

HYMNS  
FOR  
OUR TIME

*Lisle Ryder*



## ANOTHER COUNTRY

I vow to you our country,  
all earthly things below  
to cleanse what we as humans  
have done to nature's show.  
Our rivers are polluted,  
and air that creatures breathe.  
Discarded waste and effluent  
now cloak both land and sea.  
The climate's been disrupted,  
affecting food supplies,  
and all of God's creation,  
is raising piteous cries

But there's another country,  
I've heard of long ago  
a garden full of beauty,  
where nature's free to grow  
with seas and skies of freshness,  
with land that's lush and clean.  
We have what God now gives us,  
to bring back what has been.  
So we should be resourceful  
and with a firm intent  
restore our lovely country,  
to such as we have dreamt.

*Words: Lisle Ryder  
Tune: Thaxted*

### *Note*

*'I vow to thee my country' was written by Sir Cecil Spring-Rice just over 100 years ago as a patriotic hymn following the First World War with all its suffering and sacrifice.*

*These new words represent a different suffering, that of nature, and another sacrifice, that of God's creation. We are part of that nature involved and responsible as were our forefathers for the suffering and sacrifice of Christ.*

*The melody was adapted by Gustav Holst from his Planets Suite, though the original melody related not to our Earth but to Jupiter.*

*As we pray 'Thy Kingdom come on earth as it is in heaven', it presents a challenge for each of us to play a part in restoring our lovely country.*

*May2024*

## AFTER PANDEMIC

To God we offer thanks  
for medicine and for carers,  
for all who've kept in touch,  
in prayer been burden sharers.  
Through all the skills and gifts  
by which you set us free  
from scourges of disease  
may we now thankful be.

- 2 In grief we still lament  
the cost of many losses  
in life and work and health,  
with bearing all these crosses.  
Not destitute of hope  
in you our God we trust  
as guide through days to come  
in new life to adjust.
- 3 All praise to God of all  
with whom we share this planet.  
May we be one with them,  
respecting every limit.  
Each insect, beast or bird  
from which disease derives –  
we must respect their space  
that we and they may thrive.
- 4 Dear Jesus you've been here  
through times of isolation,  
in us to hold real hope,  
restoring motivation.  
Then arms outstretched once more,  
set free from all regrets,  
we'll open wide the door  
to welcome back our guests.
- 5 We meet again in joy  
refreshed upon our journey.  
As we move on from here  
with Christ who shows us mercy,  
there's much that we can learn  
as we survive the test –  
in prayer we can discern  
how care is best expressed.

*Verse 4 with special reference to Holy Rood House  
Tune: Nun danket*

## MELTING FROZEN JEWELS

God's bountiful creation,  
our hearts with wonder fill,  
held now in contemplation  
with mind and body still.  
Diversity of creatures,  
varieties of plants  
for our delight displayed here  
that we may be entranced.

- 2 Among the host of creatures  
just who am I but one?  
Yet you and I together  
the world have overrun.  
We've stained its glorious beauty,  
good habitats are lost,  
exploited or polluted  
at devastating cost.
- 3 Our planet's overheating  
through burning fossil fuels;  
all round the seas are rising  
from melting frozen jewels.  
Where will the plants and creatures  
find refuge to survive?  
Without their diverse presence  
have we the will to thrive?
- 4 It's not too late God shows us,  
and science also tells,  
to change our ways of living  
pollutants to dispel.  
Jesus, in mercy lead us  
consumers of excess  
from fouling our surroundings  
to making do with less.
- 5 Earth, air and seas defiled,  
God calls us to restore  
for future generations  
to wonder at once more.  
Diversity of creatures,  
varieties of plants  
for their delight renewed there  
that they may be entranced.

*Tune 7676D: Ewing, Hatherop Castle, Aurelia, etc.*

## WITH EVERY CREATURE SING

Let all of us with every creature sing,  
praise to our God!  
Above us in the air  
may we all be aware  
of birds and bees in flight,  
whether by day or night.  
Sing with one voice to celebrate the life  
of creatures all!

Let all of us with every creature sing,  
praise to our God!  
Across the tamed terrain  
farmed now for stock and grain;  
may woodland also thrive  
and wildlife too survive.  
Sing with one voice lest any be extinct,  
protect them all!

Let all of us with every creature sing,  
praise to our God!  
Over the oceans wide  
with rise and fall of tide  
may all the plankton bloom  
for fishes to consume.  
Sing with one voice to celebrate the life  
of creatures all!

Let all of us with every creature sing,  
praise to our God!  
There deep within the earth,  
in darkness comes new birth,  
beneath the tread of boots  
among the worms and roots.  
Sing with one voice lest any be extinct,  
protect them all!

