

Now the feast and celebration
ELW 167

Refrain:

**Now the feast and celebration,
all of creation sings for joy,
to the God of life and love and freedom
praise and glory forevermore!**

- 1. Now is the feast of the paschal Lamb,
whose sacrifice has united us
to be one communion of saints.**
- 2. Power and riches, wisdom and might,
all honor and glory to Christ
forever.**
- 3. For God has come to dwell with us,
to wipe the tears from our eyes,
to make all things new.**

Unmetered Chris Nelson 2018

Refrain:

**Now the feast and celebration,
all of creation sings for joy
to the God of life and love and freedom;
praise and glory forevermore!**

- 1. Now is the feast of the Lamb once slain,
whose blood has freed and united us
to be one great people of God.**
- 2. Power and riches, wisdom and might,
all honor and glory to Christ
forever.**
- 3. For God has come to dwell with us,
to make us people of God;
to make all things new.**

Marty Haugen 1990

O Lord, how shall I meet you
ELW 241

1-24

1. O Lord, how shall I mention
your mercies ever new
when clouds of apprehension
obscure you from my view?
Restore your presence holy,
a fi-re in my breast,
to give in spirit lowly
results that please you best.
2. In fetters was I groaning
when you arrived to be
the answer for dethroning
myself so I'd be free
to wear a crown of glory,
a treasure safe on high,
the climax to my story
in heaven by and by.
3. Unselfish incarnation,
your coming down to me,
your ~~love~~ for my salvation
that makes the demons flee!
Oh, love, all loves excelling,
that led you to embrace
the world where we were dwelling
retreating from your face.
4. Rejoice, who came dejected,
to venerate the tomb,
much more than was expected,
the wonder in the room
which witnessed your appearing,
the sun about to rise
and let its radiance cheering
illuminate the skies.

7676D alt. Chris Nelson 2023

1. O Lord, how shall I meet you,
how welcome you aright?
Your people long to greet you,
my hope, my heart's delight!
Oh, kindle, Lord most holy,
your lamp within my breast
to do in spirit lowly
all that may please you best.
2. I lay in fetters, groaning;
you came to set me free.
I stood, my shame bemoaning;
you came to honor me.
A glorious crown you give me,
a treasure safe on high
that will not fail or leave me
as earthly riches fly.
3. Love caused your incarnation;
love brought you down to me.
Your thirst for my salvation
procured my liberty.
Oh, love beyond all telling,
that led you to embrace
in love, all love excelling,
our lost and fallen race.
4. Rejoice, then, you sad-hearted,
who sit in deepest gloom,
who mourn your joys departed
and tremble at your doom.
All hail the Lord's appearing!
O glorious Sun, now come,
send forth your beams so cheering
and guide us safely home.

Paul Gerhardt 1660
translation composite

Lost in the night
ELW 243

2-24

1. Lost in the night is the multitude crying,
longing for morning, the darkness denying,
hearts that are full of continual sighing.
Christ is coming soon! Christ is coming soon!
2. Must we be caught in the grip of tomorrow?
Those who have light are not letting us borrow,
giving no heed to our burden of sorrow.
Christ is coming soon! Christ is coming soon!
3. Wandering yet on the earth where we're dwelling
see we the dawn of a radiance excelling,
death and its shadows forever dispelling.
Christ is coming soon! Christ is coming soon!
4. Light on the land of the living is beaming,
rivers of life through its deserts are streaming,
rousing, releasing, restoring, redeeming.
Christ is coming soon! Christ is coming soon!

11 11 11 5 alt. Chris Nelson 2024

1. Lost in the night do the people yet languish,
longing for morning the darkness to vanquish,
plaintively sighing with hearts full of anguish.
Will not day come soon? Will not day come soon?
2. Must we be vainly awaiting the morrow?
Shall those who have light no light let us borrow,
giving no heed to our burden of sorrow?
Will you help us soon? Will you help us soon?
3. Sorrowing wand'ers, in darkness yet dwelling,
dawned has the day of a radiance excelling,
death's deepest shadows forever dispelling.
Christ is coming soon! Christ is coming soon!
4. Light o'er the land of the needy is beaming,
rivers of life through its deserts are streaming,
bringing all peoples a Savior redeeming.
Come and save us soon! Come and save us soon!

