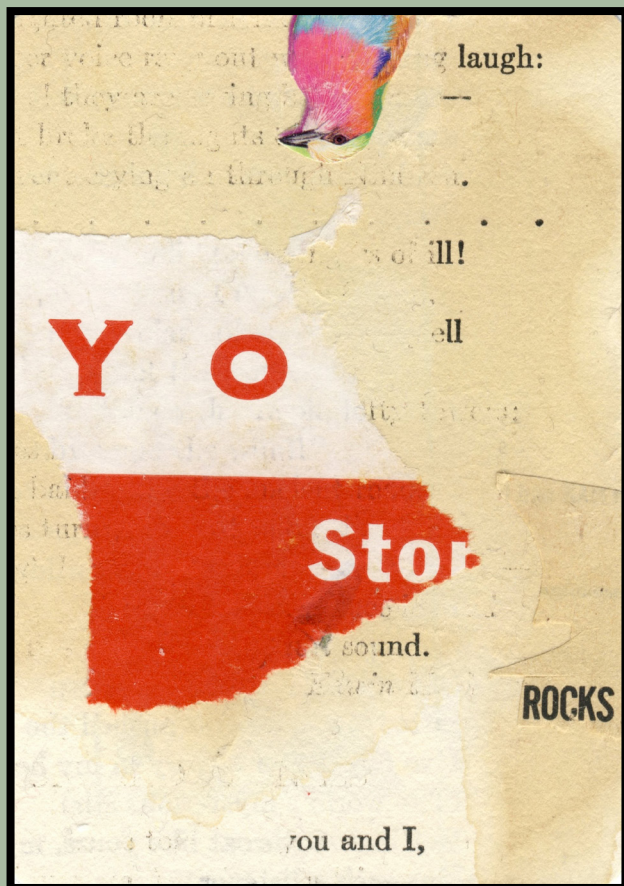


# The Sower Comes Again



New Hymns of  
Richard Leach

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# The Sower Comes Again

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# Introduction

## *Singing a New Song*

“O sing to the Lord a new song.” That is the first verse of Psalms 96 and 98. Other psalms also say it, and so does Isaiah chapter 40, verse 10. All of us who write new words and music for people to sing in worship take that verse as permission, as our license to write and offer our work to the church.

Our God is surely worthy of the talents of living poets and composers, and their songs are new by definition. But recently written is not a very deep definition of newness. One could improvise new words and music to God on the spot, but they might not be worth repeating!

I suggest that the Psalmist wants a new song not for the sake of novelty, but for the sake of the new things God does. New things like leading slaves into freedom and keeping a very old promise to give them a land. New things like forgiveness rather than making debtors pay and pay and pay. New things like touching those the world has declared untouchable and healing those the world thinks are not healable. New things like the resurrection of a Jewish rabbi who had been rejected by the leaders of his own people, and legally executed by the Roman empire as a threat to its order.

The world has many old songs sung by old singers. Pharaoh’s Hebrew slaves in Egypt knew what they sounded like. We remember Pharaoh. When you go to him asking for a break from work in order to worship God, he tells you that you’re just being lazy.

The old song and the old singers say that God cannot be our first priority. They say that when it’s time to make the bricks, you make the bricks. When the straw for the bricks is taken away and the brick quota gets raised, you do without straw and you meet the new quota. And somehow, no matter how many quotas you meet, no matter how long and hard you work, the work is never done.

“Whistle while you work,” says Pharaoh. You know the tune, you know the words. Sing my song. Do as I say.

But the God of Israel does not answer to Pharaoh. God does something Pharaoh does not expect, something new. God frees the slaves from Egypt, and Pharaoh’s pursuing army drowns behind them, its heavy cavalry stuck in the mud, as Israel goes on in sandals and barefoot to freedom. Miriam begins the new song on the freedom shore. “Sing to the Lord, for he has triumphed gloriously. The horse and his rider he has thrown into the sea.”

The song of escape from the imperial troops chasing us down is always new. Miriam's song never gets old. Sing that, says the Psalmist. You don't have to sing Pharaoh's old song any more.

This is a challenge as well as a promise because besides being the heavy yoke of a work song, the old song may be a stirring anthem sung before a ball game or as a flag is saluted—so big and colorful and emotional, who wants to be left out, who dares not to salute? And the old song is a song of fear, alternately shrieking angrily and purring seductively, telling us that if we will learn the tune of not stepping out of line, of giving up civil liberties, of casting a suspicious eye on the designated other, the empire will make us secure while striking down our enemies. The chariots and troops got bogged down in the mud that one time—now the empire claims to know all about mud.

But in the end the old song is a narrow song matched to a narrow life. It is the new song sung by Miriam, the new song called for by the psalmist that gives us room—room to breathe and to move, room to live and to love.

Songs of the seas into which the imperial horses and riders go down are the new song. The laments and cries in bondage that caught the ear of God when the Israelites were slaves are the new song, for sometimes the new song is a complaint and the old song is “Don't complain or I'll give you something to complain about.” Songs of our God-given freedom are the new song, whether they were written yesterday or three millennia ago.

