

PRAISE TO THE LORD, THE ALMIGHTY  
(Lobe den Herren)

That's not the way that tune goes! It's sung like this. Or is it? Music has a way of changing, just like many other things in our lives. In 1665, the hymn tune Lobe den Herren looked like this:



In 1680, when the tune was first used with Joachim Neander's words, it looked like this:



Find Lobe den Herren in your hymnal by using the index of tune names. Compare it with these older tunes. Which is it more like? The tune underwent other changes in the hymnals of 1692, 1701, and 1708 before it came out looking like the tune we know today. Johann Sebastian Bach used the tune in Cantatas No. 57 and 137, and in a famous organ piece, "Come Thou Now, Jesus" (Kommst du nun, Jesu).

Hymn texts change too, especially as hymns are shared by Christians around the world. Here's where translators come in. They change the hymn texts from one language to another. Catherine Winkworth (1827-1878), an English educator and social worker, found time to translate many German hymns into English, and no one has matched her skills. Most of her translations appeared in her book, LYRA GERMANICA. One was "Praise to the Lord, the Almighty," the hymn Joachim Neander wrote in German when he was 15 years old.

In the midst of all life's changes, there is one thing that does not change: God's faithful love for us and all creation. The psalmist knew that for certain. Look up Psalms 103 and 150, and you will find the words that helped Joachim Neander write this hymn about God's faithfulness.

If you want to learn more about this hymn or others, find out if your library has a "hymnal companion" for your hymnal. It will have information about tunes, texts, composers, authors, and translators. You can also use the index section of your hymnal as a resource.

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