St Mark’s and Putnoe Heights Church Partnership
Lent Course 2004

Great Hymn Writers
John Keble 1792 – 1866
Pastor, Priest and Poet

15 March 2004

Sam Cappleman
A brief history of the English Hymn

1500’s

Events
Reformation starts 1517

Hymn
‘The whole booke of Psalmes, collected into Englysh metre’

Writers
Starnhold & Hopkins et al (1562)

Focus
Scripture, predominantly the Psalms

Example
Ps 100, early versions of verses from All people that on earth do dwell

Metre
86.86 (Common Metre CM) e.g. Hark the glad sound the saviour comes
66.86 (Short Metre, SM) e.g. Blest are the pure in heart…
88.88 (Long Metre, LM) e.g. Ps 100, All people that on earth do dwell
A brief history of the English Hymn

Early 1600’s

Events
Reformation and non conformism developing
Metaphysical poets, e.g. George Herbert, John Donne, John Milton

Hymn Writers
‘Hymnes and Songs of the Church’
George Withers (1623)
‘The Temple’, etc George Herbert
‘Holy Sonnets’, etc John Donne

Focus
Scripture, predominantly the Psalms, but now expanded to other lyrical parts of the Bible (OT). Ex 15, Deut 32, Jg 5, SoS
The the inner self, the heart
The relationship between self (soul) and God
Election, calling, justification, sanctification, adoption, glorification

Example
The Lord of Heaven confess…
Teach me my God and King,…
A brief history of the English Hymn

Later 1600’s

Events
- English Civil War (Established Church loyal to the Crown)
- Reformation still not complete

Hymn
- ‘…The Hours of Prayer’

Writers
- John Cosin (1627)

Focus
- Anglican Monastic tradition,
  hymns for different
times/services of the day
- Private devotions, ‘Calendar
  of Saints days’

Example
- Translation of *Veni Creator*

Others include, Crossman, Mason, Ken, Rous, Keech…

Glory of God
- Majesty of God
- Prayer

Awake my soul and with the sun
A brief history of the English Hymn

1700’s

Events
Congregationalists and dissenters begin to use hymns in worship
JS Bach’s Choral works, *Mass in B minor, St Mathew Passion*
‘*Hymns and Spiritual Songs*’

Hymn Writers
Isaac Watts

Focus
Philosophical ideas of the time, creation, suffering, grace
Psalmist experiences
translated into NT belief, e.g.
Jehovah reigns -> The Lord reigns

The life of Christ and His death
Everyone is a mystic
‘An evangelical spin on the Hebrew sense’
Praise and Adoration

Example
When I survey the wondrous cross
**A brief history of the English Hymn**

**1700’s**

| Events | The Wesley’s and Methodism, beginnings of evangelicalism  
Growing belief my many that society was morally corrupt |
|--------|----------------------------------------------------------|
|     | ‘A collection of Hymns and Psalms’  
Researchers: Charles Wesley  
John Wesley 1737 |
| Focus | Individual religious experience and personal piety  
Broad variety of inputs, including BCP |
| Example | Translations of many German hymns, e.g. Herrnhut Gesang-Buch  
And can it be that I should gain |
### A brief history of the English Hymn

**Later 1700’s**

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A brief history of the English Hymn

1800’s

**Events**
- Darwin’s ‘The Origin of Species’, 1859
- Hymns Ancient & Modern, 1861
- Romantic period, Coleridge, Milton, the Oxford Movement

**Hymn Writers**
- Reginald Heber
- Henry Milman
- John Keble, John Newman
- Dwight Moody, Faber, Caswell

**Focus**
- Prayer, the life of Christ
- Communion of Saints
- Dignity in hymns
- Inspired praise to God
- Inner life and the working of the Holy Spirit & Majesty of God
- Prayer
- Importance of tune to ‘carry’ hymn

**Example**
- Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty
- Praise to the holiest in the height
A brief history of the English Hymn

1900’s

Events
WW1, WWII, beginning of mass and consumer everything; later, explosion of communication & information technologies, moon landings

Hymn Writers
Fred Pratt Green
American & Afro American songs
Syndey Carter, Tim Dudley-Smith
Graham Kendrick, Clive Simmonds

Focus
The church as a base for operations in the world as well as an ark of safety for the faithful
Spiritual warfare, gospel hymns
Revivalism
Mission and evangelism
Victorious Christian living
Unity

