

Heaven Came Down

“Heaven Came Down” is a joyful gospel hymn composed in 1961 by prolific hymn writer John W. Peterson, who was known for his contributions to 20th-century evangelical music. The hymn vividly describes the experience of salvation in Christ, using imagery that captures the transformative moment when a soul is born again. With its upbeat melody and clear doctrinal message, the song remains a favorite in many churches and evangelistic gatherings.

John W. Peterson wrote both the words and the music for “Heaven Came Down,” and like many of his songs, it was born from a deep desire to present the gospel in a personal and relatable way. Peterson once said the hymn was inspired by a testimony he heard, in which a man said, “It seemed like heaven came down and glory filled my soul.” This vivid phrase became the title and theme of the song.

The hymn opens by recounting the moment of spiritual rebirth: “O what a wonderful, wonderful day, day I will never forget.” It celebrates the certainty and joy that come when Christ enters a believer’s life. The reference to being “born of the Spirit with life from above” points clearly to the biblical teaching of regeneration, particularly in Titus 3:5 and John 3:3–6. Peterson communicates that salvation is not based on human merit but is a gracious act of God. In the chorus, the repeated line “Heaven came down and glory filled my soul” captures the emotional and spiritual awe of salvation. It communicates the personal nature of God’s grace, emphasizing that the believer’s heart is transformed by Christ’s indwelling presence. The phrase is more than poetic—it reflects a deep theological truth: that through Christ, heaven touches earth, and the believer experiences a taste of divine glory.

The second verse continues by focusing on peace and hope that follow salvation. It contrasts the past condition of separation with the newfound joy of being reconciled to God. The believer is no longer condemned, but “justified fully” through faith in Jesus. The verse reflects Paul’s teaching in Romans 5:1, where justification brings peace with God. The final verse looks ahead to the believer’s eternal future. Now that salvation has been received, there is an assurance of a “future in heaven for sure,” grounded not in earthly hope, but in “wondrous grace.” The believer lives in joy because of this secure promise.

“Heaven Came Down” combines simple language with strong biblical theology, making it both accessible and meaningful. Its energetic tune, bright tone, and triumphant message have ensured its enduring popularity in gospel songbooks and congregational singing. The hymn invites believers to remember the joy of their salvation and to give thanks for the moment when, by grace, heaven truly did come down to their souls



**St. Paul’s Evangelical Lutheran Church
Wilton WI
9:00 AM
July 26,2026
Ninth Sunday after Pentecost
Inviting People to Journey with Christ’s
Family In Spreading God’s Love and Mercy**

As Solomon prays for wisdom, we seek to more deeply know the treasures of faith. In today’s gospel Jesus offers everyday images that reveal to us the reign of God: a tree that becomes a sheltering home, yeast that penetrates and expands, a treasured pearl, a net that gains a great catch. Even as we seek the riches of God’s reign, the great surprise is that God’s grace finds us first!

**Indicates people should stand as they are able.*
Welcome and Announcements

PEACE
The peace of Christ be with you always.
And also with you.
Let us greet one another with a sign of Christ’s peace.

GATHERING
The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God.

Hymn **“I Love to Tell the Story”** **ELW #661 v.3**

Confession and Forgiveness
Blessed be the holy Trinity + , one God,
whose compassion endures forever.
Amen.

Let us confess our sin to God.

Compassionate God,

we confess to you all our sins.

Our burden is heavy, and we cannot free ourselves.

In your mercy, call us back to you.

Your yoke is easy and your burden is light.

Restore us to dwell in your peace.

In Christ's name we pray,

Amen.

Jesus says, "Come to me,
all you who are weary
and are carrying heavy burdens,
and I will give you rest."

In the name of God,
Father, Son, and Holy Spirit,
your sins are forgiven.

Rest in God's love.

Amen.

PRAYER FOR THE CHILDREN

Dear Lord Jesus;

We lift to you our children and grandchildren. We ask that your spirit will dwell with them according to your will, that they will grow in the knowledge of you and know they are dearly loved by you. We pray for your protection from deception by the evil one and his darts that would lead them astray. May they do well in school, learning and discerning your direction for them. We also pray for all children throughout the world that you will keep them in your loving care. In Jesus name we pray. Amen

‘MORNING HAS BROKEN’

Morning Has Broken" is a Christian hymn first published in 1931. It has words by English author Eleanor Farjeon and was inspired by the Village of Alfriston in East Sussex, then set to a traditional Scottish Gaelic tune, "Bunessan".

