

Top 10 Advent/Christmas/Epiphany Hymn Sing 2022

Sunday 30 January 2022

Number 10 - This is a song with lyrics written by Mark Lowry in 1984, and music written by Buddy Greene in 1991.

The song encourages contemplation of the relationship between Mary and her son, although some religious commentators have criticized the lyrics for downplaying Mary's own grace and understanding.

[Mary, Did You Know?](#)

Number 9 - The soundtrack to A Charlie Brown Christmas is an unorthodox mix of traditional Christmas music and jazz. The jazz portions were created by the Vince Guaraldi Trio. Producer Lee Mendelson, a fan of jazz, heard Guaraldi's crossover hit "Cast Your Fate to the Wind" on the radio not long after completion of his documentary Charlie Brown & Charles Schulz, and contacted the musician to produce music for the special. Guaraldi composed the music for the project, creating an entire piece, "Linus and Lucy," to serve as the theme. The TV special first aired on 9 December 1965.

[Hark the Herald Angels Sing](#)

Number 8 - This song was written by Hoyt Axton in 1971 and made famous by Three Dog Night. The song is also popularly known by its opening lyric, "Jeremiah was a bullfrog". Some of the words are nonsensical.

Axton wanted to persuade his record producers to record a new melody he had written, and the producers asked him to sing any words to the tune. A member of Three Dog Night said that the original lyrics to the song were "Jeremiah was a prophet" but no one liked it.

[Joy the World](#)

Number 7 -This hymn began as a doctrinal hymn based on the Latin poem "Corde natus" by the Roman poet Aurelius Prudentius, written in the 4th Century. It was set to music first in the 10th century.

There are two translations commonly sung today; one by John Mason Neale and Henry W. Baker, and another by Roby Furley Davis.

Neale's original translation began "Of the Father sole begotten" in his Hymnal Noted (London, 1851), and contained only six stanzas. It was Neale's music editor, Thomas Helmore, who paired this hymn with the Latin plainsong. Neale's translation was later edited and extended by Henry W. Baker for Hymns Ancient and Modern (London, 1861).

[Of the Father's Love Begotten](#)

Number 6 -This song was written in 1992 as part of the curriculum for Whole People of God. The author has been part of the Church, in various ways, all her life. Of this song, she says:

"I believe that Jesus is a way into the healing energy of God. I can see now that I described him in verse 3 as one who "showed us a brighter path to walk" - a guide and mentor or role model. Now I would describe him as a pathway through which God is drawing me toward God's Self. That Jesus creates an illumination of the Holy."

[Living in the Light](#)

Number 5 - This hymn was written by Janet Gadeski in 2005. The tune is called "there was a child in Galilee, also written by Janet Gadeski in 2006. This hymn is a paraphrase of the Magnificat, or "Song of Mary".

When searching for information on this hymn I entered "Dreaming Mary" into the search box, which revealed an online "horror game". "The story of a young girl who explores her dreams while playing games with her animal friends; but all is not as it seems". Not the Dreaming Mary I was looking for.

[Dreaming Mary](#)

Number 4 - This carol was written in 1818 when Franz Xaver Gruber set Joseph Mohr's poem to music. It was first performed that Christmas Eve in Austria, sending its message of peace into a time marked by war, hunger, disease and natural disasters.

On Christmas Eve 1914, at the beginning of World War One, soldiers in the trenches on the Flanders front laid down their rifles and helmets and sang *Stille Nacht, Heilige Nacht*; both in its original German, and English.

It is today, more than 100 years later, still one of the most beloved Christmas hymns.

[Silent Night](#)

Number 3 - Like many spirituals and folk songs, this hymn has a pretty murky origin. The song likely dates back to the mid-19th century, but spirituals were passed from plantation to plantation orally, disseminating the songs without sheet music, let alone recordings, making them difficult to date accurately. It is believed that John Wesley Work, Jr. contributed to this song, likely around 1865. Recorded by Mahalia Jackson on 17 October 1950, it remains one of the very best recordings of this song.

[Go Tell it on the Mountain](#)

Number 2 - This hymn was originally a poem written by the English poet Christina Rossetti. The poem was published, under the title "A Christmas Carol", in the January 1872 issue of *Scribner's Monthly*.

In 1906, the composer Gustav Holst composed a setting of Rossetti's words (titled "Cranham") in *The English Hymnal* which is sung throughout the world.

An anthem setting by Harold Darke composed in 1909 is also widely performed by choirs, and was named the best Christmas carol in a poll of some of the world's leading choirmasters and choral experts in 2008.

[In the Bleak Midwinter](#)

Number 1 - Based on a French-language poem by poet Placide Cappeau, written in 1843, that composer Adolphe Adam set to music in 1847. The English version is by John Sullivan Dwight.

This version is performed by Ben Caplan, a Canadian folk singer from Nova Scotia, recorded in 2020.. Unlike the quaint yuletide classic that many know it as, Caplan's rendition of this hymn is a decidedly dark and baroque cut that nods to the songwriter's signature Eastern European folk sensibilities and features his rugged low voice.

[O Holy Night](#)

Bonus Track - This hymn, (originally known as "Carol of the Drum") is a popular Christmas song written by American composer Katherine Kennicott Davis in 1941. First recorded in 1951 by the Trapp Family, and the song has been recorded many times since. In the lyrics, the singer relates how, as a poor young boy, he was summoned by the Magi to the Nativity of Jesus. Without a gift for the Infant, the little drummer boy played his drum with approval from Jesus's mother, Mary, recalling, "I played my best for him" and "He smiled at me".

This version, sung by the Australian Christian Rock Duo "For King and Country" has become a staple in their repertoire and is sung at every concert they play, regardless of the time of year.

[Little Drummer Boy](#)

Thank you to everyone who sent in their favourites. We weren't able to sing all of them, as there were 28 entries, but the top 10 were featured today with a bonus.