out of bed.
Brush my teeth while I make the coffee, pour the juice, butter the bread.
Feed the kids, cats, and the husband, walk the dog, finally get dressed.
Out the door at 6:29; I'm totally stressed!

Hop in the car, get on the highway, drive too fast to get to the train.
Parking spot's a mile from the station, break a heel, it starts to rain.
Drink cold coffee, read an old paper, stationmaster steps out to say,
"Train broke down a mile from the station."
This isn't my day!

But where do I go?
Who can I turn to?
How can I find a little blessed rest?
Where do I go?
Who can I turn to?
How can I find a little bit of blessed rest?

Hop in the car, drive away faster, try to beat the mob from the train.
Weave through traffic into the city, get to the office feeling insane.
Papers falling out of my briefcase, raindrops dripping off of my head,
Words come tumbling out of my mouth that shouldn't be said.

I wonder how my life got so crazy, certainly didn't plan it this way.
Multitasking every last minute, spinning faster every new day,
Climbing higher, stepping out farther, do, do, do, but never get done
The things I really need to survive I haven't begun.

But where do I go?
Who can I turn to?
How can I find a little blessed rest?
Where do I go?
Who can I turn to?
How can I find a little bit of blessed rest?

Come to me and I will give you rest.
Come to me and I will give you rest.

Alarm clock rings, six in the morning, wake up fast, jump out of bed.
Brush my teeth while I make the coffee, pour the juice, butter the bread.

Feed the kids, cats, and the husband, walk the dog, finally get dressed.
Out the door at 6:29.

That's when I stop,
That's when I listen,
That's when I hear:

Come to me and I will give you rest.
Come to me and I will give you, I will give you rest,
Blessed rest.

Words and music by LNW
CCLI Song #4762683

Blessed Be Your Name

Written for The Gathering

“Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come . . .”

Blessed be, blessed be, blessed be your name,
Evermore, evermore, evermore the same.
From the rise of the moon to the setting sun,
Blessed be, blessed be, blessed be the one.

Holy, holy, Lord God almighty,
Forevermore the same.
Holy, holy, Lord God almighty,
Blessed be your
Blessed be your name, your name.

Words by LNW
Music by Godfrey Nelson and LNW
CCLI Song # 4800174

God-Sized Hole

Last fall, Pastor Taylor Holbrook was planning a six-part sermon series called “What Are We Doing on Earth?” Each week, I wrote a section that went along with the sermon topic. I never knew what I'd be writing about until the next week. I sang the song in its entirety at the end of the series.

I don't know where to begin.
My world seems to be closing in.
I've got a family, a house, a career,
But something is missing right here.
It's in the voice I've been trying to still,
The hunger I'm dying to fill.

There's a God-sized hole living in my heart
And it's tearing me apart.

I have lost my way, my truth, my life
I gave it all away, believing in a star that burnt out in the night.
Well, now the dawn is near, but it's dark in here.
In this God-sized hole, living in my heart
My whole world has come apart.

Someone tell me, how long can this last?
My future looks just like my past.
Will every new ocean I chart
Always carry me back to the start?
To a world that's as broken as me
Where I don't know how I can be free?
From this God-sized hole, in this God-sized hole,
My whole world has come apart.

I have lost my joy, my peace, my life—
I gave it all away, believing in a star that burnt out in the night.
Now the dawn is near, but it's dark in here.
In this God-sized hole; I've been set apart
Who can give me back my heart?

I've heard about a glory day
An endless love, an outstretched hand
Another world that's just beyond
This one that I don't understand.
I want to reach up to the sky,
But I don't have the faith to fly
'Cause I have lost my way.

Do you know the way to the truth, the light?
'Cause I would give my soul for anyone to come
And lift me from this night.
'Cause it's hell in here,
And I'm filled with fear.
In this God-sized hole I have come apart;
Who can heal my broken heart?
Can you heal my broken heart?

Words and music by LNW
CCLI Song # 4800239

It All Depends

Reverend David Bast, the radio minister of Words of Hope, was our guest preacher one Sunday last February. His sermon title, "The Gospel in a Pluralistic World," inspired this song. A late-night Web search led me to a verse by an anonymous author whose identity I discovered after a bit of detective work: 98-year-old writer and ethics professor, Abraham Edel. With his kind permission, the verse became the choruses of this song.

Where is the truth? Is there a way to find it?
Is it atop a mountain or deep inside myself?
What is the truth? Is it a rare elixir?
Is it a feel-good fixer in a bottle on a shelf?
I search for the word.
So far all I've heard is

It all depends on where you are;
It all depends on when you are.
It all depends on how you feel;
It all depends on what you feel.
It all depends on how you're raised;
It all depends on what is praised.
If tastes just happen to agree,
Well then, you have morality.
But where there are conflicting trends,
Seems to me it all depends.
Seems to me it all depends.

Who knows the truth? Maybe a famous preacher?
Maybe an ethics teacher who's quoting Socrates?
Show me the truth behind a thousand doorways.
Everyone offers more ways, but no one has the keys.
I scream to be heard.
No one hears a word.