translated from the Finnish by
Olav Lee 1932

Creator of the stars of night
ELW 245

1. Creator of the stars of night,
your people's everlasting light,
redeemer of the great and small,
we pray you hear us when we call.
2. As this terrestrial orb drew on
you came when all our hope was gone,
not as a monarch, but the child
of Mary, blessed mother mild.
3. Before the name of Jesus, now
all knees must bend, all hearts must bow,
and things on earth with one accord,
like those above, shall call you Lord.
4. In might upon the clouds, display
your triumph over evil's sway,
defend us while we dwell below
from arrows of our dreaded foe.
5. To God the Father, God the Son,
and God the Spirit, Three in One,
all honor, praise and glory be
from age to age eternally. Amen.

8888 alt. Chris Nelson 2018

1. Creator of the stars of night,
your people's everlasting light,
O Christ, redeemer of us all,
we pray you hear us when we call.
2. When this old world drew on toward night,
you came; but not in splendor bright,
not as a monarch, but the child
of Mary, blessed mother mild.
3. At your great name, O Jesus, now
all knees must bend, all hearts must bow:
all things on earth with one accord,
like those in heav'n, shall call you Lord.
4. Come in your holy might, we pray,
redeem us for eternal day;
defend us while we dwell below
from all assaults of our dread foe.
5. To God the Father, God the Son,
and God the Spirit, Three in One,
praise, honor, might, and glory be
from age to age eternally. Amen.

Latin hymn 850
translation 1940

People, look east ELW 248

1-24

1. People, look east. The time is near
for the crowning of the year.
 Garland the house as hands are able,
 trim the hearth and set the table.
People, look east, and sing today -
Love, the Guest is on the way.
 2. Furrows, be glad. The desert bare
blooms again with tender care.
 Give of your expertise to nourish
 every seed that all may flourish.
People, look east, and sing today -
Love, the Rose, is on the way.
 3. Planets, keep watch. When sight is dim,
one more light the bowl shall brim,
 shining in spite of frosty weather,
 bright as sun and moon together.
People, look east, and sing today -
Love, the Star, is on the way.
 4. Angels announce with shouts of mirth
praise to God and peace on earth.
 Set every peak and valley humming
 with the news the Lord is coming.
People, look east, and sing today -
Life and Truth adorn the Way.
1. People, look east. The time is near
of the crowning of the year.
 Make your house fair as you are able,
 trim the hearth and set the table.
People, look east, and sing today -
Love, the Guest, is on the way.
 2. Furrows, be glad. Though earth is bare,
one more seed is planted there.
 Give up your strength the seed to nourish,
 that in course the flow'r may flourish.
People, look east, and sing today -
Love, the Rose, is on the way.
 3. Stars, keep the watch. When night is dim,
one more light the bowl shall brim,
 shining beyond the frosty weather,
 bright as sun and moon together.
People, look east, and sing today -
Love, the Star, is on the way.
 4. Angels announce with shouts of mirth
him who brings new life to earth.
 Set ev'ry peak and valley humming
 with the word, the Lord is coming.
People, look east, and sing today -
Love, the Lord, is on the way.

879887 alt. Chris Nelson 2023

Eleanor Farjeon 1950

"I am the way, the truth and the life".
John 14

Blessed be the God of Israel
ELW 250

2-24

1. Blessed be the God of Israel
 who comes to set us free,
to raise a saving hope as well:
 a Branch from David's tree.
Your messengers have long declared,
 your prophets from of old,
that you would rout our foes who dared
 to keep us in their hold.
2. In mercy was your promise shown,
 your covenant recalled,
that Abraham would not condone
 those altars they'd installed,
to venerate released from fear,
 in temples that amaze,
within the kingdom drawing near,
 as servants all our days.
3. And you, O little child, will be
 the prophet who begins
to tell the people they will see
 forgiveness of their sins,
for those who live in gloom, a dawn
 whose rays will never cease,
when shadows of our death are gone
 and all will be at peace.

8686 8686

Chris Nelson 2024

1. Blessed be the God of Israel
 who comes to set us free
and raises up new hope for us:
 a Branch from David's tree.
So have the prophets long declared
 that with a mighty arm
God would turn back our enemies
 and all who wish us harm.
2. With promised mercy will God still
 the covenant recall,
the oath once sworn to Abraham,
 from foes to save us all;
that we might worship without fear
 and offer lives of praise,
in holiness and righteousness
 to serve God all our days.
3. My child, as prophet of the Lord
 you will prepare the way,
to tell God's people they are saved
 from sin's eternal sway.
Then shall God's mercy from on high
 shine forth and never cease
to drive away the gloom of death
 and lead us into peace.