Example
God is here! As we His people Meet to offer praise and prayer
Lord of the dance
Tell out my soul
A brief history of the English Hymn

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Catholicism | Anglicanism | Oxford Movement |
Methodism | Non conformists | Evangelicalism |
Dissenters |

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1500 1600 1700 1800 1900 2000

Hymn singing becomes legal in C of E in 1819
John Keble and the Oxford Movement

The Oxford Movement - Background

Repeal of Test and Corporation Act (1828) - Non Anglicans had power
- Before that Anglican’s only to sit and vote in parliament

Emancipation of Roman Catholics (1829) – Catholics had power
- Before that Catholics could not hold office

Reform Act (1832) – House of Commons had power
- Before that greater influence exerted by the Crown, the Lords (and therefore the Church)

Non-Anglicans now had some legislative control over the Church of England
‘no longer the lay synod of the Church’

Churches needed in industrial towns, but difficult to fund. Needed forum for debate regarding reform. This was often channelled through the (Anglican) University of Oxford, but with the admission of Dissenters the Anglican identity would be ‘destroyed’ and it became increasingly difficult for the Anglican voice to be heard. This was brought to a head when the government proposed to suppress and amalgamate some bishoprics in (mainly Catholic!) Ireland. The ‘Anglican’ fears had been realised.
John Keble and the Oxford Movement

The Oxford Movement Established

On 14 July 1833, John Keble preached the Assize Sermon at Oxford. (This sermon marked the opening of a term of the civil and criminal courts, and was officially addressed to the judges and officers of the court, exhorting them to deal justly.)

In 1833 his sermon was called "National Apostasy," and denounced the Nation for turning away from God, and for regarding the Church as a mere institution of society, rather than as the prophetic voice of God, commissioned by Him to warn and instruct the people.

The sermon rocked the nation, and can be considered to be the beginning of the religious revival known as the Oxford Movement or Tractarian Movement.
The Oxford Movement – What did it Stand For?

Reacted against the growing liberal and broad church tendency
- Wanted a purer form of church worship
- Wanted to demonstrate that the church was not subject to political manipulation
- Concerned about and fought against the disestablishment of the Church

Had a sacramental attitude towards nature and the world (and the word of God)
- Doctrine of Incarnation and the Doctrine of Divine indwelling
- Restored religious communities, pilgrimages and retreats

Believed that only the best was good enough for God
- Hence attention to detail of church furnishings & reverence in liturgy and worship
- Stress the importance of church, ministry, sacraments and apostolic Christianity

Key figures were John Keble, Reginald Heber, John Henry Newman, Hurrell Froude
Robert Willberforce, and Edward Pusey
John Keble and the Oxford Movement

The Oxford Movement – what it did for Hymns…

Drew hymnody away from Evangelicalism into a more central Christian experience

Made it popular and respectable

Its writings influenced many hymn writers who were to follow
Who was John Keble (1792 – 1866)?

1792 Born at Fairford in Gloucestershire, the son of a Parish Priest
1806 Age of 14 went to Corpus Christi College, Oxford
1811 Fellow of Oriel College at age 19
1816 Ordained Priest at age 24
1823 Went back to Gloucestershire to look after Father
1825 Curate at Hursley (near Winchester)
1827 Went back to Gloucestershire to look after Father again until 1834
1831 Professor of Poetry at Oxford
1835 Married Charlotte Cornish
1836 Priest at Hursley
1866 Died at Hursley

A leading academic thinker of his time and a holy pastor to his people
Keble College Oxford named in his honour 3 years after his death
John Keble and the Oxford Movement

John Keble – What did he Believe?

Believed there are a natural kinship between poetry and theology which ‘worked together for good’. Had a high and sacramental view of the nature of poetry. This was reflected in his work and hymnody, especially ‘The Christian Year’

Saw the Church of England, and the Book of Common Prayer as having ‘to fight against a sickness in society and in thought’. Wanted his poems to ‘exhibit the soothing tendency of the Prayer Book’ and be a calm and quiet voice at ‘the sick bed of nineteenth century religion’

Wanted to keep Anglo-Catholicism alive within the Church of England
Vigorous opponent of liberal and reforming tendencies
Wanted to restore the lost high church ideals of the 17th century
John Keble and the Oxford Movement

John Keble His Poetry

Sixteenth Sunday After Trinity

In life’s long sickness evermore
Our thoughts are tossing to and fro:
We change our posture o’er and o’er
But cannot rest or cheat our woe

Life is a fever from which we need to receive soothing.
We need to have calm and quiet to recover from this illness

Prayer for Emigrants

Thine everlasting creed
Is ours to say in time of need
We waft thy name from coast to coast
Father, Son and Holy Ghost

The creeds and formularies of the church were important to Keble, and the Oxford movement, as a source of support in difficult and trying times
John Keble and the Oxford Movement

John Keble – What did he Believe?

