

COMMENT: HYMN - SEND US OUT

Anyone who has had the task of choosing hymns for services will know that there is an *acute shortage* of hymns about **going out!** One cannot sing 'Forth in thy name O Lord I go', at the end of *every* service! The tendency to end with a favourite hymn because of its feel-good factor, means that there are always some services which actually conclude with fine hymns of invitation!

Worship is our 'servicing'. We come to God tainted and bruised from our work and witness. We come to worship, to meet God afresh, and give time to allow him to speak to us, cleanse us, guide us, inspire us, strengthen us and equip us **in order to leave the Church building to serve him**. This dynamic cycle is necessary and is endlessly repeated: in-put, out-put; in-put, out-put, etc.

No U-turn may be good for motorists, but is fatal for worshippers! Worship, rightly understood, is a **Compulsory U-Turn**. If it is not, it is inadequate, misleading and distorted. It then does next-to-nothing for the Kingdom of God because it preoccupies the very people who should be implementing it in God's world. Most congregations do not want to turn at all! Every possible means, therefore, should be employed to ***send them out in the power of the Spirit to live and work to God's praise and glory***. This hymn is inspired by those words. It is trinitarian in structure with a doxology at the end.

This hymn is a small attempt to remind congregations that they are being equipped for their next six days' witness, mission and evangelism.

I usually write words to existing tunes because they already have strong associations with Christian themes, which can then underline my theme. I deliberately wrote this, therefore, for the tune '**Marching**', with which many Christians will associate lines such as '*Not for ever by still waters would we idly rest and play, but would smite the living fountains from the rocks along our way*'. ! Nice U-turn there!

HYMN: SEND US OUT

Suggested tune – 'Marching' (M.Shaw) 8.7.8.7.

1.

**Praise to you Lord God our Father,
as we go upon our way;
keep us child-like and dependent
on your mercies day by day.**

2.

**Praise to you Lord Christ our Saviour,
Jesus – crucified yet here!
Breathe on us your Holy Spirit,
strengthen faith and cast out fear.**

3.

**Praise to you O Holy Spirit,
from the Father and Our Lord;
send us out to work and witness,
in your strength on us, outpoured.**

4.

**Glory be to God the Father,
ever worshipped and adored;
in the Spirit we sing praises,
all through Jesus Christ our Lord.**