

Psalms for the Common Era

Hebrew Psalms in Modern Metrical English for Individuals, Choirs and Congregations

by Adam Carlill

Complete Psalter

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Adam Carlill, March 2018

Psalms for the Common Era: Introduction

The intention of this translation of the psalms is to encourage more people to sing more psalms more often. While the traditions of Anglican chant, responsorial chant and plainsong chant provide us with a rich musical heritage, for many people these forms are inaccessible. One can never please everybody, but by choosing hymn tunes from widely used hymn books, I hope to increase the likelihood that some people will sing the translations of psalms in this book who otherwise would miss out. Most psalms were meant to be sung and there are several tunes mentioned in the ancient Hebrew titles. These suggest that the tunes existed independently of the psalms, as they do here. I have suggested usually one tune for each psalm and made the translation with that tune in mind. I have chosen several tunes for the twenty-two parts of the long alphabetic Psalm 119 for the sake of variety. The choice of tune for the

psalms took into consideration primarily the structure and metre of the Hebrew psalm (more of which below), but also the mood and theme.

This psalter is unabridged. As such it is intended as a metrical equivalent of the *Parish Psalter* (Nicholson; The Faith Press: Leighton Buzzard, 1932) and its successors. Inevitably, when translating Hebrew metre into English rhyme, the phrases and ideas frequently do not fit. Where necessary I have embellished the psalm to solve this issue rather than omitting sections. It was a high priority to make sure that the entire psalm was included each time. One of the reasons why metrical psalms are not used as much as they might be is because they frequently skim over difficult or unedifying passages, and, as a result, are often seen as inferior to literal translations. I have not made it my business to decide which psalms, or portions of psalms, are palatable, but to leave such choices to the reader, singer, worship group or congregation. In worship some verses will need to be omitted.

I have tried to follow the voice of each psalm, switching from first to second or third person as the source text demands. The translation is gender neutral with some exceptions: the divine epithets, 'Lord', 'King' and 'Father of the Years' (more on this below) are clearly male, and I have allowed male references to God to stand. To remove all references to 'his', 'he' and 'him' in these instances would be so convoluted as to be unworkable, and would also result in a translation which ended up bearing little relation to the Hebrew poem. Some of the psalms refer to the earthly king of Judah/Israel, and I felt I would be changing an essential part of the text if I were to remove these. Psalm 78 contains two interesting exceptions. In the 11th stanza the Hebrew of verse 31, to which it refers, implies that the objects of God's wrath were first and foremost the male leadership. I have taken advantage of this to use the phrase 'men of note'. Similarly my use of the 'sons of God' (9th stanza for verse 25) interprets 'the mighty ones' as the heavenly court (cf. Job 1-2, 1 Kings 22, etc.) who are referred to as gender specific in Genesis 6.1-2. Occasionally there is gender specific language in direct speech (usually of imagined enemies speaking about the psalmist). On these occasions I have kept 'him' and 'his', etc. but placed these words in italics to

indicate that it would be entirely appropriate to replace the word with a feminine pronoun, should that be appropriate to the person using the psalm.

I have paid particular attention to divine names and epithets. The use of Yahweh or Elohim is nearly always reflected in the translation. It is particularly noticeable where psalms have been duplicated and the divine names changed: Psalms 14 (// 53) and 40.14-end (// 70). The divine name, El, is frequently rendered with the Ugaritic title 'Father of the Years' or something that reflects this ancient name.

I have followed the Hebrew numbering, and, as is usual with liturgical psalters, have omitted the ancient headings that are found in the Bible. I have also ignored the untranslatable word 'Selah' which occurs frequently in Hebrew poetry. Alphabetic psalms have been rendered alphabetically: Pss. 9-10, 25, 34, 37, 111, 112, 119 and 145. Because the Hebrew alphabet only contains 22 letters, I have omitted Q, X, Y and Z. This gives the English-speaking reader the opportunity to experience the poem with this rather dispassionate structure in mind.

While I have tried to be true to the Hebrew text, on occasion I have followed the other ancient witnesses to solve some difficulty or corruption. One new addition to the text is the occasional inclusion of an updated cosmology. Fossils, Einsteinian physics and the second law of thermodynamics are all present. This may sound like an odd idea, but this translation is a rendering for the Twenty-first Century, and I wanted the reader to feel that scientific truth is no less a part of God's truth. Modern concepts do not replace biblical ones, but exist alongside them. Biblical writers describe contradictory ideas about the world around them, because, unlike the modern mind, they apparently did not feel it necessary to harmonise myth and reality. The two coexisted, and that is reflected in the use of mythical imagery alongside scientific language here.

A word about Hebrew metre and the process of translation. I began each translation with a literal rendering into English from the Massoretic Text, noting the number of stress units in each verse. This is not an exact science, but it does give some idea of the balance and flow of the poem.

Next, I grouped the verses into appropriate sections, depending on the content, and checked to see whether the sections were roughly equal size in terms of the number of stress units. If they were, a suitable English metre was assigned to the psalm before choosing a particular tune to fit. If the psalm were more complicated, I used other devices to find a solution. Sometimes I would take one verse and use it as a refrain (eg. Psalms 5, 7, 8, 45, 48, and 120). Sometimes I would embellish the psalm in places to fit the English metre. A notable example of this is my treatment of Psalm 29, in which one word, 'glory', is expanded into an entire eight-line stanza. These embellishments reflect the content of the Psalm, or make reference to other content in the Hebrew Bible, which I consider appropriate to the psalm. For instance, I have added alleluias to Psalm 100. Although these are not to be found in the psalm, they fit the tone and, in the case of the tune *Victory*, the single syncopated alleluia at the end of each stanza feels very much like the *teru'a*, the victory shout, which is called for at the beginning of the opening verse.

I have taken advantage of the fact that the proper nouns, Sinai and Israel, can be pronounced with either two or three syllables: 'Seye-neye' / 'Seye-nee-eye'; 'Is-rail' / 'Is-ray-el'. I have not indicated in the text which way they should be pronounced, but rely on the rhythm of the line to make this clear to the singer. Similarly I have avoided the use of a grave over the second 'e' of blessed, and trust that the rhythm makes clear which pronunciation should be used. To aid the singer I have tried to use one or the other of these options consistently within each individual psalm.

Translation is the art of compromise. While the Principals of the translation are set out here, inevitably there are occasions when the rules I have set myself have been bent a little. However, I hope these psalms prove to be edifying and enable more people to enjoy singing psalms individually or in public, but, either way, making music to God in their hearts, and enjoying the many blessings that he gives.

Adam Carlill, March 2018

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Psalms 1-10

Psalm 1

CM

Richmond

Blessed are the ones who do not walk
in plans of wicked folk,
who do not stand for sinful talk,
or sit with those who mock.

Joyfully they will muse before
their Lord, with great delight;
they meditate upon his law,
unceasing day and night.

Standing like avenues of trees,
where streams and rivers flow,
they never wither, and with ease,
they flourish there and grow.

Not so, the wicked folk, not so!
Their evil schemes decay.
As dust or chaff, the wind will blow
and drive them all away.

Knowing them all, the Lord will raise
the righteous and their sort.
May sinners die, and all their ways,
before the righteous court.

Psalm 2

87 87 D

Ebenezer (Ton-Y-Botel)

Why the global agitation,
empty speeches, all in vain?

Kings and worldly leaders gather;
what can they intend to gain?
Close together, they conspire to
bring the Lord's anointed down.
'We will break their cords that bind us!' -
sacred cords and holy crown.

God in heaven reigns securely,
sits enthroned above in might,
snorts derision in their faces,
scorns their plotting, hateful spite.
Wrath and anger leave them pale and
petrified, as still as stone.
'Sanctity resides in Zion,
heaven's monarch on the throne.'

God, the Lord, has made a statute;
I will tell you what he said:
'You, my only child and heir, will
rule the nations in my stead.
Ask me, and you will receive the
peoples of the earth, to own.
Break them with an iron rod, and
shatter them, in pieces sown.'

So be careful, all you rulers;
be admonished, you who lead.
Wait for God with apprehension,
as with prudence you proceed.
Burning anger will consume the
evil and imperfect path.
Blessed are those who seek his refuge,
who avoid his fearful wrath.

Psalm 3

LM
Breslau

Lord, how innumerable my foes,
who wish to take away my life!
So many rise, who presuppose
you cannot rescue me from strife.

Yet you, my God, lift up my face,
and shield me with your glorious light.
I plead within your holy place,
and you give answer in my sight.

But as for me, repose is mine;
I sleep and wake, as God restores.
I do not fear, though bands combine,
and thousands gather at my door.

Rise, Lord, to save, my God, to bless.
You smite my foes, their evil jaws.
You break the teeth of wickedness.
Release and blessing - they are yours!

Psalm 4

10 4 10 4 10 10
Sandon, Alberta

O God I call! Give heed and let me hear
your gracious word.
In narrow paths you ease my way to prayer,
my righteous Lord.
How long, you torpid souls, will you remain
in love with lies, pursuing them in vain?

Know how my Lord will pour on faithful souls
his marvellous deeds.
He hears and answers, when they rise and call;
he meets their needs.
Let not your trembling soul incline to ill,
consider him, and on your bed be still.

