

Hymn Study

Choose a hymn for the season of the church year.

There is a suggested hymn on the Lutheran Liturgical Homeschool Cards or choose your own.

Listen to the hymn throughout the day.

Both passive (having it on in the background) and active (focused listening or singing)

- *Resources of how to listen: Music streaming search “LSB 497”*
- *smallchurchmusic.com has public domain hymns*

Sing the hymn during daily devotions.

Sing acapella, play accompaniment on piano – only the melody line is fine!

- *Resource for beginning-intermediate piano players – David’s Harp has leveled hymn accompaniment books. It allows even the youngest player to begin accompanying.*

Ask questions!

Throughout the church season, explore details about the hymn.

Use the Lutheran Service Book as a starting point.

Other resources: *Lutheran Service Book Companion to the Hymns, Hymnary.org, https://allthehousehold.com/*

- What section of the hymnal would you find this hymn? (LSB Index 993)
- *Who wrote the text? Did they write any other hymns in our hymnal? (LSB Index pg 998) Did they write any other hymns or poetry that are not found in the hymnal?*
- Who wrote the tune? Are there other hymns in the hymnal using the same tune? (LSB Index pg 1003)
- *When was the hymn text and/or tune written? What was going on in history during that time? Look at a timeline for reference.*
- What Scripture references are associated with this hymn? Read the scriptures and the hymn text and discuss why they are attributed to that hymn. Can you find the Scripture in the Lectionary readings? (LSB xiv)
- *What is the listed meter? (LSB Index pg 1007, 1013) Are there other hymns in the hymnal that use the same meter? Look them up and compare. More information on meter can be found here: XXX*
- Who is the translator, if applicable? (LSB index pg (998) What other hymns have they translated? Find out more information about them.
 - *Are there any words or phrases we do not understand?*
- What does this hymn teach? What does it say about who God is? about sin? about Jesus as Savior? about forgiveness? about Baptism? about the Lord’s Supper? Can you find Law and Gospel?

Dig deeper:

- Look for musicians, Pastors, or theologians who have articles, blog posts, or podcasts talking about specific hymns. Resource option: Issues, Etc and KFUO radio
- Analyze the music to the best of your ability! Is it in major or minor? Is there a regular time signature? Can you clap the beat? What other musical markings do you see?
- Listen to choral arrangements, cantatas, organ preludes/postludes, etc based off of the hymn
- Study a piece of artwork that is associated with the Scripture reference or season of the church year while listening to the hymn

Other activities/ideas:

Pick one hymn to learn/memorize for the whole season or for the whole year. Memorize one verse at a time.

Learn it with and without the tune. Hymns make beautiful poetry!

- *Even the smallest children can memorize hymns. Here are a few that I like because their repetition or simplicity:*
Christ, the Life of All the Living LSB 420, Lamb of God, Pure and Holy LSB 434,
He is Arisen! Glorious Word LSB 488, Triune God, Be Thou Our Stay LSB 505,
I Come, O Savior, to Thy Table LSB 618, What God Ordains Is Always Good LSB 760

Find out what hymns your church is singing on the following Sunday. Throughout the week, sing them for home devotions.

Practice singing the liturgy!

LCMS website has recordings of every part of the liturgy.

The liturgy is also a great place to introduce basics of part singing. Start with learning the alto line on the Amen's or Allelulia's as the phrases are short and harmonies are accessible.

Play the melody line of hymns for the season of the church year without telling which one it is.

Can anyone guess the name of the hymn? Can you remember any more words? Can you find it in the hymnal?

Work through the alphabet and sing hymns that begin with each letter.

Be flexible enough to start with the second or third word of the title when you get to challenging letters!

Do a hymn sing!

Everyone can pick their favorite hymns. This is also fun to do with extended family and friends.

Remember hymn study is lifelong! Hymns proclaim scripture, doctrine, and the Gospel of Christ through poetic rhythm and rhyme, and the music enhances their texts. Start with singing, add a few questions, and add more as your children grow and as the season of the church year returns.