Origins

The hymn originally appeared in the second edition of *Songs of Praise* (published in 1931), to the tune "Bunessan", composed in the Scottish Islands. In *Songs of Praise Discussed*, the editor, Percy Dearmer, explains that as there was need for a hymn to give thanks for each day, English poet and children's author Eleanor Farjeon had been "asked to make a poem to fit the lovely Scottish tune." Farjeon later included a slight variation on the original hymn text under the new title, "A Morning Song (For the First Day of Spring)", in her collection of poems for children entitled *The Children's Bells*, published by Oxford University Press in 1957.

After appearing in Lachlan MacBean's *Songs and Hymns of the Gael*, "Bunessan" was used in the *Revised Church Hymnary* (1927) and the Appendix (1936) to the *Irish Church Hymnal* (1919) paired with the nativity text "Child in the Manger" by the Scottish poet Mary MacDonald (1789–1872), who lived on the Isle of Mull and was born there, near the village of Bunessan, after which the tune is named. After its rise to popularity with Farjeon's text, the tune was used for the James Quinn hymns "Christ Be Beside Me" and "This Day God Gives Me", both texts adapted from the traditional Irish hymn "St Patrick's Breastplate". Michael Saward's hymn "Baptized In Water" also uses the tune.

and songbook Lord of Light. Later arrangements by John Weissrock and Michael Pope helped prepare it for wider hymnal use. It entered The United Methodist Hymnal in 1989 and The Presbyterian Hymnal in 1990, contributing to its broad ecumenical reception.

Biblical Foundations

The refrain comes most directly from [Isaiah 6:8](#), where the prophet hears God's question and responds, 'Here I am. Send me.' The hymn preserves both the generosity and the humility of that response. The nocturnal call in the refrain also recalls 1 Samuel 3, where Samuel learns to recognize God's voice and answer with attentive obedience. Exodus 3 provides another foundational pattern: God hears the suffering of the people and calls Moses to participate in their deliverance. The stanzas also echo Ezekiel's promise that God will replace hearts of stone with hearts of flesh. The final stanza's concern for the hungry and needy resonates with Jesus' call for laborers and with his command to Peter to feed and tend his flock. The hymn therefore presents vocation not as private self-fulfillment but as participation in God's compassionate response to human suffering.

WORDGod speaks to us in scripture reading, preaching, and song.

FIRST READING

Because Solomon did not ask for long life, riches, or the defeat of his enemies, God gave him what he asked for: wisdom to govern the people well.

A reading from 1Kings 3:5-12

⁵ At Gibeon the Lord appeared to Solomon in a dream by night, and God said, "Ask what I should give you." ⁶ And Solomon said, "You have shown great and steadfast love to your servant my father David because he walked before you in faithfulness, in righteousness, and in uprightness of heart toward you, and you have kept for him this great and steadfast love and have given him a son to sit on his throne today. ⁷ And now, O Lord my God, you have made your servant king in place of my father David, although I am only a little child; I do not know how to go out or come in. ⁸ And your servant is in the midst of the people whom you have chosen, a great people so numerous they cannot be numbered or counted. ⁹ Give your servant, therefore, an understanding mind to govern your people, able to discern between good and evil, for who can govern this great people of yours?" ¹⁰ It pleased the Lord that Solomon had asked this. ¹¹ God said to him, "Because you have asked this and have not asked for yourself long life or riches or for the life of your enemies but have asked for yourself understanding to discern what is right, ¹² I now do according to your word. Indeed, I give you a wise and discerning mind; no one like you has been before you, and no one like you shall arise after you."