Offer the Lord your blameless gift in peace,
and rest assured.
Though many fear, and entropy increase,
their minds inured,
I trust in you, my Lord, and seek your face.
Lift up your light, and send your saving grace.

You give me pleasure, as you set me free
within my soul.
Sweeter than sustenance, or growth, to me
is your control.
In even peace and stillness I may rest,
in you, my Lord, to lie secure and blessed.

Psalm 5

CM
Binchester

Listen, O Lord! Answer my cry;
discern my earnest care.
Consider me, my King and God,
as now I make my prayer.

When I awake, calling to you;
I watch and make my claim.
For you despise unrighteousness,
dispelling evil aims.

Those who are proud cannot remain
before your searching gaze,
for you abhor their hands of blood,
and their deceitful ways.

*Only by grace can I give praise,
approach your house with awe.
Your favour, Lord, will be a crown,
my shield for evermore.*

Lord, make my ways truthful and straight,
because of cunning spies,
whose faithless tongues and secret lusts
are graves and empty lies.

Sentence them, Lord; drive out their plans,
their horde of wilful sin.
May those, who love and seek your shade,
rejoice and ever sing.

*Only by grace can I give praise,
approach your house with awe.
Your favour, Lord, will be a crown,
my shield for evermore.*

Psalm 6
77 77 D
Aberystwyth

Lord, my God, do not contend;
do not castigate and chide.
May your grace and life extend
soothing touch and balm inside.
Terrified and never free,
how long must I wait in vain?
Turn around to rescue me.
Save me! Let your love remain.

Who in death remembers you;
shades can never offer praise.
Weariness is all I know,
sleepless nights and tearful days.
See my endless waking sighs;
how long must I wait in vain,
while vexation wastes my eyes,
weakened in my constant pain?

Turn away from me, my foes,
you who work with evil spite.
God has heard my grievous throes,
endless crying, day and night.
May my enemies beware,

shamed and fearful, never free.
God will hear my humble prayer;
he will act upon my plea.

Psalm 7
666 66 and Refrain
Personent Hodie (Theodoric)

Lord, my God, rescue me;
you alone hear my plea,
lest my foes capture me,
pierce my soul with iron,
tearing like a lion.

*I will praise, praise, praise;
I will sing, sing, sing:
God is high, God is true;
praise the God of justice!*

If my hands deal in wrong,
if my deeds all along
spoil my friends, hurt the strong,
may my life be taken,
lie in dust, forsaken.

*I will praise, praise, praise;
I will sing, sing, sing:
God is high, God is true;
praise the God of justice!*

Rise, O God, take your stand;
foes are near, close at hand;
be our judge, give command;
summon all the peoples
to your throne as equals.

*I will praise, praise, praise;
I will sing, sing, sing:
God is high, God is true;
praise the God of justice!*

Judge me, Lord; your decree
will uphold honesty.
You destroy cruelty,
certify the faithful;
you appraise the graceful.

*I will praise, praise, praise;
I will sing, sing, sing:
God is high, God is true;
praise the God of justice!*

God redeems upright hearts;
he will shield inward parts,
making sharp sword and darts,
ire for empty penance,
fire and deadly sentence.

*I will praise, praise, praise;
I will sing, sing, sing:
God is high, God is true;
praise the God of justice!*

As for those who despise,
hatching ill, spawning lies;
these become their demise;
none then ever spare them;
violence will ensnare them.

*I will praise, praise, praise;
I will sing, sing, sing:
God is high, God is true;
praise the God of justice!*

Psalm 8

10 4 66 66 10 4
Luckington

*How great your name, in all the earth adored,
exalted Lord!*

From babe to heaven's throne,
your majesty they own,
to quell the vengeful heart,
and foes who stand apart.

*How great your name, in all the earth adored,
exalted Lord!*

*How great your name, in all the earth adored,
exalted Lord!*

From age and endless years,
your contrapuntal spheres,
you stoop to hear our groan,
in dust and ashes sown.

*How great your name, in all the earth adored,
exalted Lord!*

*How great your name, in all the earth adored,
exalted Lord!*

No deity can name
our noble human frame.
We supervise and know
your natural earth below.

*How great your name, in all the earth adored,
exalted Lord!*

*How great your name, in all the earth adored,
exalted Lord!*

You give into our care
your creatures, rich and rare;
your mysteries are profound,
unfathomable ground.

*How great your name, in all the earth adored,
exalted Lord!*

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adamcarlill@psalmsforthecommonera.com

Psalm 19

85 85 843

Angel Voices

Heaven tells the Father's glory
every passing phase;
stars above declare the story,
all his works and ways;
day by day creation preaches,
and its speech is full of praise.

Silently their voice is sounding
forth, without a word,
and, in all the earth abounding,
languages unheard,
from eternal constellations
to the nations: 'Praise the Lord!'

And the sun, among the voices,
rising from his source,
like a bridegroom, he rejoices
to maintain his course,
blazing onwards in his carriage
to his marriage, vital force.

For the law of God is perfect,
aiding heart and soul,
cheering us in every subject,
altogether whole;
clean and curing, still enduring,
and ensuring self-control.

All your precepts and your judgements
make the simple wise;
all your statutes and commandments
shine upon the eyes,
pure and forthright, sure and upright,

as the daylight in the skies.

More desirable than money,
or the finest gold,
sweeter than the golden honey
any hive can hold,
is the learning they afford, and
their reward cannot be told.

From my secret sins perfect me,
hidden deep inside;
from my vain conceit protect me,
and from haughty pride.
Keep me from the great misdeed, so
I indeed am purified.

May my words and contemplation
rise before your sight.
May my heart and meditation
be your sweet delight.
Only you can still deliver,
rock and giver, Lord of might.

Psalm 20

8 8 9 10

The Truth From Above

The Lord be your defence in strife;
the God of Jacob keep your life,
support your cause, winning every race,
and send you help from Zion's holy place;

remember every gift you bring,
your holy vows, the food of kings;
and give to you all your heart can find,
fulfil your counsels and inform your mind.

May we ring out your victory cry,
and in God's name our banner fly.
The Lord give ear every time you plead,
and answer you in every kind of need.

I know the Lord will now protect
our monarch here, as we expect,
with mighty hand, save and hear your cry,
defend you from his holy heaven on high.

While some trust horses or their arms,
to keep them safe in time of harm,
the Lord our God saves us from the spear;
we make his holy name remembered here.

So now they fall at your command,
but we are risen and will stand.
*O Lord, we pray, hear and save the king,
and may he answer daily when we sing.*

Psalms 21-30

Psalm 21

LM

Gonfalon Royal

The king rejoices in your might;
because you save him, you are blessed.
You satisfy his appetite,
and, Lord, you answer his request.

You come with blessings to bestow,
you crown his head with purest gold;
from you he sought for life below;
you freely give him days untold.

His glory rising by your aid,
endowed with honour, pride and grace,
by blessing and approval made,
you give him joy before your face.

Our king, you grasp your hostile foes,
uncover those who hate your ways;
and when, in fury bands oppose,
your face will set them all ablaze.

The Lord will swallow down for sure;
his burning wrath devour them all;
their fruit will never grow mature,
until their generations fall.

For they have planned an evil snare,
prepared a scheme to set in place.
Rebuffing them without a care,
you aim your bow before their face.

Our king has trusted you, O Lord,
and by your grace will stand secure.
The Lord is high, in might adored;
we sing and praise you evermore.
Amen.

Psalm 22

87 87 87

Picardy, Mannheim

O my God, my God! Where are you?
Why have you forsaken me?
Why are you so far from saving,
saving me from misery?
God, I need an urgent answer;
I am yearning constantly.

Day by day I call in anguish,
but you do not hear my cry,
peering in the dark for answers,
as my terrors close nearby.
Night and day I seek for silence,
any peace before I die.

You, my God, are pure and holy,
praise of Israel, King on high.
In the past our forebears trusted;
they believed and you stood by.
They were faithful, so you saved them,
turning quickly to reply.

I am just a worm, not human,
scorned and shunned by passers-by.
All who see me stare and mock me,
gawping as they peer and pry.
'Let the Lord protect and save *him*,
save the apple of his eye.'

When my mother was in labour,
you delivered me to birth;
laid me as a helpless baby
at her breast, alive on earth.
I have trusted you, my maker,
since my mother brought me forth.

Do not be so far from helping,
when distress is ever near;
I am all alone and helpless,
in my ever-present fear.
Do not leave me unprotected,
on my own, without you here.

Many bulls are gathering round me,
hemming me on every side,
mighty bulls of Bashan's pastures,
gaping muzzles open wide,
roaring like an angry lion,
tearing at my heart inside.

I am emptied out like water,
poured onto a thirsty field;
while my bones are all disjointed,

pulled apart until I yield.
Heart and soul within are melting;
I believe my fate is sealed.

Now my mouth is dry and dusty,
like a potsherd on the ground,
while my tongue is sore and swollen,
sticking to my gums, and bound.
In the dust of death you place me,
and the shades are drifting round.

Like a pack of dogs they circle,
searching round for food to eat,
evil-doers who surround me,
plotting violence in the street;
with their lion's teeth they maul me,
piercing through my hands and feet.

In my weakness I am starving;
all my bones are standing out,
as they gather round, uncaring;
deaf to me, they come about,
tearing all my clothes among them,
casting lots to share them out.

