

Music Blurbs for 10-14-18

News & Notes

This week we will sing the perennial favorite “All things bright and beautiful,” as well as “Seek ye first the kingdom of God,” and “O God, our help in ages past.” (10:30). The choir will sing a touch of Tudor with Christopher Tye’s “Give almes of thy goods.”

Bulletins

There are seven texts in *The Hymnal 1982* by prolific author Cecil Frances Alexander (1818-1895). The list includes “Once in royal David’s city,” “He is risen,” “There is a green hill far away,” and “Jesus calls us o’er the tumult,” as well as today’s hymn “All things bright and beautiful.” This text for children provides an illustration of the second article of the Apostle’s Creed: “God the Father, maker of heaven and earth.” It first appeared in *Hymns for Little Children* (London, 1848) and was used in the Catechism section of *The Hymnal 1916*. The lovely hymn has a dark side, some would claim—the infamous omitted verse! “The rich man in his castle, the poor man at his gate, God made them high or lowly, and ordered their estate.” A British commentator pointed out: “Here the Tory stratification of society is given the sanction of God Almighty.” *The Hymnal Companion* explains, “In our day, however, we appreciate the simplicity and charm of the remaining text better for the offending stanza’s omission.” In more recent times, the first four lines of the first stanza became the titles of four books of memoirs by James Herriot, a veterinarian in the north of England. The books were soon turned into a television series, for which the credits theme uses the song’s text, sung to music by John Rutter.

The tune in the hymnal is called ROYAL OAK. This tune was adapted for this text in 1915. Stories behind the tune name vary. Perhaps it was the tree where Charles II hid after escaping from a battle in 1651. Some say the tune’s real name is “The 29th of May,” a loyalist song celebrating the restoration of Charles II to the English monarchy on the 29th of May, 1660. Yet others say the tune is called, “The Jovial Crew.”