

Dear Christians, One and All, Rejoice

Nun freut euch, lieben Christen g'mein
Martin Luther, 1523
Tr. Richard Massie, 1854, alt.

8.7. 8.7. 8.8.7.

Nun freut euch
Eilich Christlich Lieder, 1524
Arr. The Free Lutheran Chorale-Book, 2015

Dear Chris - tians, one and all, re - joice,
And, with u - nit - ed heart and voice

With ex - ul - ta - tion spring - ing,
And ho - ly rap - ture sing - ing,

Pro - claim the won - ders God hath done,

How His right arm the vic - t'ry won;

Right dear - ly it hath cost Him.

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| <p>2 Fast bound in Satan's chains I lay,
Death brooded darkly o'er me,
Sin was my torment night and day,
In sin my mother bore me;
Yea, deep and deeper still I fell,
Life had become a living hell,
So firmly sin possessed me.</p> <p>3 My own good works availed me naught,
No merit they attaining,
Free will against God's judgment fought,
Dead to all good remaining.
My fears increased till sheer despair
Left naught but death to be my share;
The pangs of hell I suffered.</p> <p>4 But God beheld my wretched state
Before the world's foundation,
And, mindful of His mercies great,
He planned my soul's salvation.
A father's heart He turned to me,
Sought my redemption fervently:
He gave His dearest Treasure.</p> <p>5 He spoke to His beloved Son:
"Tis time to have compassion.
Then go, bright Jewel of My crown,
And bring to man salvation;
From sin and sorrow set him free,
Slay bitter death for him that he
May live with Thee forever.</p> | <p>6 The Son obeyed His Father's will,
Was born of virgin mother,
And God's good pleasure to fulfill,
He came to be my Brother.
No garb of pomp or pow'r He wore,
A servant's form, like mine, He bore,
To lead the devil captive.</p> <p>7 To me He spake: Hold fast to Me,
I am thy Rock and Castle;
Thy Ransom I Myself will be,
For thee I strive and wrestle;
For I am with thee, I am thine,
And evermore shalt thou be Mine:
The Foe shall not divide us.</p> <p>8 The Foe shall shed My precious blood,
Me of My life bereaving.
All this I suffer for thy good;
Be steadfast and believing.
Life shall from death the vict'ry win,
My innocence shall bear thy sin;
So art thou blest forever.</p> <p>9 Now to My Father I depart,
The Holy Spirit sending
And, heav'nly wisdom to impart,
My help to thee extending.
He shall in trouble comfort thee,
Teach thee to know and follow Me,
And in all truth shall guide thee.</p> <p>10 What I have done and taught, teach thou,
My ways forsake thou never;
So shall My kingdom flourish now
And God be praised forever.
Take heed lest men with base alloy
The heav'nly treasure should destroy;
This counsel I bequeath thee.</p> |
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Martin Luther's hymn "Dear Christians, One and All, Rejoice" ("Nun freut euch, lieben Christen g'mein") was the first to be printed in any Lutheran hymnal. It appeared at the opening of the *Achtliederbuch* ("Eight-song Book") of 1524, in some printings of which the hymn is dated 1523, suggesting that it may have appeared previously on a broadsheet, though no such broadsheets are extant. The hymn gave expression to Luther's struggles of conscience, and to the comfort and joy that he found in his Savior. If Paul Speratus's hymn "Salvation unto Us Has Come" ("*Es ist das Heil uns kommen her*") is the classic hymnic presentation of the Lutheran theology of salvation in objective form, then "Dear Christians, One and All, Rejoice" is its subjective counterpart, emphasizing the struggle of the individual and his subsequent intimate relationship with Christ.

Together with the original printing of Luther's text is the melody that would come to be proper to the hymn. In subsequent hymnals, the melody provided for the text would often be "Es ist gewisslich" ("The Day Is Surely Drawing Near," "*Es ist gewisslich an der Zeit*"), but the original melody was occasionally provided, and by early in the seventeenth century it had become the proper tune for the text. It is likely that Luther himself composed the melody "Nun freut euch."

The translation chosen for the Free Lutheran Chorale-Book is that by Richard Massie, 1854, as altered in *The Lutheran Hymnal*, 1941, No. 387. The musical arrangement is that found in the *Evangelical Lutheran Hymn-Book*, 1930, No. 310, with a slight alteration following Lucas Osiander's 1586 arrangement. Both text and music are in the public domain and may be freely used and reproduced for any purpose whatever. They are offered with the prayer that they may serve for the edification of Christian people everywhere, that with Luther they may rejoice in their Savior. For more information, visit the Free Lutheran Chorale-Book at:

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The Free Lutheran Chorale-Book

presents

Dear Christians, One and All, Rejoice

by

Martin Luther

and translated by

Richard Massie

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