So, my Lord, do not ignore me;
Lord, be swift to send me aid.
Save my soul from sword and conflict,
growling dog and murderous blade.
From the lions' mouths and oxen,
you have saved me when I prayed.

I declare your name and glory,
praising you among the throng.
You who fear the God of Israel,
praise the Lord in prayer and song.
May the seed of Jacob fear him;
glorify the Lord, be strong.

God has not despised the poorest,
nor detested those in need;
he has not ignored their crying,
or their yearning, as they plead.
All my praise, in open worship,
will proclaim your word and deed.

Now I will fulfil my pledges,
in the presence of the poor;
minister the holy portions,
to the hungry, as I swore.
They will seek the Lord, and praise him,
have their fill forevermore.

All the earth will long remember,
turning to the Lord again;
every country, every nation,
will acknowledge your domain.
You are Lord of all the peoples,
yours the kingdom, yours the reign.

In your kingdom none will hunger,
all will eat your sacred feast;
you will raise their souls to worship,
every one from death released,
heaven and earth and hell together,
from the greatest to the least.

Generations in the future,
serving you in every place,
praising you before their children,
every tribe and every race,
they will tell your righteous wonders,
through the years, in time and space.

Psalm 23

10 10
Song 46

God is my shepherd; nothing shall I need.
In grassy fields he lays me down to feed.

By restful waters he directs my soul,
and gently brings me back to make me whole.

In righteous paths he guides my erring feet,
that I may know his name, for it is sweet.

Yes, though I walk alone in death's dark vale,
I will not fear when evil shall assail.

For you are with me, ever by my side,
your rod and staff to comfort and to guide.

You have arranged a table in my sight,
as witness to my foes of your delight.

Pouring the purest oil upon my head,
you fill my cup, and I am richly fed.

Surely your grace and mercy will pursue;
they daily follow me, my whole life through.

So I will dwell within the holy gate,
for length of days, O Lord, to watch and wait.

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Psalm 39

DCM
Third Mode Melody

I said that I would keep my ways,
in case my tongue should sin,
defend my mouth from wicked folk,
restrained and still within.
In silence searing pain was stirred;
my indignation flared.
I murmured, while the fury burned,
and then my tongue declared:

'Lord, let me know my end and fate,
how long I have to live.
To you my mortal days abate,
no matter how I strive.'
For humankind is mist and smoke;
we walk about in gloom.
We toil and work, not knowing who
will place us in the tomb.

Why do I wait? What is my hope?
My Lord, you are my goal.
O make me not a laughing-stock;
from sin release my soul.
For I have bound and shut my mouth,
O take your plague away,
your angry and contentious hand;
I am undone today.

You chasten us, rebuke our sin;
the moth consumes our lust.
Humanity is mist and smoke;
our forebears pass to dust.
Lord, hear my prayer, consider well
a traveller's cry and tears,
and look away that I may smile,
before I meet the years.

Psalm 40

DCM
Christmas Carol (Walford Davies)

I gladly waited here for God;
he quickly turned his ear.

From roaring pit and miry sod
he drew me from my fear.
Upon his rock he placed my feet,
established and secure,
and, with a new song to repeat,
his praise has made me sure.

Then those who see will fear the Lord,
who fosters trust within.
Blessed is the one who trusts his word,
who does not turn to sin,
who does not trust in foolish pride,
or err with those who lie,
who keeps you near to lead and guide,
and trusts wholeheartedly.

My Lord and God, how many are
the wonders you have done!
You comprehend us from afar,
who live beneath the sun.
Your wonders and your thoughts to us
can never be compared.
Were I to count them or discuss,
they could not be declared.

You have not asked for sacrifice,
instead an open ear,
in place of holocaust or spice
I answered, 'I am here!'
According to the written scroll,
I long to do your will.
Your law is hidden in my soul,
and gently guides me still.

Your righteousness was on my tongue;
I spoke for all to hear,
did not restrain my lips, among
the faithful who revere.
I did not hide your truth and grace,
your victory far away,
from any who approach your face,
to worship you and pray.

My Lord, do not withhold your grace
from all my guilt and sin,
for untold evils, set in place,
have caught my soul within.
May truth and mercy be my shield,
for I no longer see.
My countless wrongs have been revealed;
my heart is failing me.

My Lord, be pleased to rescue me;
my Lord, give aid today.
Let them be shamed, who all agree
to sweep my soul away.
Let them be driven and debased,
who long for my demise.
Let them be ruined and disgraced,
who hurl abusive cries.

Let them exult and celebrate,
who seek you and confess.
Let them declare, 'The Lord is great!'
who love your righteousness.
While I am poor and full of strife,
Lord, hear my prayer today.
You give me help and save my life;
my God, do not delay.

Psalms 41-50

Psalm 41

11 10 11 10 11 10 11 12
Londonderry Air

Blessed are the ones who pay heed to the needy;
the Lord will save them in an evil day;
preserving lives, the Lord delivers freely;
they shall be blessed at home and far away.
You will not hand them over to the fervour
of bitter foes, who counter and complain;
and on their sickbed you are their preserver;
the Lord will overturn their deadly bed of pain.

But as for me, I said, 'O Lord, be gracious,
to heal my life; against you I have sinned.'
While speaking ill, my rivals are rapacious:
'When shall *he* perish and *his* lamp be dimmed?'
And if they come to see me they are hollow,
reciting fair, their hearts amassing foul;
so when they leave they speak to those who
follow,
arousing discontent against my heart and soul.

All those who hate me congregate against me;
they whisper, '*He* is nearly good as dead:
for there is deadly poison in *his* body;
he cannot live or get up from *his* bed.'
Yes, even one who was my close companion,
the one I trusted and who ate my bread,
has turned against me, boasting with abandon,
rejecting love and choosing wickedness instead.

But you, O Lord, be gracious and restore me,
and I will pay them back for all their ill.
By this I know your favour is before me:
the hateful cries of enemies are still.
For you uphold my honour and endeavour,
you place me, safe before you once again.
The Lord and God of Israel is for ever,
and blessed from evermore to evermore. Amen.

Psalm 42

SM

Trentham

As when the running deer
longs for a flowing stream,
so my soul longs for you, O God,
to save and to redeem.

I am athirst for God,
giver of life and grace.
When shall I come before my God,
or stand before his face?

Tears are my only bread,
day and night overawed,
and all day long they say to me,
'So where is he, your God?'

These things I call to mind,
when I pour out my soul,
and, with the multitude, I pass,
as I approach my goal.

Leading the festal throng
into the house of God,
ringing my joy, I dance and sing,
as they adore the Lord.

*Why so cast down, my soul?
Why murmur in despair?
Wait on your God! I praise the one,
who saves and hears my prayer.*

God, I am so cast down,
as I remember you;
Jordan surrounds, and Hermon's peaks,
with Mizar, fill my view.

Deep calls to endless deep,
thundering tracts beneath;
over my head your breakers pass

their waves and waves of death.

Lord, you are good by day,
sending me grace in strife;
music from you becomes, at night,
a prayer to God, my life.

I will address my rock,
'Why must I walk in shade?
Why have you quite forgotten me,
as foes oppress and raid?'

Feeble and shattered bones,
foes who reproach and nod,
and all day long they say to me,
'So where is he, your God?'

*Why so cast down, my soul?
Why murmur in despair?
Wait on your God! I praise the one,
who saves and hears my prayer.*

Psalm 43

SM

Trentham

Save me, O God my God;
judge me and plead my case,
stop their injustice, their deceit,
when they abandon grace.

You are my God, my rock.
Why must I walk in shade?
Why have you quite rejected me,
as foes oppress and raid?

Send out your light and truth;
send them to lead me hence,
bring me to see your sacred hill,
approach your holy tents.

Let me approach your shrine,
come to my great delight,
praise you with music on the lyre,
O God, my God and light.

*Why so cast down, my soul?
Why murmur in despair?
Wait on your God! I praise the one,
who saves and hears my prayer.*

Psalm 44

7676 D
King's Lynn

Our forebears, God, have told us,
our ears have heard your ways;
your deeds unfold before us,
your work of former days.
You dispossessed the nations,
and planted us to stay,
afflicted all their stations,
and drove them all away.

Their sword was not their strength, when
they dispossessed the land,
nor did their own arm save them,
but your right arm and hand,
your glory and your presence,
the sign of your delight.
My King and God, your sentence
was victory and light.

By you our foes were scattered;
we trampled them to dust.
My sword was not what mattered;
my bow was not my trust.
You offered us salvation,
you shamed the hateful foe.
In God our celebration
would ever overflow.

But you reject and shame us;
you disregard our corps;
you turn us back and maim us,
defeated in the war.
As sheep with no remittance,
you scatter us away;
you sell us for a pittance,
the bargain of the day.

My insult is before me,
a never-ending shame;
the enemy abhor me,
reproach and curse my name,
insulted by the peoples,
derided and disdained.
They sneer at all our evils;
our name has been profaned.

All this has come upon us,
yet we remembered you.
Your covenant is still with us,
and we are ever true.

We have not been unjust, as
we have not gone astray.
With demons you have crushed us,
in dark and death today.

If we had not remembered
the honour of our God,
if we had all surrendered
to deities abroad,
would you have not considered,
who know the secret heart,
for whom we are disfigured,
as sheep, and torn apart?