Seems it all depends on where you are;
It all depends on when you are.
It all depends on how you're raised;
It all depends on what is praised.
It all depends on points of view;
In Rome, do as the Romans do.
If tastes just happen to agree,
Well then, you have morality.
But where there are conflicting trends,
Seems to me it all depends.
Seems to me it all depends.

Living in a world where anything goes is like digging in a landfill where everything
grows.
Everybody tries so hard, but no one really knows just how to tell the good from the bad.

When it all depends on where you are;
It all depends on when you are.
It all depends on points of view;
From Australia to Timbuktu.

What's right today is wrong tomorrow;
Joy in France, in England sorrow.
If tastes just happen to agree;
Well then, you have morality.
But where there are conflicting trends,
How will all this madness end?
I can't believe, I won't believe
It all depends.
I can't believe it all depends.
I won't believe it all depends.
I can't believe it all depends.

Words by LNW and Abraham Edel*
Music by LNW
CCLI Song #4762944

*Incorporating these lines from "Ethical Judgment" by Abraham Edel:

It all depends on where you are;
It all depends on when you are;
It all depends on how you feel;
It all depends on what you feel;
It all depends on how you're raised;
It all depends on what is praised;
What's right today is wrong tomorrow;
Joy in France, in England sorrow;
It all depends on points of view;
Australia, or Timbuctoo;
In Rome do as the Romans do;
If tastes just happen to agree, then you have morality;
But where there are conflicting trends,
It all depends, it all depends.

Ethical Judgment © Transaction Publishers, Piscataway, NJ 08854. Used with permission.

The Empty Chair

"Think about the person who might sit in this empty chair." That was the challenge posed to the congregation of HRC when we were talking about possible service style changes. What will we do to welcome people who are not yet here? Can we look beyond our own worship preferences? Youth pastor Randy Prentiss gave a sermon on this same topic, which this song accompanied.

Who will sit in this empty chair?
Who will sit in this empty chair?
What will we do to welcome someone there?
Who will sit in this empty chair?

Who will sit in this empty chair?
What can we do to welcome someone there?

Can we sing from our hearts to the tops of the mountains?
Can we stretch out our arms like the rays of the sun?
Can we fling wide the doors and draw the world together?
If we make some room for everyone, then

Who will sit in this empty chair?
Who will sit in this empty chair?
What can we do to welcome someone there?

If we sing from our hearts, then the love of God will echo.
When we stretch out our arms, surely grace can touch us all.
When we open the doors so that nothing can divide us,
Then our call to the world is not for one but for who will sit in this empty chair.
Maybe the one who answers every prayer.

Words and music by LNW
CCLI Song # 4800253

I Can Feel Your Love

Written for The Gathering

“Pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened . . .”

I've never seen the wings of an angel floating above in a clear blue sky;
I've never seen the kingdom of heaven open its gates before my eyes.
I've never seen you stand before me, but I know in my heart that you are here.
What's invisible to the human eye I have always known in this heart of mine.

I can feel your love;
I can trust in your faithfulness.
I don't need any more than this;
I can feel your love.
I can feel your love.

You are the one who gives me everything; you are the life within my breath.
You are the sun, the one bright morning star, offering life, transforming death.
Though I've never seen the glory of your face, and others may doubt you're even here,
What's invisible to the human eye you have always shown to this heart of mine.

I can feel your love;
I can trust in your faithfulness.
I don't need any more than this;
I can feel your love.

I can feel your love.

Words by LNW

Music by Godfrey Nelson and LNW

CCLI Song #4762669

What Would Jesus Say?

Do you ever look around at the church and say, "Is this what Jesus had in mind?" Pastor Holbrook's series on belief in a postmodern world asked this along with another interesting question, "Would Jesus be a Christian?"

If Jesus walked the earth today, would he be a Christian,
Or would he need some other way to make his message known?
If Jesus walked the earth today on a holy mission of opening the heavens,
Would he be there standing all alone,
Looking in here and wondering what's going on?

Is this the church of Jesus?
Is this the church of Jesus Christ?
Is this the church of Jesus?
And if he walked the earth today,
Tell me, what would Jesus, what would Jesus say?
What would Jesus say?

If Jesus walked the earth today, would we recognize him,
Or would we pass him by like some pauper on the street?
If Jesus walked the earth today, would people still despise him,
Say that he's a liar and try and nail him back up on the cross?
Hear him cry out and wonder how we got so lost?

Is this the church of Jesus?
Is this the church of Jesus Christ?
Are we the church of Jesus?
And if he walked the earth today,
Tell me, what would Jesus, what would Jesus say?
What would Jesus say?

Stop, look, listen with your heart!
When the hands you have don't belong to you,
But when you stretch them out and have them do the things that Jesus Christ would do, then

This is the church, this is the church of Jesus;
This is the church, this is the church of Jesus Christ.
We are the church; we are the church of Jesus.
And if he walked the earth today,

Tell me, what would Jesus, what would Jesus say?
What would Jesus say?

