

# 87 Comfort, Comfort Now My People

1 "Com - fort, com - fort now my peo - ple; tell of peace!" So says our God.  
 2 For the her - ald's voice is cry - ing in the des - ert far and near,  
 3 Straight shall be what long was crook - ed, and the rough - er plac - es plain.

"Com - fort those who sit in dark - ness mourn - ing un - der sor - row's load.  
 call - ing us to true re - pen - tance, since the reign of God is here.  
 Let your hearts be true and hum - ble, as be - fits God's ho - ly reign.

To my peo - ple now pro - claim that my par - don waits for them!  
 O, that warn - ing cry o - bey! Now pre - pare for God a way.  
 For the glo - ry of the Lord now on earth is shed a - broad,

Tell them that their sins I cov - er, and their war - fare now is o - ver."  
 Let the val - leys rise in meet - ing and the hills bow down in greet - ing.  
 and all flesh shall see the to - ken that God's word is nev - er bro - ken.

This 17th-century German paraphrase of Isaiah 40:1-5 was one of the texts translated as part of the 19th-century British interest in German religious poetry. It is set here to one of the most popular Genevan Psalter tunes, probably derived from an earlier French folksong.

TEXT: Johannes Olearius, 1671; trans. Catherine Winkworth, 1863, alt.  
 MUSIC: Genevan Psalter, 1551

GENEVAN 42  
 8.7.8.7.7.8.8

# 106 Prepare the Way, O Zion

1 Pre - pare the way, O Zi - on, your Christ is draw - ing near!  
 2 He brings God's rule, O Zi - on; he comes from heaven a - bove.  
 3 Fling wide your gates, O Zi - on; your Sav - ior's rule em - brace,

Let ev - ery hill and val - ley a lev - el way ap - pear.  
 His rule is peace and free - dom, and jus - tice, truth, and love.  
 and ti - dings of sal - va - tion pro - claim in ev - ery place.

Greet One who comes in glo - ry, fore - told in sa - cred sto - ry.  
 Lift high your praise re - sound - ing, for grace and joy a - bound - ing.  
 All lands will bow re - joic - ing, their ad - o - ra - tion voic - ing.

## Refrain

O blest is Christ who came in God's most ho - ly name.

*Guitar chords in Pew Edition do not correspond with keyboard harmony.*

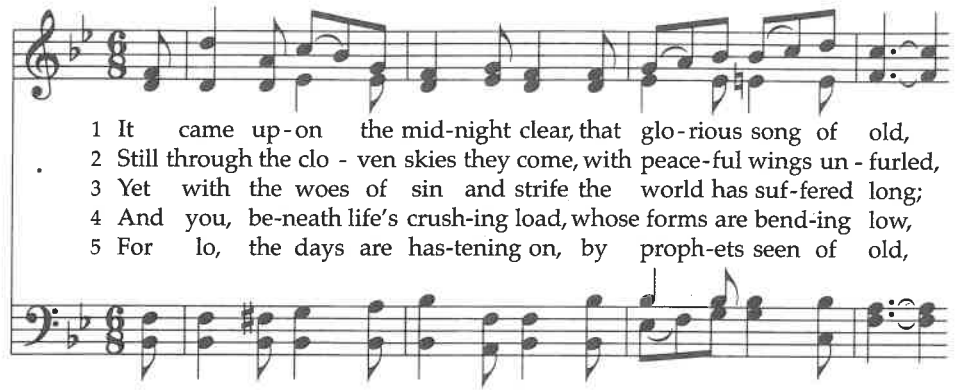
This engaging Advent text based on Isaiah 40:3-5 and Psalm 24:7-10 has been in use in the Church of Sweden for almost two hundred years. It is set to a version of an even older Swedish tune, which in turn seems to be derived from a German folktune that spread to Scandinavia.

TEXT: Frans Mikael Franzen, 1812; rev. 1819; trans. Augustus Nelson, 1958;  
 adapt. Charles P. Price, 1980, alt.