Carl P. Daw Jr. 1989

My soul proclaims your greatness
ELW 251

2-24

1. My soul would magnify and bless
the Lord who deigns to look
with favor on the lowliness
of servants in your book,
that generations yet to be
would eagerly proclaim
the greatness of your gift to me,
and holy is your name.
2. Your mercy is for those who fear
the power of your arm
that bars the schemers drawing near
to do your people harm.
You bring the haughty down to earth
and elevate the poor,
the hungry filled with food of worth,
the wealthy insecure.
3. Intently has the Mighty One
assisted Israel,
recalling deeds that you'd begun,
and promises as well,
when Abraham expressed the need
for faith in your design,
descendant-workers all agreed
to cultivate the Vine.

8686 8686

alt. Chris Nelson 2024

1. My soul proclaims your greatness, Lord;
I sing my Savior's praise!
You looked upon my lowliness,
and I am full of grace.
Now ev'ry land and ev'ry age
this blessing shall proclaim -
great wonders you have done for me,
and holy is your name.
2. To all who live in holy fear
your mercy ever flows.
With mighty arm you dash the proud,
their scheming hearts expose.
The ruthless you have cast aside,
the lowly throned instead;
the hungry filled with all good things,
the rich sent off unfed.
3. To Israel, your servant blest,
your help is ever sure;
the promise to our parents made
their children will secure.
Sing glory to the Holy One,
give honor to the Word,
and praise the Pow'r of the Most High,
one God, by all adored.

With One Voice 1995
The Magnificat

Each winter as the year grows older
ELW 252

2-24

1. Each winter as the year grows older,
we each grow older, too.
The chill sets in a little colder
and verities we knew
seem shaken and untrue.
2. When multitudes are crying treason,
when sirens call for war,
they overwhelm the voice of reason
and scream as we ignore
what bravery is for.
3. Yet I believe beyond believing
that life from death can spring.
that growth can flower from our grieving,
that we can also cling
to faithfulness and sing.
4. So even as the sun is turning
its journey to rebirth,
the living flame, in secret burning,
can kindle on the earth
a love of highest worth.
5. How well you know our joys and sorrows,
O Child in the hay!
Bequeath your light for our tomorrows,
your healing for today,
your Truth, your Life, your Way!

96966 alt. Chris Nelson 2024

1. Each winter as the year grows older,
we each grow older, too.
The chill sets in a little colder,
the verities we knew
seem shaken and untrue.
2. When race and class cry out for treason,
when sirens call for war,
they overshout the voice of reason
and scream till we ignore
all we held dear before.
3. Yet I believe beyond believing
that life can spring from death,
that growth can flower from our grieving,
that we can catch our breath
and turn transfixed by faith.
4. So even as the sun is turning
to journey to the north,
the living flame, in secret burning,
can kindle on the earth
and bring God's love to birth.
5. O Child of ecstasy and sorrows,
O Prince of peace and pain,
brighten today's world by tomorrow's,
renew our lives again;
Lord Jesus, come and reign!

William Gay 1971

Comfort, comfort, now my people
ELW 256

2-24

1. Comfort, comfort, O my people,
says our God who brings us peace,
telling those from every steeple
sorrow's load of gloom will cease,
in the city we have made
that her penalty is paid,
that the term she served is ended
by the good that was intended.
2. Lo, a voice that's all-commanding,
calling those with ears to hear,
that they turn with understanding
to the kingdom coming near.
with a summons we'd obey
to prepare for God a way,
hills and valleys not to waver
in this year of grace and favor!
3. Through the desert lest you stumble
make a highway straight and broad,
with intentions true and humble
in the presence of our God,
for the joy of many healed
on the earth has been revealed,
for the refugee a token,
for the words so truly spoken.

