



MU 1530, Lutheran Hymnody

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Fall 2008, Second Six Weeks

Course Description

An in-depth consideration of topics in hymnody: American Lutheran hymnody from New Sweden to now. Lutherans have been singing songs of praise in America ever since their arrival in New Jersey in the 17th century. A study of American Lutheran hymnals and hymnic traditions from the beginning until now is vital to understanding Lutheran efforts to indigenize their European traditions of song in the face of the strong Yankee culture of America, and the American religious themes of revival, conversion, and religious liberty and pluralism. There will also be a singing component to the course.

Course Objectives

Students will learn about:

- The major traditions and hymnals of American Lutheran hymnody
- The characteristics of each major movement in hymnody
- How to choose appropriate hymns for various services
- How to find the information about the hymns they are using

Texts

All books are available to purchase from the Luther Seminary Bookstore.

Required Texts

- *Lutheran Hymnals in America: God's Song in a New Land* by Carl F. Schalk (St. Louis, Concordia Publishing House, 1995)

E-Reserves

Available inside MyLutherNet.

- Lutheran Encyclopedia (sections 1-7)
- Grindal materials including *Word & World* and *Lutheran Quarterly* articles "Rhetoric of Luther's Hymns"

"The Swedish Tradition in Hymnals and Songbooks"
"Dano-Norwegian Hymnody in America"

Optional Texts and Resources

- *The Hymnal Companion to the Lutheran Book of Worship*. A good resource on reserve in the library and available in the LS bookstore.
- Companions to hymnals and hymn traditions. Many other hymnal companions can be found in the library or on the web.
- Hymnuts — Students can also access much of the necessary material on my Hymnuts web site or you may find other sites on the web - <http://hymnuts.luthersem.edu/hymnal.htm>
- ELCA Renewing Worship - <http://www.elca.org/Growing-In-Faith/Worship.aspx>
- 500 years of Lutheran Music will help as you visualize and consider each week's materials - <http://www.thrivent.com/heritage/music>

Course Requirements

Hymn of the Week and Group Discussion/Conclusions

This exercise will help you understand how a hymn from the period being discussed each week represents the tradition in which it appears — the theory being that one hymn will reveal much about the others in the same tradition.

The organizing idea behind the course is that every new spiritual movement needs its own song, and that hymnody emerges from the previous tradition with some difficulty, and often has a difficult relationship with the past which it usually attacks, critiques, or ignores while it does its own thing.

This means essentially that every age has to deal with contemporary hymnody, which traditionalists usually dislike, but which the next generation after the conflict will take into its next hymnal and make the new movement a part of the tradition.

- Gather basic information on the hymn you choose to study each week and report your findings in MyLutherNet **each Tuesday**. Be sure to read what other students are posting before class on Thursday. Use these questions to guide your research (this information is also available electronically in MyLutherNet).

NAME OF HYMN:

1. Who wrote the hymn text? Provide a short bio
2. If the original was not English, who translated the text into English?
3. What is the name and meter of the hymn tune?
4. Who wrote the hymn tune? Provide a short bio.
5. What was the occasion for writing the hymn text?
6. a. Where did the hymn first appear?
b. In which Lutheran hymnal did you find this hymn?
7. Major image/theological theme (cross, justification, sanctification, etc.)
8. Biblical source or reference, if any?

9. To whom is the hymn addressed? (who is the audience: God, Jesus, congregation, the soul, other)
10. What kind of discourse is it? (e.g., sermon, prayer, praise, biblical paraphrase, etc.)
11. On what occasion would you use the hymn? with what Scripture? Sunday morning service, private devotions, small groups? Name all that are appropriate.
12. If the hymnal is organized by topic, in what topic does your hymn fall?
13. Where would YOU use it in the worship service? (opening, pre-sermon, post-closing?)
14. Why do you think this hymn was included in the hymnal in which you found it? Read the preface of the hymnal online, if available, and/or about the hymnal in the **Lutheran Encyclopedia** or Grindal materials in e-reserves or in the Schalk text.
15. How is the hymn Lutheran or not Lutheran? What do you think Carl Schalk would say about it? Would Carl Schalk accept it as a good Lutheran hymn?

Singing/Teaching the Hymns

Because this is a hymnody course, singing the hymns is a natural part of our syllabus. It is hoped you will all be inspired to see the hymns as teaching resources or sermon illustrations. As theologians, we will be looking at the texts as theological interpretations of scripture. As biblical scholars, we will understand hymnody as midrash. As historians, we will take note of the different theological emphases from the different eras in Lutheran history.

Arrange for a "Teaching the Hymn" opportunity in your local congregation or with another group. The group size should be approximately 3-5 people.

Possible places/ways to present:

- Sunday adult forum
- Education segment for your church choir group
- Devotional for a Tuesday morning Bible study
- Hymn-sing opportunity

Select 2-3 hymns using the questions that you use for your Hymn of the Week discussions as guidance for what to teach your group about the hymns. Submit a project proposal including what hymns you have chosen, information about the members of the group and a brief description of how you will teach the hymns. This proposal is due **Monday, Nov. 17**.

You may wish to coordinate this project with your preparation for the Final Paper. It is required that your presentation include time to either listen to the hymns being sung (if you have a recording of the hymns) or ask the group to sing the hymns together.

Ask 2-3 people to complete an evaluation and complete a self-evaluation form (forms are found in MyLutherNet). This assignment and the evaluations are due on or before **Thursday, Dec. 18**.

Final Paper

You are on a hymn text committee for a new Lutheran hymnal (at some future date). Prepare a rationale (between 5-10 double spaced pages) for including a hymn of your choice in this new

hymnal. Think back to the first week of class when you answered the question, "What is a Lutheran hymn to you and why?" Has your answer changed, shifted, expanded, narrowed, etc. over the duration of the course? Given what you have learned from this course about what is and is not a Lutheran hymn, reflect on your original answer. Incorporate your original answer into your paper and describe how you would answer the question now when choosing a hymn for the forthcoming hymnal. Explain how your answer has or has not changed and why. In order to do this, the following questions should be answered:

- Select one hymn to be included in the new hymnal from any Lutheran hymnal up to and including the ELW or that you think should be included in the Lutheran canon of hymns.
- In order to prepare a text for inclusion in this hymnal you need to find its original language version (if not in English) and several of its translations or versions as it has appeared in 3 previous Lutheran hymnals in English. Or, if it has not appeared in three previous Lutheran hymnals, find where it was first published and compare that hymn to its most current version.
- How has that hymn been revised over the years?
- Why do you think it was changed? and What difference does it make to the hymn?
- Who are the translators (if any)? and how close to the original is the translation?
- Why should it be included in the canon of Lutheran hymnody?
- Make an argument for your version of the hymn. Edit and prepare the text for inclusion in a new hymnal (theologically, poetically).
- If you can, retranslate it.

Due **Thursday, Dec. 18** via email to the instructor.

Grading

The course can be taken either for a letter grade (A, B, C, etc.) or on a Pass/Marginal/Fail basis.

The student who elects a letter grade should indicate that choice in writing on the appropriate form from the Registrar's web site no later than **Wednesday, November 12, 2008**.

Additional grading information can be found on the Registrar's web site.