The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

HERE I AM LORD

Hymn “God Whose Almighty Word” ELW#673 v.1

Psalm 119:129-136

¹²⁹*Your decrees are wonderful;
therefore I obey them with all my heart.*
¹³⁰***When your word is opened it gives light;
it gives understanding to the simple.***
¹³¹*I open my mouth and pant
because I long for your commandments.*
¹³²***Turn to me and be gracious to me,
as you always do to those who love your name.***
¹³³*Order my footsteps in your word;
let no iniquity have dominion over me.*
¹³⁴***Rescue me from those who oppress me,
and I will keep your commandments.***
¹³⁵*Let your face shine upon your servant
and teach me your statutes.*
¹³⁶***My eyes shed streams of tears,
because people do not keep your teaching.***

Hymn “Joyful, Joyful We Adore Thee” ELW# 836 v.1

SECOND READING

These words celebrate the depth of God’s actions for us. Through Christ’s death for us and the activity of the Spirit praying for us, we are fused to God’s love poured out in Jesus Christ. Nothing, not even death itself, is able to separate us from such incredible divine love.

“Here I Am, Lord” is a modern hymn of divine compassion, vocation, and human response. Written and composed by Daniel Schutte in 1979 and first published in 1981, it became one of the most widely sung hymns to emerge from Roman Catholic liturgical renewal after the Second Vatican Council. The hymn is structured as a dialogue. In the stanzas, God speaks as Creator, Redeemer, and compassionate Lord who hears the cries of suffering people. In the refrain, the congregation answers with humility and willingness: the response is not self-confident certainty but a prayerful readiness to be sent. Its themes make it especially suitable for ordination, commissioning, mission, vocation, confirmation, and services of dedication. Its continuing appeal lies in the way it joins biblical calling with concern for the poor, the suffering, and those in need of light, healing, nourishment, and hope.

Historical Background

Daniel Schutte wrote Here I Am, Lord while studying theology at the Jesuit School of Theology in Berkeley, California. A priest friend asked him on a Wednesday to write a song for a diaconate ordination that would take place that Saturday. Schutte was ill with influenza and had only a few days to complete the piece. The request centered on Isaiah 6 and the language of vocation. Schutte also drew on the call of Samuel in 1 Samuel 3 and broader prophetic imagery. He completed the song in two days and was still making revisions while walking it to his friend's home. The original refrain reportedly used the words 'Here I stand, Lord.' After consultation with the other St. Louis Jesuits, Schutte revised the line to 'Is it I, Lord?' in order to preserve the humility and uncertainty often found in biblical call narratives. The hymn premiered at Oakland Cathedral in 1979. It was first published in 1981 on the St. Louis Jesuits' album

Soon and Very Soon (con't)

This text is filled with exuberant joy and eschatological hope. This song revels in the promise of paradise—eternal communion with the King—where there will be no more hurting or crying or dying. Sing with confidence, like those who have left for a long-anticipated journey to a wonderful place: before we arrive, our hearts are already there. Especially when coupled with the “Hallelujah” refrain, the tone is full of excitement and joyful expectation, a far cry from the fearful attitudes that once characterized portrayals of Christ’s return. Christ is no longer the forbidding Judge but the consoling and life-bestowing King.

There is great comfort in that to those who look forward to seeing Him one day. It is especially meaningful to those who, for whatever reason, may have been treated as unimportant in this lifetime. Whether struggling under the bondage of slavery or the deprivation of the depression, or marching in freedom marches in an attempt to gain the rights and privileges that are supposed to be possessed by all citizens of this country, African-Americans have had to fight to maintain their dignity. To be treated as second-class citizens—or, indeed, as less than citizens at all—only reinforces the need to be recognized as one with worth. In declaring that the King knows each of us by name, that worth is affirmed in a way no amount of human acceptance can.

A reading from Romans 8:26-39

²⁶ The Spirit helps us in our weakness, for we do not know how to pray as we ought, but that very Spirit intercedes with groanings too deep for words. ²⁷ And God, who searches hearts, knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God. ²⁸ We know that all things work together for good for those who love God, who are called according to his purpose. ²⁹ For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn within a large family. ³⁰ And those whom he predestined he also called, and those whom he called he also justified, and those whom he justified he also glorified.