8787 7788

Chris Nelson 2024

1. "Comfort, comfort, now my people;
tell of peace!" So says our God.
Comfort those who sit in darkness
mourning under sorrow's load.
To God's people now proclaim
that God's pardon waits for them!
Tell them that their war is over;
God will reign in peace forever.
2. For the herald's voice is crying
in the desert far and near,
calling us to true repentance,
since the reign of God is here.
Oh, that warning cry obey!
Now prepare for God a way.
Valleys, rise to greet the Savior;
hills, bow down in humble favor.
3. Straight shall be what long was crooked,
and the rougher places plain.
Let your hearts be true and humble,
as befits God's holy reign.
For the glory of the Lord
now on earth is shed abroad,
and all flesh shall see the token
that God's word is never broken.

translated from the German by
Catherine Winkworth 1870

Unexpected and mysterious

1-20

ELW 258

1. Unforeseen and unexpected
is the gentle word of grace,
ever by your love protected,
by the arms of your embrace.
Even as the bell is tolling,
when we doubt what we have known,
you are faithful and consoling
as a mother tends her own.

2. When the angel came to Mary
at the full-appointed time,
she was told that she would carry
both the lowly and sublime,
what the prophets were foretelling
of Elizabethan joy,
of the woman in a dwelling
who would recognize her boy.

3. We would ponder in our fashion
mysteries of the coming Christ
who embodied God's compassion
on the altar sacrificed,
ever with us in the thunder
bringing healing to the earth,
while we watch in silent wonder
at the miracle of birth.

8787D alt. Chris Nelson 2019

1. Unexpected and mysterious
is the gentle word of grace.
Ever loving and sustaining
is the peace of God's embrace.
If we falter in our courage
and we doubt what we have known,
God is faithful to console us
as a mother tends her own.

2. In a momentary meeting
of eternity and time,
Mary learned that she would carry
both the mortal and divine,
Then she learned of God's compassion,
of Elizabeth's great joy,
and she ran to greet the woman
who would recognize her boy.

3. We are called to ponder myst'ry
and await the coming Christ,
to embody God's compassion
for each fragile human life.
God is with us in our longing
to bring healing to the earth,
while we watch with joy and wonder
for the promised Savior's birth.

Jeannette M. Lindholm 2002

Fling wide the door
ELW 259

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|---|--|
| <p>1. Uplift the arch, you ancient doors,
for One who puts an end to wars!
 The Lord of Hosts arrives in state
 to bring salvation at the gate.
As worshippers confess their sin,
they let the King of Glory in.
 To God the Father raise
 your canticles of praise.</p> <p>2. This Rock assists our unbelief,
this Mercy knows our every grief.
 This Crown adorns a sacred head
 whose enemies have lately fled.
This Righteousness is drawing near
a kingdom that will soon appear.
 To Christ the Savior raise
 your canticles of praise.</p> <p>3. The land you rule is truly blest,
the country where you name's professed.
 The earth is yours, and all the world,
 the nations with their flags unfurled.
Wherever people dream their dreams
they'd live a life that love redeems.
 To God the Spirit raise
 your canticles of praise.</p> <p>4. Look down from up above and see
this vine that you have caused to be
 the scorn of neighbors round about,
 the crucible of faith and doubt.
Restore to us our rightful place
and shine on us your shining face.
 To God the One-in-Three
 be praise eternally.</p> | <p>1. Fling wide the door, unbar the gate,
the King of glory comes in state;
 the Lord of lords and King of kings,
 the Savior of the world who brings
his great salvation to the earth.
So raise a shout of holy mirth
 and praise our God and Lord,
 Creator, Spirit, Word.</p> <p>2. He is the rock of our belief;
the heart of mercy's gentle self.
 His kingly crown is holiness;
 his scepter is his loveliness;
he brings our sorrows to an end.
Now gladly praise our king and friend,
 and worship him with song
 for saving us from wrong.</p> <p>3. Oh, happy towns and blessed lands
that live by their true king's commands.
 And blessed be the hearts he rules,
 the humble places where he dwells.
He is the rightful Son of bliss
who fills our lives and makes us his,
 creator of the world,
 our only strength for good.</p> <p>4. Come, Lord, our Savior, Jesus Christ;
our hearts are open wide in trust.
 Oh, show us now your lovely grace,
 upon our sorrows shine your face,
and let your Holy Spirit guide
our journey in your grace so wide.
 We praise your holy name,
 from age at age the same!</p> |
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As the dark awaits the dawn
ELW 261

1. As the dark awaits the dawn,
so we await your light,
to see your promise scatter night,
loving bright, loving bright,
till shades of fear are gone.
2. As the blues expected are
before the silvering skies,
we long to see your day arise,
whole and wise, whole and wise,
O lucent Morning Star.
3. As the moon reflects the sun
until the night's decrease,
may we your healing light release
living peace, living peace,
into your reign begun.
4. Shine your future on this place,
enlighten every guest
to feel a pure and holy rest,
bright and blest, bright and blest,
and greet the Sun of Grace.

