

# Notes from the Music Director (No. 22)

Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church, Rochester, Pennsylvania

## Henry Doktorski, III

December 13, 2015—3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of Advent

In today's Gospel (Luke 3:7-18), John the Baptist predicts—along “with many other exhortations”—the coming of the Messiah, “I baptize you with water; but one who is more powerful than I is coming; I am not worthy to untie the thong of his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire.”

Our Sending Hymn today is the popular Advent hymn, “Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus,” with text by Charles Wesley and tune (“Jefferson”) by William Walker. Charles Wesley (1707-1788), born in the small town of Epworth, Lincolnshire, England, first published “Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus,” in his *Hymns for the Nativity of our Lord* (1744). Like most of Wesley's hymns, scriptural passages are quoted in nearly every phrase. Stanza two recalls Old Testament Advent prophecies, “Born thy people to deliver, born a child, and yet a king; born to reign in us forever, now thy gracious kingdom bring.”

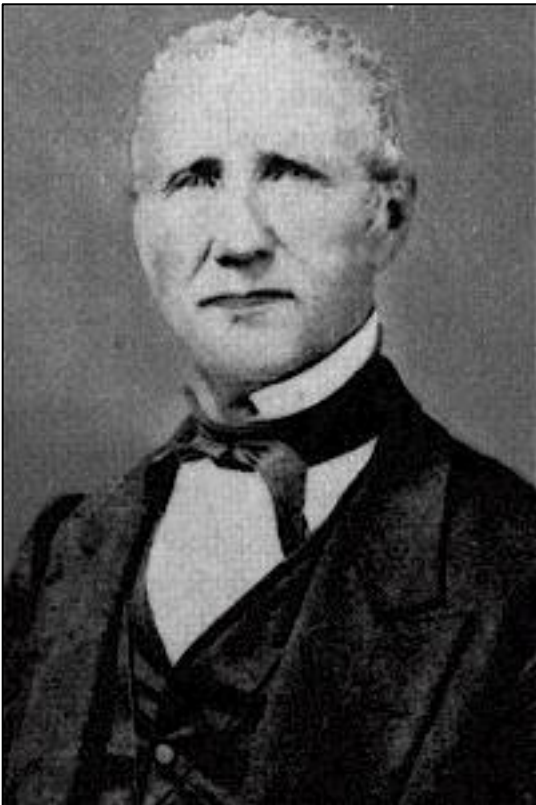
Charles Wesley was an English leader of the Methodist movement, the son of Anglican clergyman and poet Samuel Wesley, the younger brother of Methodist founder John Wesley and Anglican clergyman Samuel Wesley the Younger. He was father of musician Samuel Wesley and grandfather of musician Samuel Sebastian Wesley, whom we discussed in “Notes From the Music Director No. 6” (see [http://henrydoktorski.com/Hymn\\_Notes/6.pdf](http://henrydoktorski.com/Hymn_Notes/6.pdf)).

Charles studied at Westminster School and Christ Church, Oxford. Soon after accepting religious orders in 1735, he traveled as a missionary to the British



Charles Wesley, portrait by  
John Russell

colony of Georgia in America for about a year. After returning to England, he became “an indefatigable itinerant and field preacher.” It is said that Wesley wrote no less than 6,500 hymns. Twelve of his hymns appear in our *Lutheran Book of Worship*, including such classics as “Hark! The Herald Angels Sing” (LBW 60), “Jesus Christ Is Risen Today” (LBW 151), “You Servants of God” (LBW 252), “Love Divine, All Loves Excelling” (LBW 315), and “Oh, for a Thousand Tongues to Sing” (LBW 559).



William Walker

The composer (or perhaps compiler; we don't know for sure) of the tune (“Jefferson”) sung to Wesley's text is William Walker (1809–1875), an American Baptist song leader, shape note singing master, and compiler of four shape note tunebooks, most notable of which was *Southern Harmony*. He was born in Martin's Mills (near Cross Keys) in South Carolina and lived most of his life in Spartanburg. Ten tunes from Walker's *Southern Harmony* appear in our Lutheran Book of Worship, including “What Wondrous Love Is This” (LBW 385) and “Amazing Grace” (LBW 448).

To hear “Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus” with text by Charles Wesley and tune from Walker's

*Southern Harmony* in an arrangement by Nancy M. Raabe, go to <https://youtu.be/-ncKpn7vw6Q?t=5s>.

## Resources

Holy Bible, New Revised Standard Version (Zonderfan: 1989)  
LBW: Lutheran Book of Worship (Augsburg Publishing House: 1978)  
WOV: With One Voice (Augsburg Fortress: 1995)  
W&P: Worship & Praise Songbook (Augsburg Fortress: 1999)  
ELW: Evangelical Lutheran Worship (Augsburg Fortress: 2006)  
Wikipedia: <https://en.wikipedia.org>

Hymnary.org: <http://www.hymnary.org>  
GIA Publications: <http://www.giamusic.com>  
Hymntime.com: <http://hymntime.com>  
Singers.com: <http://singers.com>

Back to the index of "24 Essays on 24 Hymns":  
[http://henrydoktorski.com/Music\\_Director\\_Notes.html](http://henrydoktorski.com/Music_Director_Notes.html).