Wake up! Why are you sleeping,
rejecting us so long,
and why are you ignoring
their pillaging and wrong?
Awake! Look down to see us,
with dirt upon our face.
Arise to help and free us,
O call to mind your grace.

Psalm 45

11 10 11 10

O Perfect Love, Strength and Stay

Here, as my heart stirs eloquence within me,
I will recite my work before the king.
So now my tongue pens poetry, to win me
thanks from his throne, as I perform and sing.

Perfect and charming, more than any creature,
grace has been poured upon you at your door.
Beauty is yours, divine in every feature;
wherefore your God has blessed you evermore.

Gird on your sword and belt, you mighty warrior,
glorious in splendour, dignity and fame.
Ride on in truth to conquer every barrier,
fighting for right, your true and humble name.

May your right hand impose a fearful lesson;
arrows will pierce the folk who disobey,
foes who rise up in hate to plot aggression,
peoples who perish, as they flee away.

Righteous, your throne will stand, O God, forever,
sceptre of royal name and noble ends.
Yearning for justice, hating your oppressor,
God has anointed you above your friends.

Fragrant with spices, splendid robes commend you,
music from palaces your sweet delight.
Princesses stand with ladies who attend you;
gorgeous in gold, the queen is at your right.

Daughter, O hear me; look towards the future,
leaving your people and your father's house.
Worship the king, for he, your lord and ruler,
longs for your beauty as his loving spouse.

Daughters from Tyre shall seek you with a present -
riches and treasure, glorious to behold.
Within her room our princess is resplendent,
wearing a gorgeous dress of finest gold.

Brought to the king, with virgins who attend her,
lavishly dressed, she is a stunning sight.
Maidens behind, to usher and commend her,
enter the palaces with great delight.

Children console you for the loss of parents;
they will be princes to the furthest shore.
Then, as your name resounds in their descendants,
peoples will offer praises evermore.

Psalm 46

76 76 D and Refrain
Wir Pflügen

Our God is our defender,
our castle and our keep.
We will not fear the earthquake,
the roaring of the deep,
the dark and rolling mountains,
the boiling, angry foam,
the waters of the ocean
in their eternal home.

*God Most High is with us,
the Lord of Hosts is here,
the God of Jacob is our rock
from year to year.*

Within the holy city
there flows a living stream,
and God Most High resides there,
to help her and redeem.
The nations boil in anger,
in rage the kingdoms foam.

Your voice will melt creation
from your eternal home.

*God Most High is with us,
the Lord of Hosts is here,
the God of Jacob is our rock
from year to year.*

So come to see the Lord, who
will devastate the earth.
Removing war and conflict,
he brings his peace to birth,
destroying bows and lances,
their military might.
'Be still and know my name, as
I rise up in their sight.'

*God Most High is with us,
the Lord of Hosts is here,
the God of Jacob is our rock
from year to year.*

Psalm 47

LM
Deus Tuorum Militum

All peoples, clap your hands on high,
and shout to God with ringing cry;
the Lord, Most High above, is feared,
as King of all the earth revered.

Our God subdues, beneath our feet,
the scattered peoples in defeat,
who chooses our possession here,
the pride of Jacob, ever dear.

The Lord ascends, with trumpet call
and horn, into his holy hall.
Give praise to God, give praise and sing,
give praises to our heavenly King.

For God is King of all the earth;
give praise and sing, proclaim his worth,
who reigns on high in every state,
enthroned as Lord and magistrate.

The nobles of the peoples now
acknowledge God, and, bending low,
they are a single tribe and clan,
to raise the God of Abraham.

Psalm 48

65 65 D and Refrain
St. Gertrude

God is great in Zion,
highly to be praised,
on the sacred mountain,
elegant and raised,
in the royal city,
fortified for war;
God is her defence, and
guards her evermore.

*We have heard the rumour
and confirm the word.
This is God's own city,
armies of the Lord!*

Kings arose together,
swept across to fight.
They were overwhelmed and
staggered at the sight,
filled with fear and trembling,
writhing in defeat,
reeling, as your tempest
burst upon their fleet.

*We have heard the rumour
and confirm the word.
This is God's own city,
armies of the Lord!*

In your temple courts we
re-enact your grace.
God, your name is praised in
every time and place,
justice in your right hand,
judgements in your voice.
Now let Zion sing, and
Judah's towns rejoice.

*We have heard the rumour
and confirm the word.
This is God's own city,
armies of the Lord!*

Wander through Mount Zion,
count her many towers,
lay to heart her ramparts,
scrutinise her powers.
Tell it to your children,
when our days are gone,
'God is ours for ever,

and will lead us on.'

*We have heard the rumour
and confirm the word.
This is God's own city,
armies of the Lord!*

Psalm 49
13 13 13 13 13 13
Thaxted

O hear this, every people,
and listen to my word;
you children of creation,
come, let my song be heard;
you rich and poor together,
of great or little worth:
I speak with understanding,
and contemplate the earth.
Unfolding my conundrum,
my riddle to the lyre,
my mouth will utter insight,
my spirit will inspire.

O why should I be frightened
of evil at my door,
of brutes who overpower,
or trust in all their store?
They boast of all their riches,
they boast of all their wealth,
but treasure cannot save them,
or keep them in good health.
Their souls cannot be bought, or
eternally secured.
We cannot live forever;
our death is well assured.

Yes, we can all be certain
that death awaits us all;
the wise and fool together
eventually will fall.
They leave their wealth to others,
with all their grand estate;
their home will be the graveyard,
where generations wait.
*The rich who never ponder,
who do not understand,
are simpleminded oxen,
that perish out of hand.*

Their ways are superficial,
self-satisfied and blind,

and, like a sheep for slaughter,
they follow on behind;
with Sheol for their shepherd,
descending to the grave,
corruption is their fortress,
to capture and enslave.
But God is my redeemer;
he will release my soul,
he saves me from the power
of Sheol's dark control.

So, do not fear the rich, or
their splendour and increase,
for nothing stays forever,
no glory in decease.
Although they bless themselves, and
you also in your might,
their souls descend to shadow,
and, hidden from the light,
*the rich who never ponder,
who do not understand,
are simpleminded oxen,
that perish out of hand.*

Psalm 50

11 11 11 11

St. Denio

The Lord of the ages, the Father of Years,
from Zion, perfection of beauty, appears.
He summons the earth, from the south to the
north;
from sunrise to sunset his splendour shines forth.

Our God, who is coming in lightning and storm,
will never be silent, with burning reform;
he summons the heavens and, calling the world,
administers justice, his judgement unfurled.

'Come, gather together the faithful, who heard,
who sealed an agreement, and gave me their
word.
The heavens are telling my honour and might,
for I am your God, who loves justice and right.

'Now hear me, you people, the whole human
race.

To you, and to Israel, I set out my case;
for I am your true God, the only one here,
eternal and mighty, the God you should fear.

'I will not reprove you for gifts you have made;

your vows and oblations have fully been paid.
I do not require any bull from the field,
or ram from the pasture, a tenth of the yield.

'The beasts of the forest, and cattle, are mine;
the sheep and the oxen are there by design;
I know all the birds as they circle around;
I know every insect that crawls on the ground.

'If I became hungry, I would not tell you;
the world and its fullness is all in my view.
So how can you think that I make myself full,
with blood from a goat, or with flesh from a bull?

'Your offering to me should be blessing and
prayer;
to God the Most High pay the vows that you
swear.

Then raise your appeal in the day of distress,
and glorify God, when I save you, and bless.

'But why are the wicked reciting my laws,
or quoting my covenant, each statute and clause?
You hate my rebuke, and you wander astray;
you take my commandments, and throw them
away.

'If you saw a thief, you would follow along;
in your eyes adulterers have done nothing wrong.
Your mouth pours out evil, and, filled with conceit,
your tongue is offensive, contriving deceit.

'You sit there and smear your own sibling with
lies;
you slander your family, the kin you despise.
When I held my peace, you thought I was like
you,
but I will condemn you; my judgements are true.

'Let those who forget me beware and behave,
in case I devour you, with no-one to save.
Your gift of thanksgiving increases my praise;
deliverance is yours, if you follow my ways.'

Psalms 51-60

Psalm 51

11 11 11 5

Herzliebster Jesu

My God, be gracious, show consideration,

according to your kindness and affection.
According to the wealth of your compassion,
clear my transgression.

Completely wash away my great offences,
and cleanse me from their fitting consequences.
For truly my transgressions, yes, I see them.
I cannot flee them.

Against you only is my sin directed,
and in your sight my guilt is all collected.
You will be just and pure in bringing vengeance,
when you pass sentence.

From birth my guilt has ever been beside me;
conceived in sin, I nurture it inside me.
But you delight in honesty and vision,
your hidden wisdom.

With hyssop purge me, symbol of forgiveness,
and wash me, white as snow, to make me
sinless.
May shattered bones rejoice with exaltation
and jubilation.

Ignore my anger, my unjust aggression;
O wipe away my error and transgression.
Establish and renew my soul to guide me,
clean heart inside me.

Do not dismiss me from your side to break me,
nor let your holy spirit quite forsake me.
Bring back to me your noble inspiration,
joyful salvation.

I teach your righteous ways among the lawless,
so they return to you, becoming flawless.
O save me, God, from bloodshed and from
malice,
to sing your justice.

Lord, open now my lips that I may sing you,
with heart and mouth and perfect praise to bring
you.
You take no pleasure in exotic spices,
no sacrifices.