76866 alt. Chris Nelson 2018

1. As the dark awaits the dawn,
so we await your light.
O Star of promise, scatter night,
loving bright, loving bright,
till shades of fear are gone.
2. As the blue expectant hour
before the silvering skies,
we long to see your day arise,
whole and wise, whole and wise,
O lucent Morning Star.
3. As the moon reflects the sun
until the night's decrease,
may we your healing light release,
living peace, living peace,
unto your holy dawn.
4. Shine your future on this place,
enlighten every guest,
that through us stream your holiness,
bright and blest, bright and blest;
come dawn, O Sun of grace.

Susan Palo Cherwien 1996

Savior of the nations, come
ELW 263

6-19

1. Savior of the nations, come
here among the deaf and dumb.
Marvel how this place on earth
plays a part in such a birth.
2. Not in any house we'd build,
but by prophecy fulfilled,
was the Word of God made flesh,
fruit of woman, blossom fresh.
3. To a stable, wondrous child,
to a virgin mother mild!
Very God and Mary's son,
eager now the race to run!
4. With a will the Savior speeds,
back again the pathway leads,
out to vanquish Satan's band,
back to reign at God's right hand.
5. Now your manger, shining bright,
hallows night with newborn light.
Dark and gloom cannot subdue
faithfulness that shines anew.
6. Praise we sing to Christ the Lord,
virgin's son, by all adored,
to the holy Trinity
offer we eternally!

7777 alt. Chris Nelson 2018

1. Savior of the nations, come;
virgin's son, make here your home.
Marvel now, O heaven and earth:
God has chosen such a birth.
2. Not by human flesh and blood,
but the mystic Breath of God,
was the Word of God made flesh,
fruit of woman, blossom fresh.
3. Wondrous birth – oh, wondrous child –
from his throne, a virgin mild!
Very God, and Mary's son,
eager now his race to run!
4. From God's heart the Savior speeds,
back to God his pathway leads;
out to vanquish death's command,
back to reign at God's right hand.
5. Now your manger, shining bright,
hallows night with newborn light.
Night cannot this light subdue;
let our faith shine ever new.
6. Praise we sing to Christ the Lord,
virgin's son, incarnate Word!
To the holy Trinity
praise we sing eternally!

Martin Luther 1524

translated by the hymnal committee 2006

All earth is hopeful
ELW 266

6-19

1. Planters are hopeful
the day has come at last.
Furrows are ready
for seed that they will cast
and the Lord of the harvest
is sending out more
to labor and struggle
the kingdom to restore.
2. Peoples in darkness
had heard the prophet tell
just how a virgin
would bear Emmanuel,
to conceive 'God is with us',
our brother, whose birth
will bring and encourage
a value and a worth.
3. Mountains and valleys
will have to be prepared,
highways reopened,
new protocols declared.
On the day of appearing
when grace is outpoured,
'Come out, you who carry
the vessels of the Lord.'
4. Human, incarnate,
a baby on the hay,
born in a stable,
approaching us today,
to inspire by his presence,
an image to be
depicted in neighbors,
in folk like you and me.

11 11 12 12 alt. Chris Nelson 2018

1. All earth is hopeful,
the Savior comes at last!
Furrows lie open
for God's creative task:
this, the labor of people
who struggle to see
how God's truth and justice
set everybody free.
2. People of Israel,
you heard the prophet tell:
'A virgin mother
will bear Emmanuel';
she conceived him, 'God with us,'
our brother, whose birth
restores hope and courage
to children of this earth.
3. Mountains and valleys
will have to be prepared;
new highways opened,
new protocols declared.
Almost here! God is nearing,
in beauty and grace!
All clear every gateway,
in haste, come out in haste!
4. We first saw Jesus
a baby in a crib.
This same Lord Jesus
today has come to live
in our world; he is present,
in neighbors we see
our Jesus is with us,
and ever sets us free.

translated from the Spanish by
Madeleine Forell Marshall 1995