

REFLECTING ON OUR ADVENT HYMNS

BY Joanne Maguire

During Advent, the church looks back upon Christ's coming at Christmas while at the same time looking forward in eager anticipation to the Second coming of Christ. Each Advent hymn below gives us different aspects of the season. Luther tells us the Christmas story in **From Heaven Above**; **O Come O Come Emmanuel** shares characteristics of Christ; **Lift Up Your Heads** ties Old Testament history with New Testament; **On Jordon's Bank**, John the Baptist reminds us to prepare for the Coming of the Christ Child.

1st Sunday of Advent



From Heaven Above to Earth I Come LSB 358. Words and music by Martin Luther. Later translated into English by Catharine Winkworth. “ Dr. Luther had the custom of celebrating Christmas Eve with his family by arranging a family program. For one of those programs, he paraphrased a party song to carry the Christmas message. After singing the first stanza Luther asks: “Who am I?” Luther intentionally leaves out the identity of the singer. (Take a look in GLAD TIDINGS in church foyer for answer). The 15 stanzas are often sung in varying order and by different groups or soloists since some verses portray the angel, the shepherds, and the reaction of God’s people to the news of Christmas.” It is truly the Christmas story to music.

Luther based the verses of this Carol on **Luke 2: 10-20**.