The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

Hymn “Lord, I Lift Your Name on High” ELW #857

GOSPEL

Throughout Matthew’s gospel, Jesus and his disciples proclaim the good news that “the kingdom of heaven is near!” Here, Jesus offers several brief parables that explore the implications of this announcement for people’s lives.

The holy gospel according to Matthew 13:31-33, 44-52

Glory to you, O Lord.

³¹ [Jesus] put before [the crowds] another parable: “The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed that someone took and sowed in his field;³² it is the smallest of all the seeds, but when it has grown it is the greatest of shrubs and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and make nests in its branches.”

³³ He told them another parable: “The kingdom of heaven is like yeast that a woman took and mixed in with three measures of flour until all of it was leavened.”

⁴⁴ “The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which a man found and reburied; then in his joy he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field.

⁴⁵ “Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant in search of fine pearls; ⁴⁶ on finding one pearl of great value, he went and sold all that he had and bought it.

⁴⁷ “Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a net that was thrown into the sea and caught fish of every kind; ⁴⁸ when it was full, they drew it ashore, sat down, and put the good into baskets but threw out the bad. ⁴⁹ So it will be at the end of the age. The angels will come out and separate the evil from the righteous ⁵⁰ and throw them into the furnace of fire, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

⁵¹ “Have you understood all this?” They answered, “Yes.” ⁵² And he said to them, “Therefore every scribe who has become a disciple in the kingdom of heaven is like the master of a household who brings out of his treasure what is new and what is old.”

The gospel of the Lord. **Praise to You, O Christ.**

Hymn	“Amazing Grace”	ELW #779 vs. 1&5
Sermon		Karen Sparling Synod Authorized Minister

***APOSTLE’S CREED**

**I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, God’s only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the virgin Mary,**

Soon and Very Soon

The composer of "**Soon and Very Soon**" is **Andraé Crouch**. He wrote both the words and music for this upbeat gospel song about death and the hereafter. The song is well-known in Christian music and reflects themes of hope and anticipation for the afterlife.

Aside from the bridge, the song has qualities reminiscent of a modern-day spiritual, because it has a simple text, a word-substitution format, and an inner refrain (“we are going to see the King”), making it suitable for singing easily from memory. The lines “No more crying there” and “No more dying there” are called wandering verses, because they are borrowed from other traditional songs. Most notably, the song has much in common with an earlier American spiritual, [“Come and go with me to my Father’s house,”](#) which speaks of a future in heaven, has a similar harmonic structure in the first three phrases, uses the word-substitution format, and has an inner refrain. Like the spiritual, Crouch’s song conveys sentiments found in Revelation 21:3–4, “Behold, the dwelling place of God is with man. He will dwell with them, and they will be his people, and God himself will be with them as their God. He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away” (ESV), and it echoes the promise of Revelation 22:7, “I am coming soon.”

“I Love To Tell The Story”

“I Love to Tell the Story” was part of a lengthy fifty-stanza two-part poem, The Old, Old Story, written by Katherine Hankey (1834-1911). If you know this old hymn, you may have been captivated by its simplicity as it declares the composer’s faith in Jesus. The words, full of evangelistic zeal, carry the hearer to the heart of the gospel.

Katherine Hankey wrote the words to the poem in 1866. It then became published as a small booklet. Hankey first put the words to music herself, but it didn’t gain a following. In 1867, the text of “I Love to Tell the Story” was read at a large YMCA gathering in Montreal. Dr. W. H. Doane, the composer of more than 2,000 songs (including some of Fanny Crosby’s hymns), heard it and put the words to music.

Arabella Katherine Hankey was born in Clapham, England, in 1834. She was the daughter of a wealthy London banker and a devotedly Christian mother. Called Kate by her friends, she and her father belonged to an evangelical group led by William Wilberforce known as the Clapham Sect. The group, comprised of prominent evangelicals from the Clapham area, included several members of Parliament. They opposed slavery and the slave trade and had a great influence in abolishing both in England. Motivated by their Christian beliefs, they worked for social reform for the working class and fairness for all. They supported missionary and Bible societies and published evangelistic pamphlets and journals.

Katherine gave herself to helping better workers’ conditions, taught Bible classes for shop girls, and visited the sick in hospitals. While still a teenager, Katherine organized and taught in London’s Sunday Schools.

