

Hymn of the Month is a new worship-focused series at Salem Hellers. 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 less familiar or more recently composed songs from *Hymns of Grace* that we hope will be appreciated 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 hymns and join our voices in corporate worship.

Hymn of the Month

February 2025



Oh, How Good It Is
#332 *Hymns of Grace*



1

*Oh, how good it is when the family of God
dwells together in spirit, in faith and unity.
Where the bonds of peace,
of acceptance and love
are the fruits of His presence here among us.*

2

*Oh, how good it is on this journey we share,
to rejoice with the happy
and weep with those who mourn.
For the weak find strength, the afflicted find grace
when we offer the blessing of belonging.*

3

*Oh, how good it is to embrace His command
to prefer one another, forgive as He forgives.
When we live as one, we all share in the love
of the Son with the Father and the Spirit.*

Chorus:

*So with one voice we'll sing to the Lord;
and with one heart we'll live out His Word.
Till the whole earth sees the Redeemer has come,
for He dwells in the presence of His people.*

Oh, How Good It Is sets its scriptural foundation in Psalm 133:1 - "How good and pleasant it is when God's people live together in unity!" This theme of unity is illustrated through the collaborative efforts of the four uniquely gifted and experienced musicians who composed this engaging and theologically rich congregational hymn. Keith and Kristyn Getty wrote the lyrics, and Stuart Townend worked with Ross Holmes to compose a singable melody and adaptable arrangement intended to accommodate various instruments and worship service styles. Fun fact: Holmes has performed as a fiddler with the popular British folk-rock band, Mumford and Sons.

The Text focuses on a hymn theme that is often overlooked by current worship music: the Body of Christ. The message, according to composer Stuart Townend, describes one of God's greatest blessings to his people: the joy and vitality of a shared life; the "many wonderful aspects of being part of God's family: a place of acceptance and belonging, sharing one another's joys and sorrows, learning to forgive and be forgiven, experiencing the presence of God through our unity, and being a shining light to the community around us because of our shared love." When we join our voices in this musical Call to Worship, we are affirming our unity and the many blessings that come from our corporate worship and fellowship.

Food for thought: Pastor John Gardner states "the act of community-minded, congregational singing requires cooperation unlike any other group endeavor, and joining our voices in public statements of faith bonds us to each other and encourages our faith like nothing else can. And, to those looking on, it is an act of testimony speaking volumes more than any one of us could say on his own."

Hymn Recording:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IERBkpcWPco>