

I REST IN GOD, MY SHEPHERD GUIDE

Barbara Hamm

I rest in God, my shepherd guide,
who leads me day by day;
and with my daily needs supplied,
I do not fear the way.

I walk in paths of righteousness
where God has gone before,
to lead and guide and richly bless
from love's abundant store.

When through the valley I must go,
I know that God is near;
the shepherd's rod and staff will show
the way through grief and fear.

My shepherd guide anoints my head
and bids me sit and eat;
then I partake of daily bread
and rest my weary feet.

God's mercy is my morning song,
God's grace, my evening prayer;
and I will live my whole life long,
enfolded in God's care.

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Psalm 23

Writing a new hymn based on the 23rd Psalm is inherently risky as several good ones already exist. I began my text after meeting Carol Merrick in the summer of 2006 at the combined Disciples of Christ/United Church of Christ Women's event in Indianapolis, Indiana, the Mix in 2006. I met Carol by chance on a hotel skybridge as I was playing the piano at a noontime concert. I invited her to a service of healing through music that I was leading later that day, using my own hymns. Carol came to this service, sharing with me afterwards that it was the first time in two years that she had been able to sing hymns at all, following the death of her and her husband David's 16-year-old daughter, Lily. I was so moved by her story; this is the text that came out of it.

Carol's husband David was at the time the pastor of First Christian Church, Disciples of Christ, in Olathe, Kansas. I was subsequently invited to the church in November 2006 to present my new collection of hymns, *Children of Creation: Hymns of Love and Justice for the 21st Century*, which had just been released by Abingdon Press. My new hymn, inspired by Carol's story and the deep faith of Carol and her husband, was sung for the first time at the Sunday morning service.

Several strands of significance are attached to this hymn and my visit to the Olathe Church. For one, several of my family members live in Kansas, and because it was the weekend following Thanksgiving, my father and three of my sisters were able to be present. My father has since passed on, and I am so grateful that he and my sisters were there.

For another, I was invited in 2009 by the pastor and the worship committee to write a commissioned hymn for the church's upcoming 150th anniversary. David Merrick has since passed on, but my commissioned hymn, "We Sing of God's Goodness in This Sacred Space," is still sung at the Olathe church. (It was also sung September 26, 2020, for the online Annual Gathering of the Christian Churches of Northern California/Nevada, as it fit the theme, "We Call Ourselves Disciples.")

For yet a third, my dear friend Judy McCormick, who came to the church with me that November morning in 2006, ended up finding a new church home. She became very active and chaired the search committee that led to the hiring of the Rev. Dr. Sherry McGlaughlin in 2018.

All this from a chance meeting in 2006 on a skybridge in Indianapolis!

Use: Care of the Sick, Christian Life, Comfort, Discipleship, Good Shepherd, Funerals, Trust



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ST. COLUMBA

1. I rest in God, my shep - herd guide, who
2. I walk in paths of right - eous - ness where
3. When through the val - ley I must go, I
4. My shep - herd guide a - noints my head and
5. God's mer - cy is my morn - ing song, God's

1. leads me day by day; and with my dai - ly
2. God has gone be - fore, to lead and guide and
3. know that God is near; the shep - herd's rod and
4. bids me sit and eat; then I par - take of
5. grace, my eve - ning prayer; and I will live my



I REST IN GOD, MY SHEPHERD GUIDE, cont. (2)

1. needs sup - plied, I do not fear the way. _____
2. rich - ly bless from love's a - bun - dant store. _____
3. staff will show the way through grief and fear. _____
4. dai - ly bread and rest my wea - ry feet. _____
5. whole life long, en - fold - ed in God's care. _____

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