Let all of us with every creature sing,  
praise to our God!  
May we now play our part,  
together taking heart;  
remembering all God gave,  
all creatures here to save.  
Sing with one voice to celebrate the life  
of creatures all!

*Tune: Luckington*

## GOLDEN LEAVES

Dropped golden leaves  
all glowing from the ground.  
Upon the tree -  
there you were once the crown.

- 2 Fly, fly dear birds  
as you must needs migrate,  
yet come back safe  
once more to procreate.
- 3 Weep, weep you clouds  
with rain to fill the lakes,  
yet not our homes  
to flood, with us displaced.
- 4 Blow gently winds  
to cleanse the air for breath,  
never too fierce  
lest storms cause loss and death.
- 5 Come close dear God  
embark within the boat,  
keep migrants safe  
from harm, their craft afloat.
- 6 Encourage us  
who surely have enough  
to share with those  
for whom these times are tough.
- 7 May we be held  
with all that you have made,  
at one in Christ  
with creatures all arrayed.

*Tune: Song 46, Orlando Gibbons*

## GOD IN ALL

Our God who lives, flows in waters,  
drifts in clouds and glows in snow,  
silver flashing fish in shallows,  
darts in darkness round the rocks,  
blooms afresh as showers bring flowers,  
freshens scent for bugs and bees.  
Here we live together woven,  
one with God in wonder held.

2 Our God who lives, moves with breezes,  
flies in skies and travels far,  
floats with owls to quarter meadows,  
dives with gannets in the surf.  
on the wing with birds migrating  
swallows, swifts and butterflies;  
Though they fly in all directions,  
God is with them as they fly.

3 Our God lives, alert and watching  
over newborn in the nest,  
keeps them warm with fur or feather,  
crouches, pounces on the hunt,  
scuttles, burrows, refuge seeking,  
fox and mouse, God lives in each.  
On the ground we are together,  
held by God in pain or joy.

4 Our God dies, entombed with Jesus,  
from the earth he on us breathes  
autumn scents from leaves decaying,  
whiffs of springtime gifting life.  
Grubs and worms soil overturning;  
naught is wasted, all made new.  
Like all creatures we are mortal,  
as with Christ we die and live.

5 God lives anew, now arising,  
swelling oceans, winds astir,  
croaks to us as frogs are courting,  
calls to us in curlew's song,  
shines from corals colours gleaming,  
rests in shade of leaves above.  
Called to serve your living creatures  
guide us God to tend and care.

6 Holy Spirit ever moving,  
always leading, out ahead.  
Come let's find what wisdom's showing,  
lightly tread among what's spread,  
gaze in wonder and amazement,  
serve and share the gifts of life.  
God who raises Christ in glory  
lift us all to praise and sing.

*Tunes: 8787.D Abbot's Leigh, Blaenwern, Hyfrydol*



## AFTER TRAUMA

### 1 (Exodus)

Into the wild as slaves they had fled  
with nothing to drink without any bread.  
For what were they chosen? where to be led?  
As if they'd been punished, with feelings of dread.

*As out in the desert God was revealed,  
later in exile no longer concealed.  
With two on the road their Jesus was risen,  
so open your heart be ready to listen.*

### 2 (Exile)

Banished to Babylon without shalom.  
Mount Zion laid waste their God had no home.  
Oppressed and bereft to whom could they pray?  
And could it be true what prophets did say?

### 3 (Crucifixion)

Mary was weeping there in deep loss,  
her firstborn and God's now dead on the cross.  
His friends were dispersed their spirits all numb.  
With Jesus now gone could his kingdom come?

### 4 (Last night)

Feeling knocked down all hope has been lost,  
no more in control you're counting the cost.  
Awake in the night it isn't a dream,  
the trauma is real you're ready to scream.

*Tune: Light up the fire (Colours of day...)*

## A LIFE BEYOND

Beyond life's span how might we be?  
Where would eternal life be found?  
What will it mean for you and me,  
with all to whom in love we're bound?

- 2 Imagination's upward climb  
may scan and search horizons vast –  
beyond all distance, mass and time.  
How will we feel when death has passed?
- 3 At one in all we've ever met,  
to know the hurts and wrongs of life;  
will we feel burdened by regret  
and anguished in eternal strife?
- 4 In Jesus Christ may we abide,  
his healing touch puts all to right.  
So reconciled with all who've died  
we'll be at one in our delight.
- 5 Enfolded in our God's embrace  
at peace, with laughs and joys to share,  
we shall be held by Christ with grace  
to dwell in love and beauty there.

*Possible LM tunes:*

*Tallis Canon, Melcombe, Song 34*

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