

Hymn of the Month is a new worship-focused series at Salem Hellers. Pastor Bruce often reminds us that worship is the most important thing we do. As part of our efforts to enrich and deepen our worship, each month we will focus on one of the more recently composed songs from *Hymns of Grace* that we hope will become familiar and loved by our congregation. We will explore different ways to introduce and incorporate these songs throughout the month; we want to help you become comfortable with them. May we grow together in faith as we learn these theologically rich songs and join our voices in corporate worship.

Hymn of the Month

October 2024



Dear Refuge of My Weary Soul
#52 *Hymns of Grace*



1

Dear refuge of my weary soul,
on Thee, when sorrows rise,
On Thee, when waves of trouble roll,
my fainting hope relies.
To Thee I tell each rising grief,
for Thou alone canst heal;
Thy Word can bring a sweet relief for ev'ry pain I feel.

2

But oh! When gloomy doubts prevail,
I fear to call Thee mine;
The springs of comfort seem to fail
and all my hopes decline.
Yet, gracious God, where shall I flee?
Thou art my only trust;
And still my soul would cleave to Thee
though prostrate in the dust.

3

Hast Thou not bid me seek Thy face,
and shall I seek in vain?
And can the ear of sov'reign grace be deaf
when I complain?
No, still the ear of sov'reign grace
attends the mourner's prayer,
Oh, may I ever find access to breathe my sorrows there.

4

Thy mercy seat is open still, here let my soul retreat;
With humble hope attend Thy will,
and wait beneath Thy feet.
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With humble hope attend Thy will,
and wait beneath Thy feet.

Dear Refuge of My Weary Soul is a wonderful example of a hymn that combines old and new. The four verses of text were written more than two centuries ago, but the melody to which the words are set was composed about a decade ago.

The text of our featured hymn for October was written by Anne Steele (1716-1778), an English hymnwriter who became an invalid at a young age. Despite years of suffering and a reclusive life, her writing style conveys warmth, tenderness and thankfulness. Her hymn text is a compelling reminder that despite suffering and troubles, the Lord is our source of comfort, encouragement, strength and healing.

The music: Matt Merker's musical setting of the text is singable and timeless. The flow and rhythm of the simple melody supports the cadence of the text, bringing focus to the meaning of the words. As a modern hymn writer, Merker's emphasis is composing songs for congregational singing and corporate worship so that all worshippers will be able to sing – not just sing along – as we raise our voices to the Lord.

Hymn Recording by Grace Worship
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zC0Ba0KX18o>