Inspired by the Methodist revival of John Wesley, her evangelistic fervor prompted her to travel to South Africa as a missionary nurse and help her invalid brother.

However, Hankey’s tireless work for the Lord took a drastic turn in her early thirties. She became severely ill. Katherine remained bedridden for a long time. During her long and difficult recovery period, she wrote a two-part poem. Its first part, “The Story Wanted,” asks who Jesus was. “I Love To Tell the Story” derives from the answer within the second part, “The Story Told.”

suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried;
he descended to the dead.
On the third day he rose again;
he ascended into heaven,
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.
I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting.
Amen.

Hymn	“How Great Thou Art”	ELW #856 vs. 1&4
Prayers of Intercession	(God of grace, (hear our prayer.)	

MEAL

God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ.

OFFERING

Offering Hymn	“This Is My Fathers World”	ELW #824 v.1
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Prayer after Offering

GREAT THANKSGIVING

Words of Institution

Hymn	“Let Us Break Bread Together”	ELW #471
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LORD’S PRAYER

Lord, remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray.

**Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name,
thy kingdom come, thy will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us
our trespasses, as we forgive those who
trespass against us; and lead us not into
temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine
is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory,
forever and ever.
Amen.**

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

Heaven has come near.
Come, share in the feast!
Everyone who believes in Jesus is welcome at Christ’s table.

Distribution

Prayer after Communion

Hymn “Blessed Assurance” ELW #638

SENDING

God blesses us and sends us out in mission to the world.

Blessing
Creator, Redeemer, Sustainer,
one God,
bless, heal, and hold you
today and always.
Amen.

I’LL FLY AWAY

"I'll Fly Away"([Roud](#) 18437) is a [hymn](#) written between 1929 and 1932 by [Albert E. Brumley](#) and published in 1932 by the Hartford Music company in a collection titled *Wonderful Message*. Albert took three years to write the song after getting the idea while picking cotton in 1928.

History

Albert E. Brumley has been described as the "pre-eminent gospel songwriter" of the 20th century with over 600 published songs. According to interviews, Brumley came up with the idea for the song while [picking cotton](#) on his father's farm in [Rock Island, Oklahoma](#). Brumley says that as he worked he was "humming the old ballad that went like this: 'If I had the wings of an angel, over these prison walls I would fly,' and suddenly it dawned on me that I could use this plot for a gospel-type song." The song Brumley described appears to be "[The Prisoner's Song](#)".^[4] It was an additional three years later until Brumley worked out the rest of the song, paraphrasing one line from the secular ballad to read, "Like a bird from prison bars has flown" using prison as a metaphor for earthly life. Brumley has stated, "When I wrote it, I had no idea that it would become so universally popular." Other earlier nineteenth century [slave songs](#) also contained similar lyrics, stating: "I'll fly away to glory; I'll fly away to my heavenly home, And I'll shout glory."

We ask that all members join the Women of ELCA and pray this prayer as you rise in the morning, and as you prepare to retire each evening.

Lord, Jesus Christ, I bring to you:

Jada, Myles, & Conner Garske; Britain Hahn; Amara Brandau; Chase Brandau; Avery Brueggen; Riley, Aria & Hudson Brueggen; Nolan & Logan Buchholz; Thadyn & Ayawyn Conner; Vanessa & Elliott Ornes; Lailah Eckes, Maevis Shock; Lena Ornes; Porter Sorenson; Josie Ornes; Brooklyn, Madelyn, Emma, Bryce, Marah, Bria, Ava, Katie & Benjamin Gruen; Braylee Zimmerman; MaKenzie & Cooper Powell; Wesson & Arden Mayne; Vanessa, Mia, & Brek Anderson; Carlee, Collin,& Camden Niedfeldt; Morgan Speicher; Krista & Sierra Cook; Franklin & Douglas Wides; Sophia, Derek & Deacon Erdman; Kody Tormoen; Callie Fleming; Miranda, Daphne & Linus Arndt; Emma Elder; Bryson Lamb, Elizabeth Wildes; Alaina & Braxton Holthaus; Jayda Leis; David, Sam & Zachary Ross; Gannon & Ellory Tormoen; Jase & Margo Picha; Watson & Duke Sebranek, Violet Ford, Hunter and Jaxson Puhl; Eason Kelbel; Cole, Caleb & Connor Redding; Luke & Joelle Kroeger; Peyton Oelson, Greyson Resop; Dakotah Adams; Kendall & Kinsley Christopherson, Hudson Birkholz; Alayna, Alivia & Levi Wyttenbach; Brooke, Claire, Grace & Bree Olson; Kaisley, Kinley, Colston Thayer; Dominic Young; Avilynn McNamer; Ayla Arndt; Lainey Myers; Rylan & Tucker McCarthy; Brynlee Jones.