Words and music by LNW
CCLI Song #4762700

Home

One night I had a powerful image of what it might have felt like to be a woman centuries ago who walked along a strangely familiar, dusty path that led to the way back home. "Home" accompanied Reverend Ted Nace's 2006 Simple Living Lessons series for Lent on www.dailyguideposts.com.

I know this path;
I've walked this way before.
Of this my heart is sure:
I've seen this town.
I know this dusty place,
The scene of our disgrace.
 And though I'm in a dream, I open up my eyes
 To see the Son of God, rejected and despised.

For this is the hill the lamb was slain on.
This is the cross the son was laid on.
This is the place the price was paid for me.
I stand in the roar of a thousand voices
Feeling ashamed as the crowd rejoices.
When it's done, I look up and I see
Not just a man alone;
I see the way back, the way back home.
Home.

I climb this hill in times of deep despair;
I search for answers there.
And now I see what prophets had foretold.
My heart, it grows so bold.
 For deep within my dream I open up my eyes,
 And by an act of grace, I see God glorified.

For this is the tomb of the risen Jesus;
This is the love of a God that frees us.
This is the place where the promise came to be.
I stand in the midst of the prophets' voices;
Hearing the truth, how my soul rejoices!
He paid the price so I could have the key,
And it's by grace alone, God's promises are shown
To be the way back, the way back home.

Home.
I know the way back home.

Words and music by LNW
CCLI Song #4726289

It's All About Love

What is Christmas all about? Guideposts' 2005 Advent series of Simple Living Lessons inspired me.

You gave a gift on a moonlit night,
The greatest of gifts you could bestow.
Wrapped in the warmth of an angel light
A beautiful babe as pure as snow.

What did I do to deserve such love?
I look at myself and I don't know.
You've given me riches beyond compare—
Why should it be you love me so?

For I've done nothing, nothing at all.
And so it amazes me, you sent your own child for me.
Blessed Christmas, it's all about your love.

It's all about love, it's all about light,
It's all about truth and the grace you give for free.
It's all about hope, it's all about Jesus Christ.
Amazing as it may be, you sent your own child for me.
Blessed Christmas, it's all about your love.

How do you love? Let me count the ways.
You've given me life, you gave me breath,
A beautiful world full of Christmas days,
A beautiful life that knows no death.

And I did nothing; you did it all.
Amazing as it may be, you sent your own child for me.
Blessed Christmas, it's all about your love.

It's all about love, it's all about light,
It's all about truth and the grace you give for free.
It's all about hope, it's all about Jesus Christ.
Amazing as it may be, you sent your own child for me.
Blessed Christmas, it's all about your love.

Amazing as it may be, you gave your own son for me,

Blessed Christmas, it's all about your love.
It's all about your love.

Words and music by LNW
CCLI Song #4726131

They Called Him

Written for Guideposts' 2005 Lenten series of the same name

Sometimes God gives you a gift that reaches worlds beyond anything you could have possibly imagined. I was not with Cay, my beloved mother-in-law, when she passed away from lung cancer, but the rest of her family was present. This song, which my husband Godfrey and I had just recorded that morning, was playing in her room when she took her last breath. Godfrey said that because of the dialogue in the middle section, it sounded as though I was standing right there with everyone else. That is my treasured gift.

How many words can you think of for someone who laid down his life for you?
Beautiful words, full of grace, full of comfort and hope for a heart so true?
So many words: listen to them and one will call out your name.
What did they call him? What name did they say?

They called him Wonderful; they called him Counselor.
They called him Word of Life; they called him Lamb of God.
They called him Cornerstone; they called him the Alpha and Omega.
I call him love; I call him love.

*Dayspring . . . the True Light . . . Faithful Witness . . . Son of Righteousness . . .
the Good Shepherd . . . the Messiah . . . Savior*

What did they call him? What name did they say?

They called him King of Kings; they called him Prince of Life.
They called him Emmanuel; they called him Morning Star.
They called him Holy One; they called him the Everlasting Father.
I call him love.
He calls me child of God.

Words and music by LNW
CCLI Song #4534471

I Can See God's Face

As my own spiritual journey continues, I continue to have mostly questions. But I do know this: I know what God looks like. I know where God lives.

No one can tell me that God isn't here on this earth,

Living and breathing and crying in death and in birth.
No one can tell me that God doesn't hear, God doesn't care—
I'll never believe it's the truth 'cause I've got proof.

I can see God's face in you,
In the eyes you're looking through.
Though the world seems dim,
Deep within, God's alive in you.
Now you may not think it so,
But the day will come, I know,
When you'll see yourself like I do,
When I see God's face in you.

I'm looking at God's face.

You'll never convince me that God isn't here in this place,
For I have been touched by the hands of incredible grace.
I have heard words, honest and true,
I've seen a heart, a heart God is living life through,
And it's in you.

I can see God's face in you,
In the eyes you're looking through.
Though the world seems dim,
Deep within, God's alive in you.
Now it may not feel this way,
But I promise you one day,
You will see yourself like I do,
When I see God's face in you.

I'm looking at God's face in you.

Words and music by LNW
CCLI Song # 4800260