Instead of sacrifice and reparation,
I bring my guilty soul as my oblation.
My crushed and broken heart, my broken spirit,
you will receive it.

*Do good to Zion in your grace and pity;
rebuild Jerusalem, your holy city.
Then they will offer bulls upon your altar,
with song and psalter.*

This is a sample of Psalms for the Common Era. For access to the complete psalter please email Adam Carlill –
adamcarlill@psalmsforthecommonera.com

Psalm 65

87 87 D
Blaenwern

Human praise is dumb before you,
Lord our God, in Zion's place.
We fulfil the vows we swore you;
prayers are answered by your grace.
All the human race approaches,
burdened by their sin and crime,
overpowered by our reproaches;
you forgive us all the time.

When you bring the chosen near you,
to reside within your court,
we are sated, and revere you,
filled with good of every sort.
You respond with fearful justice,
saving by your powerful hand,
Faith in you, and lasting trust, is
far and wide, in distant lands.

You created mountain ranges,
by your strength, their hidden caves,
stilled the furious ocean rages,
calmed the roaring of their waves.
While the hoards of distant races
fear your wonders in the sky,
day and evening, from their places,
offer up their ringing cry.

Visit earth with endless riches,
making food and goodness grow;
drench the furrows, fill the ditches,
as your treasures overflow,
softening all the land with showers,
filling rivers in your love;
bless the corn with fruit and flowers,
milk and honey from above.

Crown the seasons with your goodness,

pouring down from your parade:
desert pastures, in their fulness,
hill and vale and field arrayed,
full of sheep and joy and laughter,
stores of wine and food and grain.
Now with joy, and ever after,
in your house we sing again.

Psalm 66

87 87 87

Neander (Unser Herrscher)

Sing to God, you earth, in triumph,
glorify his sacred name.
Bring to God your songs of glory,
sing his universal fame.
Say to God, 'Your deeds are glorious;
they will ever be the same.

'By the greatness of your power,
by the might of your decree,
every foe will cringe before you,
entering in on bended knee.
All the earth will bow in worship,
bring a song and melody.'

Come to see the acts of God, who
works amazing deeds on earth,
turning oceans into pathways,
bringing Israel to birth.
When they crossed the river dry shod,
we were glad and filled with mirth.

God for ever rules in power,
looking after great and small.
There cannot be proud rebellion,
no disloyalty at all.
Peoples, bless our God, and let your
praise resound in house and hall.

God, the Lord, is our salvation,
guarding souls in life and light,
keeps the erring footsteps steady,
with perpetual oversight;
he has tried us and refined us,
pure as silver, burnished bright.

When the snares are brought upon us,
when you grieve our minds with scourge,
foes arise to trample on us,
we may pass through fire and surge;
you will lead us out of trouble,

with relief as we emerge.

I will offer whole burnt offerings,
vows I made with holy word,
keep the promise made in trouble,
as my soul within was stirred:
bulls and fatlings I present you,
from the flock and from the herd.

Let the faithful pay attention,
hear what God has done for me.
I arose with lofty praises;
now my life has been set free.
Had I cherished guilt within, the
Lord would not have heard my plea.

Nonetheless my God has heard me,
paid attention to my prayer.
He received my supplication,
did not leave me in despair.
Bless our God, whose loving-kindness
lasts forever, everywhere.

Psalm 67

LM

Illsley

Be gracious, God, and bless us here;
in glory may you now appear,
Be praised in joy upon the earth,
your great salvation brought to birth.

*May peoples everywhere acclaim,
and come to praise your holy name.*
The races glory and rejoice
across the earth, with single voice.

For you will judge the world with right,
exhorting nations in your sight.
*May peoples everywhere acclaim,
and come to praise your holy name.*

We now enjoy the fruits of earth,
the gifts that you have brought to birth.
In faith may all the world revere,
and God forever bless us here.

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adamcarlill@psalmsforthecommonera.com

Psalm 76

66 66 88

Little Cornard

Judah, the home of God,
Jacob, divine ascent,
Salem, the holy sod,
Zion, the sacred tent:
God shattered there the battle bow,
the shield, the sword, and brought them low.

Shining in high renown
over the ancient hills,
ending the wars around,
violence of human wills,
you put the stout of heart to rest;
they fall asleep, and fail the test.

When you rebuke, our God,
rider and horse lie still,
all of them overawed,
empty of aim and will.
Our fearful God of Israel,
when you are angry, none rebel.

Justice in heaven is heard,
fearful, the earth is still,
God as a judge is stirred,
saving the poor at will.
For human rage can only please;
you gird yourself with refugees.

Vow to the Lord your God,
gathering the riches here,
glory in every word,
serving in faith and fear.
For God destroys all human worth,
is feared by every king on earth.

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Psalm 84

78 78 88

Liebster Jesu

Lord, how lovely are your courts,
in your holy habitation.
All my longing, all my thoughts,
focus on your royal station.

Heart and flesh ring out their glory
to the Father of their story.

Here the swallow makes her nest,
here the birds have your protection.
Lord of Hosts, they hatch and rest,
near your altar and affection.
Blessed are those who ever dwell here,
praising you, and serve you well here.

Blessed are those with you for strength,
walking highways of affliction,
through the valleys, where, at length,
rain will clothe with benediction.
Strong and stronger, they rely on
God, to bring them home to Zion.

Lord of Hosts, receive my prayer,
God and King, grant my petition.
God of Jacob, turn your ear
to my passionate submission.
Look upon our shield appointed,
see the face of your anointed.

I am longing to adore,
just one day, within your temple,
better than a thousand more,
where the evil folk assemble.
I would rather guard your threshold,
than inhabit wicked households.

God, the Lord, is sun and shield,
giving grace and glory freely,
never keeping goodness sealed
from the just, who walk discreetly.
Lord of Hosts, though we are dust, you
bless the folk, who ever trust you.

Psalm 85

87 87 D

Hyfrydol

You, O Lord, were pleased to save your
land and folk, when they were slaves,
bearing Jacob's violation,
clearing all our sinful graves.
You have gathered up your fury,
turned away your blazing wrath,
brought your people back from bondage,
safely on their homeward path.

Turn us, God of our salvation,

let your anger pass away.
Will there always be vexation,
will your anger ever stay?
Will you not revive your people,
so they may rejoice again?
Show your grace and loving-kindness,
save your people from their pain.

Now the Father of the Years will
speak, and I will listen well.
Now the Lord will speak of peace, for
all his people Israel,
peace for all the faithful, lest they
turn to folly, underhand.
Your salvation rests upon us;
glory shines across our land.

Grace and truth have met together,
peace and justice kiss in love.
Truth shall spring from earth, with justice
gazing down from heaven above.
Yes, the Lord will pour his blessing
on the land, to make it grow.
Justice will go forth before him,
lay the path of God below.

Psalm 86

76 76 D

King's Lynn

Hear me, O Lord, and answer
my poverty and need.
Protect me from disaster,
O save me and give heed.
I am your faithful servant,
I put my trust in you.
Be gracious and observant;
I call the whole day through.

Give ear to my petition,
and listen to my prayer.
I call in desperation,
for you will surely care.
Give joy to me, your servant;
I raise my weary soul.
Lord, you are good and fervent,
forgiving all who call.

No other god is like you,
O Lord, the God of all,
for you have given life to
the nations, great and small.

They worship their defender,
and glorify your name,
for you, their might and splendour,
alone remain the same.

O Lord, make known your pathways,
and I will follow you.
Lord, may my spirit always
be honourable and true,
my Lord and God, to fear you,
to glorify and praise.
In mercy bring me near you,
from Sheol's deadly shades.

The insolent have risen,
they cruelly seek my soul.
O God, they have no vision
of godliness at all.
But you, my Lord and Father
of Years, are God above,
compassionate, the author
of gracious truth and love.

So turn and show your mercy,
to strengthen and secure;
although I am unworthy,
deliver and restore;
come, show some gracious token,
which those who hate may see,
that you, my Lord, have spoken;
give aid to set me free.

Psalm 87

66 11 66 11

Down Ampney

Founded on holy heights,
in her the Lord delights,
loves Zion more than Jacob's habitations,
splendid in gate and wall,
honoured above them all,
the city of our God for generations.

Babylon comes to mind,
Rahab and all its kind,
while I remember all of those who know me.
Even the Philistines,
Tyre where the ocean shines,
and Cush - they all were born in her below me.

Zion they all prefer;
it will be said of her,

'Now everyone on earth is born within you.'
God, the Most High, is here,
builder and overseer,
establishing your palaces to win you.

And when the nations come,
peoples beneath the sun,
our Lord will count their number on her
mountains.
All will be gathered here,
born equal, to appear,
with song and dance, as living springs and
fountains.

Psalm 88

76 76 D

Passion Chorale

Lord God of my salvation,
by day and night I call.
Receive my keen oblation,
give ear to sigh and gall.
My soul is full of evil,
in Sheol, in the pit,
where there is no retrieval,
and no-one will acquit.

I lie with the departed,
adrift among the dead,
with corpses, disregarded
by you, and lost in dread.
Cut off from your protection,
in deepest hell below,
you place me in subjection,
in death and overthrow.

