

Opening Hymn: Rejoice, Ye Pure in Heart

(SDAH 27, CH 17)

The words to this stirring hymn come from Edward Hayes Plumptre (1827-1891), who wrote them in 1865 for a choir festival in Peterborough Cathedral. They were first sung to a different tune (see SDAH 50). Since the hymn was to be used for the choir festival processional, a long hymn was needed, so there were originally 11 stanzas. The full text of the hymn shows that Plumptre used the processional to represent the Christian's spiritual march to the New Jerusalem, singing all the way. Plumptre was a well-respected Anglican preacher, theologian, and scholar, who wrote several volumes of verse and hymns.

The tune "Marion" was composed in 1883 by Arthur Henry Messiter (1834-1916) and named for his mother, Marion. It is unusual in that it undergoes several changes of key in such a short hymn. Born and trained in music in England, he emigrated to America in his late 20s and worked as a musician in several prominent churches and a college. In 1866 he was appointed choir leader and organist at Trinity Episcopal Church in New York City, from which he retired in 1897.

Alternate Opening Hymn: Lord, in the Morning

(SDAH 39, CH 39)

This paraphrase of Psalm 5 by Isaac Watts (1674-1748) appeared in his *Psalms of David* in 1719. The original hymn has eight stanzas. Of the stanzas in our hymnal, stanzas 1 and 2 correspond to the first three verses of the psalm, stanza 3 with verse 8, and stanza 4 with verses 11 and 12.

Isaac Watts was born in Southampton, England, to a family of Huguenot ancestry who had been persecuted for their religious convictions. He followed the Nonconformist practices of his parents, which kept him out of the Church of England and therefore also excluded him from studying at a university. At a Nonconformist academy he prepared for the ministry in the Independent, or Congregational, church. He did serve in such a capacity, but poor health limited his ability to fulfill his duties. Yet he wrote about 600 hymns and revolutionized hymn singing around the world. His *Hymns and Spiritual Songs* (1707-1709) was the first real hymnbook in the English language. He paraphrased nearly all of the 150 psalms in his *The Psalms of David*, adapting them to Christian themes.

The tune "Mear" is probably by the music engraver Aaron Williams (1731-1776), who was of Welsh descent, was a member of the Scots Church in London, and served as editor of *Williams' Psalmody*, published in 1770.

Closing Hymn: All the Way

(SDAH 516, CH 259)

Frances (“Fannie”) Jane Crosby (1820-1915), the blind writer of so many beloved hymns, was meditating on the leading of Providence when a friend came to her door. Unexpectedly, the friend gave her five dollars. Miss Crosby was short of money at the time and needed this amount until she would be able to draw money from her publishers. This experience started a train of thought in her that resulted in her writing the words to this hymn. As someone without eyesight, she often needed someone to lead her to her destination and a way from danger. The words speak of such leading.

Crosby sent the hymn to Robert Lowry (1826-1899), whom she often consulted about the phrasing of a hymn. Lowry composed the tune, which now bears his name, especially for the words. It was first published in 1875.

Adapted from Wayne Hooper and Edward E. White, *Companion to the Seventh-day Adventist Hymnal* (Hagerstown, Md.: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1988).

SDAH = *Seventh-day Adventist Hymnal*

CH = *Church Hymnal*