Sought after truth and holiness. Faith was a response of the being, a response of the heart, not just a response of the intellect, the brain.

Two worlds are ours: tis only sin
Forbids us to decay
The mystic heaven and earth within
Plain as the sea and sky

The Christian Year

The way of holiness, enabled by the grace of God, was especially shown in the sacraments, the way by which God made Himself known to each individual.

Sanctification, being set apart by God, was central in this Eucharistic theology

Links to the Romantic poets of the time AND the tradition of classical Anglicanism
Dualistic approach
John Keble – The Christian Year

Thoughts in Verse For The Sundays and Holy Days Throughout the Year
Published 1827 – over 100,000 copies sold within the next 25 years
Day by day, week by week, year by year, each day special and sacred

Led to a increased appreciation of symbolism and imagery and the Prayer
Book patterns of ‘festivals and fasts’

Built on the theme text of the day and drew out the symbolism and scripture
in the natural order of life

In quietness and confidence shall be your
strength.
Isaiah 30 v 15

Also…
Nine ‘Tracts for our Times’ (1833 – 1841)
Edited Richard Hooker’s works (1836) and translated Irenaeus of Lyons
John Keble and the Oxford Movement

John Keble – His Hymns

Blessed are the pure in heart

Blessed are the pure in heart
For they shall see our God
The secret of the Lord is theirs
Their soul is Christ’s abode

New Every Morning is the Love

New mercies each returning day
Hover around us while we pray
New perils past, new sins forgiven
New thoughts of God, new hopes of heaven

The doctrine of the Reserve
Respect and reverence for the majesty and holiness of God
To be spoken of quietly, not ‘blazed abroad’

The pattern of Christian life
The day is for forgiveness, thanksgiving and prayer.
Thoughts of God and hopes of heaven
John Keble and the Oxford Movement

John Keble His Poetry

From Septuagesima Sunday

There is a book, who runs may read, Which heavenly truth imparts, And all the lore its scholars need, Pure eyes and Christian hearts.

The moon above, the Church below A wondrous race they run But all their radiance, all their glow Each borrows of its Sun

The Christian Year

The works of God and the word of God both show God, but only to those who are looking, often with the BCP and bible in hand. These are ‘the pure in heart’. This is linked to the way of God in the perfection of Anglican time. The church then becomes central to the Christian life. (and the Eucharist becomes central to the Church)
John Keble and the Oxford Movement

John Keble His Poetry

Tuesday in Easter Week – The Snowdrop

Is there a heart, that loves the spring,
Their witness can refuse?
Yet mortals doubt, when angels bring
From Heaven their Easter news:

When holy maids and matrons speak
Of Christ’s forsaken bed,
And voices, that forbid to seek
The living mid the dead,

Revive our dying fires, to burn
High as her anthems soar,
And of our scholars let us learn
Our own forgotten lore.

The hours, days, months and seasons are all sacred time.
Nature is Christian and the seasons are Anglican

We are all part of the great Communion of the saints
We have a Christ who creates new life

As Christians, whether academics, theologians, mystics or just everyday people, we should not forget the rich heritage we have in word and tradition.
John Keble and the Oxford Movement

John Keble – His Hymns

New Every Morning – our relationship with God

New every morning is the love
Our wakening and uprising prove;
Through sleep and darkness safely brought
Restored to life, and power and thought

The trivial round the common task
Will furnish all ought to ask:
Room to deny ourselves, a road
To bring us daily nearer God

Each day is a gift from God, sacred and special.
We are restored to life from our death through Christ

And He is with us, in all we do throughout the day, every day.
Our task is to walk the road that will bring us closer to God.
John Keble and the Oxford Movement

John Keble – A Closing Prayer

From Evening Hymn – our security in God

Abide with me from morn till eve,
For without thee I cannot live:
Abide with me when night is nigh,
For without thee I dare not die…

Come near and bless us when we wake,
Ere through the world our way we take;
Till in the ocean of thy love
We loose ourselves in heaven above.

Luke 24 v 29