Your anger weighs upon me,
afflicted by your waves.
You place me, lost and lonely,
forlorn among the graves.
You make me quite offensive,
you drive my friends away,
enclosed and apprehensive,
with no-one who will stay.

Because of my affliction
my vision fades away.
O Lord, in dereliction
I yearn through all the day.
Is there a sign or wonder,
your tokens for the dead?
Will shades arise to honour,

in piety and dread?

And will your loving-kindness
be told among the graves?
your faithfulness, where blindness
encloses and enslaves?
your justice in destruction?
your wonders in the dark?
your knowledge and instruction,
where spirits disembark?

I call you to restore me;
at daybreak hear my prayer.
So why do you ignore me,
and hide away your care?
O Lord, I have been dying,
and needy from my youth,
my soul in terror crying,
bewildered by your truth.

Your anger passes through me,
your terrors bring me down.
They circle and pursue me,
they inundate and drown.
You take away my dearest;
they leave me to descend,
to where the dark is nearest,
my one and only friend.

This is a sample of Psalms for the Common Era. For access to the complete psalter please email Adam Carlill –

adamcarlill@psalmsforthecommonera.com

Psalm 90

87 87 87

Pange Lingua

Lord, you are our home and dwelling,
through the ages of the earth.
Well before the hills were forming,
writhing in the pains of birth,
from forever to forever
you are God, who called them forth.

Father of the Years, you made us,
and with dust we reunite:
'Go back down, you mortal children,
back to darkness, out of sight.'
For to you a thousand years are
as a day, or passing night.

As a dream they pass before you,
overwhelmed and fast asleep;
in the morning, like the grassland,
fresh and flourishing and deep;
in the evening, dry and withered,
as the passing ages sweep.

We are ended in your anger,
dreading terror from on high.
You have set our sins before you;
secrets lie before your eye.
All our days dissolve in fury,
and our years are as a sigh.

Human lives are seven decades,
eight for those with strength to stay;
they are only full of trouble,
full of sorrow and decay.
All our days and years are failing,
speeding as we fly away.

Who can know your mighty anger,
who can know your fury here?
Those, who honour and revere you,
know your fury in their fear.
May we count our days in wisdom,
knowing we will disappear.

Lord, return towards your servants;
how much more will you delay?
Fill us with your loving-kindness,
in the morning, with the day.
So may we rejoice before you,
ever singing as we pray.

Gladden us for all the trouble,
days of toil and years of pain.
Show your servants, God, the splendour
of your work, and loving reign.
Lord, establish our endeavour,
prosper all our work again.

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Psalm 95
10 11 11 12
Slane

Come, let us ring out our joy to the Lord,

with cheering, thanksgiving and shouting to God,
our rock and salvation to whom we resort,
our King and great Father of the heavenly court.

God's is the power that fashioned the earth,
and brought all the peaks of the mountains to
birth,
who made the wide oceans and all they contain,
establishing dry land and the natural domain.

Come, let us honour, bow down and revere
the Lord, who has made us, and kneel down in
fear,
for we are his sheep in the pasture of God,
protected and guided by a merciful rod.

[O that today you would listen to me!
Do not close your heart as they did by the sea.
Your forebears at Massah, and Meribah's well,
ignoring my wonders, fell away and rebelled.

Forty years long I despised them and said,
'This people are erring in heart and in head,
not knowing my ways,' so in anger I stressed,
'These rebels will never ever enter my rest.']

Psalm 96
10 10 11 11
Laudate Dominum (Parry)

Sing out to the Lord,
bring new songs to birth.
Sing out to the Lord,
all creatures on earth,
Sing out, every nation,
and daily proclaim
the Lord's great salvation,
his wonderful name.

For great is the Lord,
and worthy of praise,
above every god,
revered in his ways.
Declare, every nation,
his glorious name,
in every location,
his wonderful fame.

The gods of the world
are worthless and vain.
The Lord has unfurled
his heavenly reign,

creating the splendour
of temple and sky,
our mighty defender,
in beauty on high.

Acknowledge the Lord,
all peoples on earth,
acknowledge the Lord,
his glorious worth.
Acknowledge his splendour,
the name of the Lord.
Bring presents to enter
the temple of God.

Bow down to the Lord
all over the earth,
with holy accord
acknowledge his worth.
With great celebration
let everyone sing,
proclaim to the nations,
'The Lord, he is King!'

Let heaven proclaim,
creation rejoice;
let oceans acclaim,
with thundering voice.
Let everything living
exult in the field;
let trees, with thanksgiving,
ring out from the weald.

The world is secure
and never to fall;
the Lord will ensure
true judgement for all,
who comes with his sentence,
who comes with his grace,
with righteous ascendance,
through all time and space.

Psalm 97

87 87 D
Austria

God the Lord is King for ever -
let the isles and earth rejoice,
cloudy darkness for a cover -
sing together with one voice:
righteousness, eternal justice,
firm supports beneath the throne,
blazing fire before and after,

his defeated foes will groan.

Lightning flashes through creation,
melting ancient hills in fear,
shaking earth to its foundation,
as the Lord of all draws near.
Heaven tells his righteous story -
praise the Lord of all the earth.
Every people sees the glory,
all as one proclaim his worth.

All who worship molten fetich,
worthless gods of human hands,
they will be ashamed and perish,
when the Lord Most High commands.
May their gods bow down to praise you.
Zion heard; may Judah sing,
sing your justice, Lord, to raise you
far above their gods, as King.

Lord, you hate the evildoer,
keeping all whose souls are just,
freeing them from wicked power,
as they offer you their trust.
Light is sown for all the righteous,
joy for every noble face.
Praise the Lord, rejoice, you righteous,
for a token of his grace.

Psalm 98

87 87 D
Abbot's Leigh

Sing afresh in all creation,
sing the wonders of the Lord.
He has shown his great salvation,
bared his holy arm abroad.
He revealed his righteous favour,
everywhere the nations dwell,
called to mind his truth, the saviour
of the house of Israel.

Earth's remotest bounds have noted
God's salvation, and his worth.
Shout aloud with songs, devoted
to the Lord of all the earth.
With the lyre, the lyre and dancing,
play before the Lord, and sing.
With a trumpet fanfare blasting,
shout before the Lord, the King.

Let the sea in fullness thunder,

all that lives across the earth.
Rivers, clap your hands in wonder,
mountains, cry aloud with mirth.
For the Lord, in full ascendance,
comes with righteousness unfurled.
He will judge, with upright sentence,
all the peoples of the world.

Psalm 99

14 14 4 7 8

Lobe Den Heren

Our Lord is King, so may peoples with trembling
implore him.
Seated on cherubim, let earth below quake before
him.
Fearful in fame,
highly exalted in name,
holy in Zion - adore him.

Strength of the king, who loves fairness and right
for the lowly,
justice in Jacob is founded by you, and you only.
Worship our God,
bow to his footstool and rod.
He, the Lord God, he is holy.

Moses and Aaron, with priests of the Lord, who
ordained them,
Samuel, with those who appealed, and he quickly
sustained them -
God answered loud,
spoke from the pillar of cloud -
they kept his laws and explained them.

You, Lord our God, alone, pardoned and
answered them duly,
Father of Years, but with vengeance, when they
were unruly.
Worship our God,
high on his mountain and sod.
He, the Lord God, he is holy.

Psalm 100

888 with Alleluia

Victory

[Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.]
Shout to the Lord in every place,
worship with joy in every race,
sing to the Lord before his face.
Alleluia.

Know that the Lord alone is God;
we are the people of the Lord,
sheep of his flock beneath his rod.
Alleluia.

Enter his gates with songs to raise,
enter his courts with thanks and praise,
bless him forever, all his ways.
Alleluia.

For he is good, the Lord is sure;
mercy and truth from him endure,
steadfast and firm for evermore.
Alleluia.
[Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.]

Psalms 101-110

Psalm 101

74 74 D

Gwalchmai

Love and justice I will sing,
Lord, before you,
pleasing music I will bring
to adore you.
I will be completely sound,
- when will you come? -
and in virtue, I will ground
my entire home.

Worthless matters in my sight,
I reject them.
Traitors, who are brought to light,
I eject them.
Twisted hearts I turn aside
from my presence.
Wicked folk will not abide
in attendance.

Those who slander, those who spy,
I will slay them.
Boastful heart and haughty eye,
I shall weigh them.
I will look for honest friends
to preserve me.
Those of sound and noble ends,
they shall serve me.

[Evil traitors in the land,

every liar,
with the wicked, will be banned
from my hire.
Every morning by the sword
I will slay them,
from the city of the Lord,
end their mayhem.]

Psalm 102

88 88 6

St. Margaret

Good Lord, receive my humble prayer,
and pay attention to my plea.
Hide not your face or loving care,
and, when distress and grief ensnare,
come quickly, answer me.

My days are finished in the smoke;
my bones are burning up inside.
My bread is bitter, and I choke;
my heart, beneath your heavy stroke,
is withered up and dried.

I groan and murmur all the day;
my bones are clinging to my skin.
I live alone, and far away,
an owl in ruin and decay,
a wilderness within.

Awake, I flutter to and fro,
some lonely bird upon a roof.
All day my enemies, I know,
are using me to curse, and, oh,
I must endure reproof.

My food is ashes for my bread.
My drink is mingling with my grief.
Your wrath has burst upon my head;
you toss me out, as something dead,
and I have no relief.

