

Now Do We Pray Unto the Holy Ghost

Nun bitten wir den Heiligen Geist
St. 1, German, 13th c.
Sts. 2-4, Martin Luther, 1524
Tr. composite

10. 9. 11. 9. 4.

Nun bitten wir
Geistliche gesangk Buchleyn, Wittenberg, 1524
Arr. composite

Now do we pray un - to the Ho - ly Ghost

For the true faith of all things the most,

That He may de - fend us when life is end - ing, As from

ex - ile home we are wend - ing. Ky - ri - e - leis!

2 Thou precious Light, be Thou within us shone,
Teach us Jesus Christ to know alone,
That we may abide in the Lord who bought us,
Who to our true homeland hath brought us.
Kyrieleis!

3 Thou sweetest Love, Thy favor to us grant,
Give to us Thy love's bright burning brand,
That with hearts united we love each other,
Of one mind, at peace with each brother.
Kyrieleis!

4 Thou highest Comforter in ev'ry need,
Help us of our death be unafraid,
That e'en then our courage may never fail us,
When the Foe at last shall assail us.
Kyrieleis!

The first stanza of “Now Do We Pray unto the Holy Ghost (*Nun bitten wir den Heiligen Geist*),” together with its early folk melody, was already a well-established vernacular hymn long before the Reformation. Luther prized it highly and furnished a further three stanzas, each beginning with a different appellation for the Holy Spirit. The complete hymn with Luther’s additional stanzas first appeared as the opening piece in Johann Walter’s *Geystliche gesangk Buchleyn*, Wittenberg, 1524, where the melody forms the tenor part of a polyphonic setting.

The hymn is found in English translation in the *Evangelical Lutheran Hymn-Book*, 1930, No. 260, *The Lutheran Hymnal*, 1941, No. 231, and the *Lutheran Service Book*, 2006, No. 768. Each translation differs significantly from the others. For the Free Lutheran Chorale-Book, we have taken the version in the *Evangelical Lutheran Hymn-Book* as our starting point, then incorporated elements from other sources. The meter had to be adjusted through the removal and addition of slurs in the melody, but has been otherwise left intact. The result, it is to be hoped, is easily sung and well reflects the German original.

Both text and music may be freely used and reproduced for any purpose whatever and are offered with the prayer that they may serve for the edification of Christian people everywhere. For more information, and to hear performances of the original hymn, visit the Free Lutheran Chorale-Book at:

www.lutheranchoralebook.com

The Free Lutheran Chorale-Book

presents

Now Do We Pray unto the Holy Ghost

by

Godly Men of Old

and expanded by

Martin Luther

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