Jesus tells a parable about a farmer who for some reason scatters seed everywhere—on the path, on rocky ground, and among thorns. The old song is, “Those seeds aren't going to amount to a thing.” But the new song is, “Oh, but they did and they do and they will.”

Richard Leach  
Stamford, Connecticut  
Palm/Passion Sunday, 2016

# 1 Gloria

1 The Lord our God, the king we praise—  
2 The Fa - ther, at his side the Son—  
3 The Lamb who takes our sin a - way—  
4 The Spir - it, bring - ing glo - ry near—  
5 The Fa - ther, Spir - it and the Son—

glo - ry, glo - ry to God!

High a - bove our hu - man ways—  
Je - sus Christ, the Ho - ly One—  
Lord who hears us when we pray—  
Life of heav - en mov - ing here—  
A - men, a - men, God is one—

peace to his peo - ple on earth.

Text: *Gloria in excelsis*, para. Richard Leach, 2007.

Music: Amanda Husberg, 2007.

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# The Water and the Name of God 2

Unison

The wa - ter and the name of God have wel - comed  
 The wa - ter and the name of God have moved us  
 The wa - ter and the name of God bring heav - en  
 The name of God is Fa - ther, Son, and Ho - ly  
 And we say yes, and we say yes, to ev - ery

us, have wel - comed us; “Do you be - lieve?”, the ques - tion  
 from a hun - gry place to ban - quet ta - bles, bread and  
 near; so near it comes, we trust the prom - ise God has  
 Spir - it, Trin - i - ty. The life of God en - wraps our  
 gift, to ev - ery claim, to all that God has gif - en

comes, and we say yes, and we say yes.  
 wine, be - yond all price, be - yond all price.  
 made, that earth and heav - en can be one.  
 own, our names as threads the Spir - it weaves.  
 us by wa - ter and the ho - ly name.



### 3 Faithful Bread

Unison

Spir - it, come,

1 Faith - ful bread, feed us  
 2 Pa - tient wine, come a -  
 3 Spir - it, come, like sweet

like sweet oil;

now, gain, oil, make be ev - 'ry face our hearts the song 'ry face strong to in our face for

for you; ev - 'ry face

love; blood; you; ev - 'ry beat song ev - 'ry of joy face

Text: Richard Leach, 2004.

Music: Amanda Husberg, 2004.

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FAITHFUL BREAD

waits to shine like sweet oil,  
 calls to you; feed us now,  
 for the heart; come a - gain,  
 waits to shine; like sweet oil,

Spir - it, come. Spir - it, come.  
 Je - sus, bread.  
 Je - sus, wine.  
 Spir - it, come.

# 4 That All May Be One

## Refrain

Prayer of the Sav - ior, that all may be one;

gift of the Spir - it, that all may be one.

1 Here is the ta - ble of Je - sus the Son,  
2 Wel - come the Lord who has tramp - led on death;  
3 See - ing the glo - ry of Je - sus the Son,  
4 Sing to the Lamb who is stand - ing, though slain,

long - ing for those whom he loves to be one.  
wel - come the Spir - it he gives with his breath.  
tast - ing a hint of the ban - quet to come,  
an - gels and arch - an - gels bless - ing his name.

Bread that is bro - ken will bind us to him;  
 Wel - come the bread and the wine with "A - men!";  
 we find a feast where a friend meets a friend;  
 Sing with the saints, sing "Ho - san - na, A - men":

*to Refrain*

prayer that is ans - wered a - gain and a - gain:  
 gift that is giv - en a - gain and a - gain:  
 prayer that is ans - wered a - gain and a - gain:  
 song that is lift - ed a - gain and a - gain:

## 5 Christ, We Wait

Christ, we wait;  
you will come,  
like a pilgrim toward the city gate.

Stars will fall  
like branches cut  
from the trees beside the road you take.

Clouds of glory  
will be spread,  
cast like cloaks upon the way ahead.

We praise now  
for the day  
when the falling stars prepare your way!

Christ, we wait.

# Waiting for the Kingdom 6

Unison

1 Wait - ing for the king - dom, har - vest long de -  
 2 Wait - ing for the king - dom, ban - quet for the  
 3 Wel - come, wel - come king - dom of the Ho - ly

laid, not con - tent with an - y world hu - man hands have  
 poor, those with - out the prop - er dress left out - side the  
 One, know - ing, judg - ing, mend - ing, all that sin has

made, though we may be wear - y, we are not a -  
 door, we will not be bit - ter for the word is  
 done; there will be a heal - ing ris - ing like the

fraid, for the king - dom comes; yes, the king - dom comes.  
 sure that the king - dom comes; yes, the king - dom comes.  
 sun, as the king - dom comes; yes, the king - dom comes.

Text: Richard Leach, 2009.

Music: Amanda Husberg, 2016.