My days go down into the shade;
my life is dying as the grass.
But you, my Lord, are unafraid;
your name will never, ever fade,
as mortal ages pass.

You rise to pity and to hear,
for Zion's ruin is unjust,
and now the time of grace is near;
to us, your servants, she is dear,

her very stones and dust.

Then all the nations will revere;
their kings will glorify your name,
when in your glory you appear,
to build in Zion, and to clear,
to save our souls from shame.

The Lord will look upon our prayer,
our destitution, and the sword;
we now record it, and declare,
so every family, and heir,
may rise to praise the Lord.

The Lord examined in his place,
surveying all the earth on high,
to hear the groaning in the gates,
our prisoners lying in disgrace,
and all condemned to die.

When peoples gather to acclaim,
in Zion, to adore the Lord,
humanity will serve your name,
and, in Jerusalem, proclaim,
that you alone are God.

My God afflicted all my ways;
my passing, mortal life is frail.
I said, 'Do not reduce my days,
eternal Father of my praise;
for you will never fail.'

In former days you made the earth,
established heaven by your hand;
while they will perish in their dearth,
as clothes or rags of little worth,
you will forever stand.

You change them, they will not endure,
but you, your years will never cease.
Your servants' children will be sure;
their seed will ever live secure,
to serve their God in peace.

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Psalm 112 (An Alphabetic Psalm)

78 78 and Alleluia

St. Albinus

All who fear the Lord are blessed,
joyful in their celebrations.

Blamelessly they have confessed
pleasure in his regulations.
Alleluia.

Celebration is their strength,
passing on to their relations,
down the ages, when, at length,
they are blessed for generations.
Alleluia.

Exaltation lies at hand,
in their house a hoard of treasure,
for their righteousness will stand,
holding firm and sure forever.
Alleluia.

Glorious light is rising clear
in the darkness, for the gracious.
High and upright year by year,
they are merciful and righteous.
Alleluia.

It goes well for those who lend,
who are gracious in their dealings.
Justice ever will attend,
helping all their ways and feelings.
Alleluia.

Keeping firm, they never sway,
right and just in their endeavour.
Lasting memory ever stays;
noble names will live forever.
Alleluia.

Mindful that the Lord is near,
when they hear of ill prevailing,
none who trust in him will fear,
or will find their heart is failing.
Alleluia.

Often, though they are afraid,
faithful hearts will be supported.
Plainly they will see displayed
all their adversaries thwarted.
Alleluia.

Reaching out, they lend a hand
to the needy, who implore them,
so their righteousness will stand,

firm forever, still before them.
Alleluia.

Their posterity will rise,
glorious in their exaltation.
Unrepentant, wicked eyes
contemplate it with vexation.
Alleluia.

Vainly they will know despair,
grinding teeth in their confusion.
When their evil passions flare,
they will perish in delusion.
Alleluia.

Psalm 113
88 88 89
Surrey

Come praise, you servants of the Lord,
give honour to his holy name,
the Lord, for evermore adored,
for all eternity the same.
From east to west, in lands afar,
the Lord is worshipped. Alleluia.

The Lord is high above the earth,
more glorious than the spheres or sky.
The Lord our God, of matchless worth,
establishes his throne on high,
who stoops to view the shooting star,
the earth and mortals. Alleluia.

God lifts the poor from underground,
he raises beggars from the slums.
They live with nobles all around,
and eat their fill, instead of crumbs.
He gives a home to those, who are
alone and childless. Alleluia.

Psalm 114
65 65 65 75
Dun Aluinn

When we came from Egypt,
from a foreign land,
Judah was his temple,
Israel his command;
then the sea retreated,
Jordan fled away,
peaks arose as leaping rams,
hills as lambs at play.

Why, you sea, retreat, or,
Jordan, fly away,
peaks, as leaping rams, or,
hills, as lambs at play?
Let the earth recoil and
writhe before our King.
Rock he makes a gushing well,
flint he makes a spring.

Psalm 115

87 87 D

Lux Eoi

Not to us, Lord, not to us, but
glory to your name on high,
full of truth and loving kindness,
full of victory when we cry.
Why is every nation asking,
'How can God be there at all?'
God is reigning high in heaven,
finding joy in great and small.

Gold or silver human idols,
empty works of mortal mind,
never speaking, never sensing,
never breathing, deaf and blind,
never walking, vain and voiceless,
dead to sense and sight and sound -
cold and lifeless are their makers,
soulless, in devotion bound.

House of Israel, house of Aaron,
all whose faith is in the Lord,
trusting in the help of God, who
is our shield and great reward,
God remembers us forever,
all the faithful, great and small.
House of Israel, house of Aaron,
God will bless us, one and all.

May the Lord increase his blessing,
bless you and your seed from birth,
blessed together, by the maker
of the sky and sea and earth.
Though the dead and silent spirits
never praise the Lord above,
we will pour eternal blessing
to the Lord, the God of love.

Psalm 116

66 66 88

Love Unknown

Lord, you have heard my prayer,
when grief and death surround,
when Sheol's cords ensnare
my soul, and I am bound.
I love you, Lord, with every breath,
for you have set me free from death.

Calling upon his name,
I said, 'Come, save my soul!'
He saves the low from blame,
and makes the simple whole.
Turn back, my soul, when you are pressed;
the Lord has fully brought you rest.

He saves from hell below,
from tears when overawed,
my feet from stumbling, so
I live before the Lord,
Our God is gracious, he is just,
and in his mercy we will trust.

When I was so oppressed,
I thought that I would die,
and in alarm confessed
the human race a lie.
I pay my vows for saving grace;
I drink his cup, and seek his face.

Precious before the Lord,
the deaths of those who fear,
while I fulfil my word,
before his people here.
Lord, I will serve, was born a slave,
but you release my bonds, to save.

Thanks I will offer now,
call on his name in fear,
while I fulfil my vow,
before his people here.
Within his house, by all adored,
Jerusalem, O praise the Lord.

Psalm 117

4664

Plaisir d'amour

O praise the Lord,
all peoples of the earth;
let all the world acclaim.
O praise the Lord.

O praise the Lord,
whose love to us is great,
whose truth will never end.
O praise the Lord.

Psalm 118

87 87 D

Golden Sheaves

Come, praise the Lord, for he is good;
his kindness is forever.
Let Israel say, 'For he is good;
his kindness is forever.'
Let all the house of Aaron say,
'His kindness is forever.'
Let those who fear the Lord now say,
'His kindness is forever.'

My prayer from ill rose to the Lord,
and he responded clearly.
In spacious pasturage abroad
he settled me securely.
The Lord beside, I never quail
at mortal degradation.
The Lord beside, I never pale
at hateful confrontation.

Far better now to seek the Lord
than trust in human beings.
Far better now to seek the Lord
than trust in noble dealings.
To cries of praise he saves the just,
with mighty hand in power;
his mighty hand will raise the crushed,
a mighty hand in power.

The nations all surrounded me,
but in his name I break them,
surrounded, yes, surrounded me,
and in his name I break them.
They circle round, like angry bees,
a thorny, blazing mayhem,
but I extinguish them with ease,
when in his name I break them.

You drove me to the brink of death;
the Lord was there to aid me,
my song and strength with every breath,
to liberate and save me.
I will survive to live and tell
his mighty operation;

with discipline he taught me well,
and freed me from damnation.

Unbar the gates of righteousness,
that here I may acclaim him.
This is the gate the Lord has blessed;
the righteous will proclaim him.
All thanks to you for you replied,
became my sure salvation,
my Ancient One, my praise and guide,
my God and exaltation.

The stone the builders all denied
is now the one foundation.
This action, by the Lord supplied,
became our inspiration.
This is the day the Lord has made;
we celebrate your splendour,
so prosper with your mighty aid,
and save us, our defender.

Blessed is the one who comes from God;
from heaven's court we bless you.
His glory shines with lightning rod,
while worshippers process to
his holy place, of stone and wood,
his temple here forever.
Come, praise the Lord, for he is good;
his kindness is forever.

Psalm 119.1-8

CM

St. Peter

Aleph

All those whose way is sound are blessed,
who guard the Lord's decrees,
and seek his charge with all their heart,
yes, they will walk with ease.

All those who do no wicked deed
will follow in his ways,
and you command that we should keep
your precepts all our days.

Ah now, if only all my ways
were firm in your demands,
and then I would not be ashamed,
when viewing your commands.

As I have learned with upright heart
to praise you for your laws;

accept me, Lord, for I will keep
your statutes, every clause.

Psalm 119.9-16

CM

Song 67

Beth

But how shall youthful ones be clean,
to heed your word and way?

Because I truly seek your law,
O never let me stray.

Because my heart has stored your words,
I keep myself from sin.

Before my eyes, Lord, you are blessed;
implant your rules within.

Bar none, my lips have told of each
commandment in your law.

Before me all your charges are
a glorious wealth and store.

By musing on your precepts, I
will look for you today.

By savouring all your statutes, I
recall your words and way.

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Psalm 120

65 65 and Refrain

Make Peace

Lord, in time of trouble,
I will make my prayer.

Save me from the liars;
treacherous tongues, beware!
Woe to me, that I sojourn in Meshech!
Woe to me, that my tent lies in Kedar!

How will you be answered,
treacherous, lying souls? -
arrows, burning, sharpened,
tempered in the coals.
Woe to me, that I sojourn in Meshech!
Woe to me, that my tent lies in Kedar!

