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**Hymn Stories ~ His-story**

**Celebrating Faith in Jesus Christ**

**July 18, 2021**

**Opening Hymn: “The Church’s One Foundation”**

Words: Samuel J. Stone (1839-1900) Music: Samuel S. Wesley (1810-76)

Samuel J. Stone (1839-1900) wrote this hymn as one of twelve published in *Lyra Fidelium: Twelve Hymns on the Twelve Articles of the Apostles’ Creed*(1866). At the time of its publication, Stone was a young priest at New Windsor Parish Church, a poor district at Lavington, Oxford, in England. Earlier, during his education at Charterhouse (1853-1858), he won a prize for composition in English verse. He continued his education at Pembroke College, Oxford (1859-1862), leading to his ordination as a deacon in 1862 and as an Anglican priest in 1863.

This hymn speaks specifically to article nine of the Apostles’ Creed, “(I believe in) the Holy Catholic Church: The Communion of Saints.” The hymn itself is based on I Corinthians 3:11: “For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ” (KJV). This hymn, as well as others in the collection, was intended to serve pastoral, devotional, and catechetic purposes, according to hymnologist Albert Bailey, aiding in the “interpret[ation of] the Apostles’ Creed for the benefit of certain cottagers in his Windsor suburb who were accustomed to repeat it as one of their private prayers” (Bailey, 1952, 377).

The purpose for the words of this hymn arose out of a controversy over critical biblical methodologies that was heating up within the Christian Church and the Anglican Church in particular. serving in South Africa. A particular argument was (and continues to be) over the dating and authorship of Scripture. Stanza three speaks specifically to the potential schism in the church as a result of different views of Scripture. As we well know, the church exists in a constant state of controversy and potential schism. In many ways, this text articulates feelings that are as fresh as ever. It was hailed in Stone's own time as ‘the battle-song of the Church’. From article by Michael W. Hawn

**Psalm 23 : "My Shepherd You {Will} Supply My Need"**  
Words: Isaac Watts, 1674-1748 Music: North America Traditional

This hymn based on Psalm 23, was written by Isaac Watts. It was first published in his 1719 collection The Psalms of David Imitated in the Language of the New Testament. Watts actually did three paraphrases of Psalm 23. The text was originally in six stanzas, following the Psalm, but with this tune, each stanza consists of two of the original. The tune (Resignation or Hopewell) to which the common meter version is usually set is a traditional early American melody of unknown origin.

**Closing Hymn: “Beautiful Savior” (“Fairest Lord Jesus”)**

Words: Gesangbuch, Munster, 1677; tr. Joseph A Seiss (1823-1904) Music: Silesian Folk Tune

This hymn came from Roman Catholic Jesuits in Germany and originally had six verses. It first appeared in 1677 in a Jesuit hymnbook titled *Munster Gesangbuch*, but the text of hymn was in existence at least fifteen years earlier, for it was found in a manuscript dating back to 1662. Regardless, the origin of the text is a mystery. It is also a mystery as to who translated the hymn into English. The first three stanzas are the work of an anonymous translator. The fourth stanza was by Joseph A. Seiss, and it first appeared in a Lutheran Sunday School book in 1873.

Morgan, Robert J. (2010) *Then Sings My Soul:150 Christmas, Easter, and All-Time Favorite Hymn Stories*, p. 147.