

# May God Bestow on Us His Grace

*Es wollt uns Gott genädig sein*  
Martin Luther, 1524  
Tr. Richard Massie, alt.

8.7. 8.7. 8.7. 8.7. 7.

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*Der Lxvj. Deus Misereatur, Magdeburg, 1524*

1 May God be-stow on us His grace, With bless-ings rich pro-  
 2 Thine ov-er all shall be the praise And thanks of ev-'ry  
 3 O let the peo-ple praise Thy worth, In all good works in-  
 vide us, And may the bright-ness of His face To  
 na-tion, And all the world with joy shall raise The  
 creas-ing; The land shall plen-teous fruit bring forth, Thy  
 life e-ter-nal guide us That we His sav-ing health may know,  
 voice of ex-ul-ta-tion; For Thou shalt judge the earth, O Lord,  
 Word is rich in bless-ing. May God the Fa-ther, God the Son,  
 His gra-cious will and plea-sure, And al-so to the hea-then show  
 Nor suf-fer sin to flour-ish; Thy peo-ple's pas-ture is Thy Word  
 And God the Spir-it bless us! Let all the world praise Him a-lone,  
 Christ's rich-es with-out mea-sure And un-to God con-vert them.  
 Their souls to feed and nour-ish, In right-eous paths to keep them.  
 Let so-lemn awe pos-sess us. Now let our hearts say, A-men.

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POSSIBLY WRITTEN as early as 1523, “May God Bestow on Us His Grace” (*Es wollt uns Gott genädig sein*) is Martin Luther’s metrical paraphrase of Psalm 67. It first appeared in print as an appendix to *Eyn weyse Christlich Mess zu halten*, Wittenberg, 1524, which is Paul Speratus’s German translation of Luther’s Latin *Formula Missae*. There Luther had recommended the use of Psalm 67 as a possible alternative to the Aaronic benediction.

The text first appeared with what would become its proper tune in 1524 on a broadsheet printed in Magdeburg by Hans Knappe the Younger. It was not included among the Psalm settings in the *Achtliederbuch* of 1524, but the Loersfeld printing of the Erfurt *Enchiridion*, also 1524, included it in the Psalm section with no melody given. It was included as No. 12 in the first official Wittenberg hymnal, Johann Walter’s *Geystliche gesangk Buchleyn* of 1524, with the tune “Christ unser Herr,” which would later come to be assigned to Luther’s hymn on the Sacrament of Holy Baptism, “Christ Our Lord to the Jordan Came” (*Christ unser Herr zum Jordan kam*). It appeared with its own proper melody in the Strassburg hymnals, beginning with Wolff Köpff’s *Teutsch Kirchen ampt*, Strassburg, 1525. Its first appearance with its proper tune in the official Wittenberg hymnals was in the 1526 *Lufft Enchiridion*, No. 12. It also appeared with its proper tune in the various editions and printings of Joseph Klug’s *Geistliche Lieder*.

“May God Bestow on Us His Grace” is found in *The Lutheran Hymnal*, 1941, No. 500, with an altered version of the translation of Richard Massie, *Martin Luther’s Spiritual Songs*, 1851, pp. 45–46. The alterations to the text bring it more closely in line with Luther’s original source material in Psalm 67, according to the King James Version. The hymn appears as No. 823 (also No. 824 with a new melody) in the *Lutheran Service Book*, 2006, the only alteration from the text as found in *The Lutheran Hymnal*, other than punctuation, being a change from “heathen” to “nations” in st. 1, l. 7.

The text and music here provided 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.

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