Far too long I suffer
enemies of peace.
When I speak of concord,
they just never cease.
Woe to me, that I sojourn in Meshech!
Woe to me, that my tent lies in Kedar!

Psalms 121-130

Psalm 121

66 86 SM

Franconia

I look towards the hills;
can they bring help to birth?
My help comes from the Lord himself,
who made the heaven and earth.

He will not let you slide,
your keeper will not sleep,
for Israel's Lord will never tire,
who has us in his keep.

The Lord will keep you safe,
the Lord will be your shade.
Of sun or moon or deadly curse
you need not be afraid.

The Lord will keep your soul,
from evil at your door.
The Lord will keep you day by day,
both now and evermore.

Psalm 122

LM

Herongate

How I rejoiced that we should go,
to see the temple of the Lord!
And now our feet are standing here,
Jerusalem, within your ward.

Jerusalem, a city built,
and altogether unified;
in her the thrones of judgement, for
the house of David, still reside.

The tribes of Israel ascend,
his tribes ascending to the Lord,
according to his covenant here,
to praise his name with one accord.

So pray prosperity and peace,
for those who love Jerusalem;
in citadel and hall be peace,
prosperity in all of them.

To friend and neighbour I will say,
The peace of God rest in your doors!
And, from the temple of the Lord,
may goodness come to you and yours.

Psalm 123

55 88 55

Arnstadt (Seelenbräutigam)

I will raise my eye
to your throne on high.
As the eye of slave to owner,
or of maid to those who own her,
so we seek the Lord,
for his gracious word.

I will raise my eye
to your throne on high.
God, be gracious, Lord, be gracious;
we are tired of those vexatious
mockers, who deride
in their scorn and pride.

Psalm 124

776 778

Innsbruck

Had God the Lord now failed us,
when hateful foes assailed us,
may Israel describe,
their anger would have burned us,
if God the Lord had spurned us,
they would have swallowed us alive.

Had God the Lord disowned us,
the waters would have drowned us,
may Israel now say,
their torrents would have flooded,
our souls they would have flooded,
the waters would have raged away.

So blessed be God the Lord, who
has not made us a prey to
their teeth, in war or dearth,
who breaks their snare and power,
our rescue from the fowler,

creator of the heaven and earth.

Psalm 125

66 66 44 44

Harewood

All those who trust the Lord
are firm as Zion's hill.
Jerusalem - the Lord
surrounds her people still,
surrounds her store
with mountain hold,
from days of old
for evermore.

The rod of wicked folk
will never rule in power,
on any righteous yoke,
in righteous home or tower,
lest upright souls
should turn their hands
to evil plans,
or wicked goals.

The Lord be good to all,
who live their upright lives;
but those who turn and fall
to evil, crooked drives,
the Lord propel
them far away,
so peace may stay
on Israel.

Psalm 126

87 87 D

Deerhurst

When the Lord established Zion
we were living in a dream.
Then our mouth was filled with laughter,
and our tongue with joyful theme.
Then they said, among the nations,
'All their Lord has done is great!'
Yes, our Lord does great things for us;
we rejoice and celebrate.

Re-establish us, our Lord, as
watercourses of the south.
Those who sow in tears and mourning
will return with joyful mouth.
Those who scatter seed in sorrow
come with sheaves in joyful state,

since our Lord does great things for us;
we rejoice and celebrate.

Psalm 127

87 87 D

Ode to Joy

If the Lord were not the builder
then the builders work in vain.
If he did not keep the city,
then the keepers watch in vain,
vain to wake and rise so early,
working hard and late to rest,
for to those who love and serve him
he gives sleep, in peace possessed.

Children of the womb are from the
Lord, his liberality,
as the arrows of a warrior,
seed of our vitality.
Blessed are those with quiver full,
their children standing, tall and straight.
They will not be shamed, and they will
answer foes within the gate.

Psalm 128

85 85 and Refrain

Guiting Power

Blessed are those who fear the Lord, who
walk within his ways.
Food is yours as your reward; you
prosper all your days.
Thus are blessed who fear the Lord,
with peace restored
to Israel.

You will have a wife to cherish,
like a fruitful vine;
children, like the olive, flourish
round you as you dine.
Thus are blessed who fear the Lord,
with peace restored
to Israel.

May the Lord from Zion bless you,
bless you all your days.
May your children's children bless you,
be your joy and praise.
May Jerusalem's reward
be peace restored
to Israel.

Psalm 129

76 76 D

Thornbury

How frequently they pressed me,
let Israel concede,
yes, from my youth they pressed me,
but they did not succeed.
They ploughed across my back, and
they made their furrows long,
but God the Lord is righteous,
who cuts the cords of wrong.

Let those with hate for Zion
be shamed and turned away,
be like the rooftop grasses,
that wither and decay,
which nobody can gather
into a harvest hoard,
and no-one offers blessing,
'We bless you by the Lord!'

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adamcarlill@psalmsforthecommonera.com

Psalm 137

494 89 94

The Infant King

In Babylon,
there we sat down and wept for Zion,
in Babylon.
As for our harps we hung them high,
strung on the poplars of the marshes,
silent, as we remembered Zion,
in Babylon.

In Babylon,
there our tormentors asked for singing,
in Babylon.
'Sing us a joyful song from home.'
How can we sing a song of Zion,
sing of the Lord with strangers, aching,
in Babylon?

In Babylon,
if I forget Jerusalem, here
in Babylon,
may my right arm and tongue decay,

if I do not recall you, make you
first of my joys, Jerusalem, here
in Babylon.

[In Babylon,
call to mind Edom's generation,
in Babylon,
Lord, how Jerusalem was razed,
how they said, 'Raze her, lay her bare, and
down to the ground, to her foundation!'
In Babylon.]

In Babylon,
Babylon's daughter, spoiled, behold her
in Babylon!
Blessed is the one will repay,
dealing with you as you deserve, and
smashing your babes against a boulder!
In Babylon!]

Psalm 138

11 10 11 10 11 10 11 12
Londonderry Air

I give you praise, O Lord, with all my being;
before the gods I sing to you above.
I bow towards your holy temple, freeing
my praise of you, your name and truth and love.
Since you have glorified your great position,
your name and word of truth, from pole to pole,
and when I called you answered my petition,
you made me strong and bold within my heart
and soul.

Let all the monarchs of the earth acclaim you,
give praise, O Lord, to you and to your name;
since they have heard of you, they will proclaim
you,
your word of truth, the greatness of your fame.
Now let them sing that all your ways are holy,
that you, O Lord, are great and glorified.
The Lord is high, but notices the lowly;
he looks disdainfully upon our human pride.

Although my troubles press and make me cower,
you will preserve me, you restore my life.
Before my enemies you send your power,
your mighty arm, to save me in my strife.
The Lord will act for me with full endeavour,
fulfilling all his will upon the earth.
O Lord, your loving-kindness is forever,
do not abandon us, the folk you bring to birth.

Psalm 139

DCM
Coe Fen

Lord, you have searched me through and
through,
you know me, where I stay,
when I rise up, and all I do,
my plans, from far away.
Proving me as I roam and rest,
you know me as a friend;
never a word have I expressed,
but you, Lord, comprehend.

You are before, you are behind,
you hold me in your hand.
Knowledge like this is undefined,
too high to understand.
How can I flee you? Where to go,
for you are everywhere?
Heaven above and hell below -
yes, you, Lord, you are there.

If, on the wings of dawn, I fly,
or live beyond the sea,
yes, even there you are near by,
to guide and set me free.
Darkness may cover where I stay,
the light be turned to night;
nightfall to you is as the day,
the darkness as the light.

You, Lord, you made my inward parts,
you wove me in the womb,
forming my limbs with fearful arts
below, in earth and gloom,
secretly weaving every bone,
with wonders hard to tell;
nothing is hidden, all is known,
and I, I know it well.

You saw my unborn members grow,
and all are written down;
all of my days were formed below
by you, and all are found.
Precious and numerous are your plans,
O Father of the Years,
countless as grains of shifting sands,
or stars within the spheres.

[God, how I wish that you would slay

deceitful, bloody spies.
Banish the rebels, turn away
the folk, who offer lies.
Do I not hate and loathe all those,
who rise to hate you, Lord?
Hatred has turned them into foes,
and hate is their reward.]

You are my Father of the Years;
I praise you through and through.
When I awake you calm my fears,
for I am still with you.
Search me to try my heart and mind,
for trouble or dismay;
lead me from pain, that I may find
your everlasting way.

This is a sample of Psalms for the Common Era. For access to the complete psalter please email Adam Carlill – adamcarlill@psalmsforthecommonera.com

Psalm 150

77 77 and Alleluias
Easter Hymn, Llanfair

Praise the Father of the Years, alleluia!
Praise him in his holy spheres, alleluia!
Praise him in his mighty deeds, alleluia!
Praise him as his power proceeds, alleluia!

Praise him with the blasting horn, alleluia!
May the harp and lyre adorn, alleluia!
Praise him in the rhythmic dance, alleluia!
May the strings and pipe enhance, alleluia!

Praise him with a cymbal clash, alleluia!
Praise him with a cymbal crash, alleluia!
Everything that breathes, adore, alleluia,
praise the Lord for evermore, alleluia!

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