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WAITING

# 7 Jerusalem the City

Unison

1 Je - ru - sa - lem the cit - y, the tem - ple was the place. The  
 2 Then twen - ty - one years la - ter, my Je - sus stood a - lone. Would  
 3 But Mar - y was a wit - ness, the grave was not the end. She

twelve-year old was Je - sus, the teach - ers were a - mazed. His  
 this man take the tem - ple to piec - es stone by stone? They  
 found the tomb was emp - ty, and then she found her friend. We

moth - er and his fa - ther did not know where he was. "Where  
 cru - ci - fied my Je - sus, he took his fi - nal breath; the  
 are a liv - ing tem - ple, the stones are all our days. O

would I be," said Je - sus, "but in my Fa - ther's house?"  
 ru - lers sent my Sav - ior in - to the house of death.  
 bless the hope that hews them, and shape each one with praise.

Text: Richard Leach, 2014, 2016.

Music: New England folk melody; harm. Hal H. Hopson, 2001.

Text © 2016, harm. © 2002 Selah Publishing Co., Inc

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NEW ENGLAND

# When Jesus Wept 8

1 When Je - sus wept, the fall - ing  
2 O sin be - liev - ing love is

tear in mer - cy flowed be - yond all bound;  
vain. O mer - cy that re - news all things.

when Je - sus groaned, a trem - bling fear seized all the  
O Je - sus, past all fear you reign. O hu - man

1  
2  
guilt - y world a - round.  
heart that grieves and sings.



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 (GIFT OF NIGHT) ..... 14  
 The Stone the Builders Cast Away .....31  
 (LUCILE)  
 Your Statutes Are My Songs (STATUTES) ....32

## CMD

On Ships That Sail upon the Sea  
 (APPLETON CHAPEL)..... 13  
 Creation Praises You, O God (WOMBLE).....36

## LM

Go Ask a Rainbow (PUER NOBIS) .....17  
 The Water and the Name of God  
 (O WALY WALY).....2  
 We Long to Know (SEED OF LIFE) .....18  
 When Jesus Wept (HELEN).....8

## LM with refrain

O Smile upon Us, Holy One (NICHOLAS)....27

## 33 66 33

Faithful Bread (FAITHFUL BREAD) .....3

## 45 44 44 8

Out of the Pit (WITTO) .....25

## 5 86 4

Tremble, O Tremble! (TROMBLEY) .....30

## 65 65 65 55

Waiting for the Kingdom (WAITING).....6

## 65 65D with refrain

We Will Not Be Fearful  
 (WHITE OAK BAYOU) .....26

## 74 49

More of You (MORE OF YOU) ..... 15, 16

## 76 76 D

Jerusalem the City (NEW ENGLAND) .....7

## 76 78

I Fix My Eyes on Your Love  
 (FAITHFUL WALK) .....23

## 77 77 with refrain

Swiftly Runs the Word of God  
 (RUN ON, JESUS) .....35

## 785 and coda

The Centurion's Song (CAPTAIN).....9

## 86 77

The Lord Our God, the King We Praise  
 (GLORIA) ..... 1

## 87 85 D

Day and Night I Cry to Heaven  
 (SEVEN-SEVEN).....29

## 87 87 77

Silent Voices, Unheard Voices ..... 21, 22  
 (VOICES).....21  
 (SILENT VOICES) .....22

## 87 87 and refrain

If All That Jesus Did.....12

## 87 87 D

Yes, I Almost Lost My Footing  
 (OPEN EYES) .....28

## 888 7

How Long, Lord (HOW LONG).....20

## 97 86 547

Song for the Sower..... 10, 11  
 (THE SOWER).....10  
 (PLAINPALAIS) .....11

## 999

Sighs That Lead to Words (PSALM 5) ..... 19

## 10 8 76 744

The One Who Says How Many Stars  
 (HUISBRINGEN) .....34

## 10 10 10 6

Praise the Lord, All You Angels  
 (GLORY, GLORY, GLORY).....24

## 10 10 10 10 and refrain

That All May Be One (UNITY) .....4

## Irr.

Christ, We Wait.....5

# Richard Leach Hymn Collections

## **Text Collections**

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### **Tuned for Your Sake: Hymns 1987-2007**

(Selah 2007, 125-428)

### **Go Worship at Emmanuel's Feet**

(Selah 2001, 125-424)

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#### **Fifty-two Biblical and Spiritual Songs**

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#### **Fifty-Two Hymns from the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke & John**

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#### **Forty Hymns for Advent, Christmas and Epiphany, Lent, Easter and Pentecost**

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## **Text and music collections**

### **New Harmony: A Harp of Thousand Strings**

(Selah 2006, 125-427, with David Ashley White)

### **Honey from the Rock**

(Selah 2005, 125-426)

### **We Sing the Shoreline**

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### **Pray Then Like This: Hymns on the Lord's Prayer**

(Selah 2002, 125-220, with Carson Cooman)

### **Over the Waves of Words**

(Selah 1996 125-423)



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Day and Night I Cry to Heaven .....	29
Faithful Bread .....	3
<i>Gloria</i> .....	1
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Go Ask a Rainbow .....	17
<i>Here Is the Table of Jesus the Son</i> .....	4
How Long, Lord .....	20
I Cry to You, O Lord .....	33
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