That your spirit will dwell with them according to your will. That they will grow in the knowledge of you and know that they are dearly loved by you. I pray that you will protect them from deception by the evil one and all his darts that would lead them astray. May they do well in school, learning and discerning what direction you have in mind for them. I also pray for children throughout the world that you would keep them in your care. In Jesus name I pray. Amen

Hymn

“I’ll Fly Away”

Insert

Dismissal

Heaven has come near. Go, share the good news!

Thanks be to God.

Those Serving Today

Ministers: All God’s People; Synod Authorized Minister: Karen Sparling; Organist: Nalani Bever; Readers: Leonard Arndt; Altar: Dixie & Leonard Arndt: Communion Servers; Volunteers

Our Prayers

Linda, Kristy Gwin Solovey, Marilyn O’Rourke, Larry Arndt, Nick Evans, Col- lin Niedfeldt, Mark Drews, Carol Lydon Fronk, Brian, Ben Bender, Darlene Diekrager, Jack Arndt, Diane Hornburger, Mike Escutia, Daniel Paulson, Marie Jacobson, Lenora Martin, Jenny Simpson Erickson, Linda Martin, Andy Martin, John Arzt, Greg Brandau

CALENDAR

Sun., July 26	Worship	9:00 am
Mon, July 27—Thurs July 30	Vacation Bible School	5:30—8:00 pm
Sun., Aug. 2	Worship	9:00 am

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Rally Day

Remember when we had a picnic and played games in the park when summer break was over and Sunday school was back in session each year? Well, we’re going to that on September 13 this year. Mark your calendar and plan to attend.

Borning Cry

The author and composer is John Carl Ylvisaker (b. 1937), a native of Fargo, N.D. He studied at Concordia College in Minnesota, where he received a bachelor's degree in 1959.

The composition of “Borning Cry” began in 1985, when Mr. Ylvisaker was asked to prepare a series on baptism called “Reflections” for the ALC. His Web site states: “John began work on the song before any footage for the video had been shot. When the media team met to put the music with the video for the first time, it became obvious that the dance-like beat and fast rhythm of the music did not match the gentle scenes being depicted on the screen. The lyrics were on target, but not the music. As he left the studio that day, John received the suggestion to ‘take it home and personalize it.’”

In addition to the lyrical melody and text that allows God to sing a love song to humanity, “Borning Cry” gives us a sense of the timelessness of God. The final stanza of the seven-stanza hymn is the same as the first stanza.

While we think of ourselves as finite beings, God re-creates us and gives us new life in the baptismal waters, a spiritual regeneration that lasts for eternity.

“Lord, I Lift Your Name on High”

was written in 1989 by Rick Founds, a California-based worship musician and songwriter born in 1954. Founds is known for composing more than 200 songs, but this one became his most famous work.

How the Song Was Composed

The inspiration came during a morning devotional. While reading the Bible on his computer monitor and watching television, Founds reflected on the water cycle—how vapor, clouds, rain, and streams rise again to replenish the earth. He saw a parallel in Christ's life, death, resurrection, and ascension, viewing salvation as a cycle:

- From heaven to earth (Christ's incarnation)
- From earth to the cross (Christ's atonement)
- From the cross to the grave (Christ's burial)
- From the grave to the sky (Christ's resurrection and ascension)

This “cycle of redemption” became the lyrical framework. He began playing his guitar and singing the opening line, “Lord, I lift Your name on high,” as a way to express adoration and the completeness of God's work.