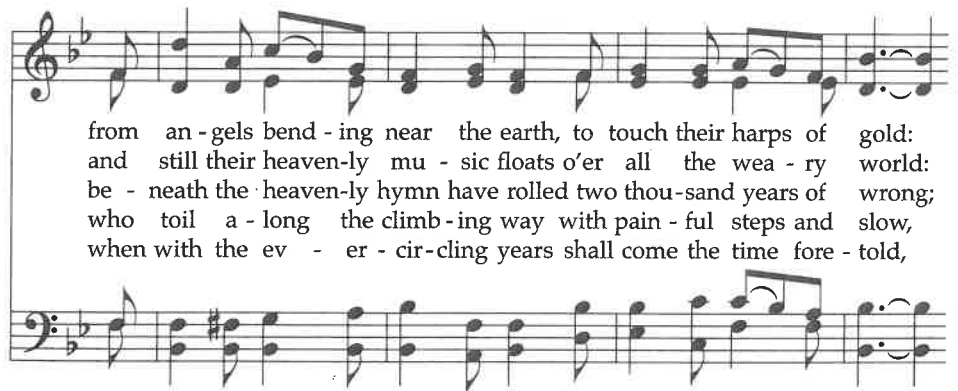
MUSIC: *Then Svenska Psalmboken*, 1697; arr. *American Lutheran Hymnal*, 1930  
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BEREDEN VÄG FÖR HERRAN  
 7.6.7.6.7.7 with refrain

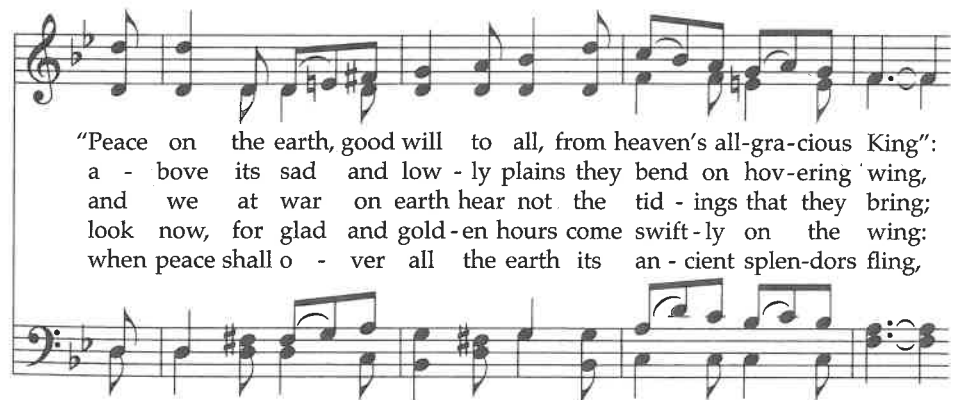
# 123 It Came Upon the Midnight Clear



1 It came up-on the mid-night clear, that glo-rious song of old,  
2 Still through the clo - ven skies they come, with peace-ful wings un - furled,  
3 Yet with the woes of sin and strife the world has suf-fered long;  
4 And you, be-neath life's crush-ing load, whose forms are bend-ing low,  
5 For lo, the days are has-tening on, by proph-ets seen of old,



from an-gels bend - ing near the earth, to touch their harps of gold:  
and still their heaven-ly mu - sic floats o'er all the wea - ry world:  
be - neath the heaven-ly hymn have rolled two thou-sand years of wrong;  
who toil a - long the climb-ing way with pain - ful steps and slow,  
when with the ev - er - cir-cling years shall come the time fore - told,



“Peace on the earth, good will to all, from heaven’s all-gra-cious King”:  
a - bove its sad and low - ly plains they bend on hov-ering wing,  
and we at war on earth hear not the tid - ings that they bring;  
look now, for glad and gold - en hours come swift - ly on the wing:  
when peace shall o - ver all the earth its an - cient splen-dors fling,

The “it” of the first line of this text by a Unitarian minister does not refer to the birth of Jesus, but to “that glorious song of old,” the angelic tidings of peace on earth. The restored third stanza laments how often the noise of human strife has obscured that message.

TEXT: Edmund Hamilton Sears, 1849, alt.  
MUSIC: Richard Storrs Willis, 1850

CAROL  
CMD  
(alternate tune: NOEL)