

# A Hymn for the Great Fifty Days From Easter to Pentecost

Adapted from [Jan-Feb 2007 WorshipArts](#) article by Robin Knowles Wallace

"Rejoice, the Lord Is King", from Charles Wesley's *Hymns for Our Lord's Resurrection*, 1746 (VIII), with the two tunes given in *The United Methodist Hymnal* (#715, DARWALL'S 148TH and #716, GOSPAL), is rich enough for weekly use during the Great Fifty Days from Easter to Pentecost. The text, celebrating Jesus Christ's risen return to rule with God, points to this season as a time of celebrating God's reign over all creation, the establishment of God's kingdom, and the place of Jesus Christ in mediating that reign for us. It was published during a particularly productive time of Charles' life, during a year when he published a series of small, thematic hymnals for various feast days of the church.

Many congregations are familiar with Darwall's energetic setting, originally for Psalm 148 in *The New Universal Psalmodist*, 1770. Handel's setting, originally for solo voice and figured bass, written between 1749 and 1752 specifically for this text, was lost and rediscovered in 1826 by Charles' son Samuel, who had it published that year. "The tune is named after Gopsal Hall, Leicestershire, the residence of Charles Jennings, the librettist for *Messiah*" (Carlton R. Young, *Companion to The Hymnal*, Abingdon, 1993, p. 567). In the British Methodist hymnal, *Hymns and Psalms* (1983), the realized setting by John Wilson at #243 is augmented by a descant for S on the final stanza, SA on the refrain.

Preface the learning and singing by reading 1 Corinthians 15:51-52

1. Rejoice, the Lord is King! Your Lord and King adore; mortals, give thanks and sing, and triumph ever more.

Refrain, 1-3: Lift up your heart, lift up your voice; rejoice; again I say, rejoice.

2. Jesus the Savior reigns, the God of truth and love; when he had purged our stains, he took his seat above. Refrain.

3. His kingdom cannot fail; he rules o'er earth and heaven; the keys of earth and hell are to our Jesus given. Refrain.

4. Rejoice in glorious hope! Jesus the Judge shall come, and take his servants up to their eternal home. We soon shall hear the archangel's voice; the trump of God shall sound, rejoice!

April 20 – Easter – introit: choir sings stanza 2 to GOSPAL

April 27 – Opening hymn: congregation sings all stanzas to DARWALL'S 148TH, with trumpet on stanzas 2 and 3, *The United Methodist Hymnal Music Supplement* #79

May 4 – anthem, children's or youth choir, st. 1-2, unison, to GOSPAL

May 11 – closing hymn: congregation sings all stanzas to DARWALL'S 148TH, with alternate harmonization (and unison singing) on st. 4 for brass quartet and/or organ and soprano descant, *The United Methodist Hymnal Music Supplement* #80

May 18 – anthem before or during communion, using GOSPAL: choir; st. 1 women in unison, st. 2 men in unison, st. 3 in four parts, st. 4 all in unison

May 25 – introit; children's or youth choir on st. 1, adult choir on st. 2, all unison, using GOSPAL

June 1 – Opening or closing hymn; choir on st. 1, congregation join on st. 2 and 3; descant on st. 4 for two trumpets, *The United Methodist Hymnal Music Supplement* #147