

A Prayer for the Year's Turning – music and words for the New Year

Brightest and best of the sons of the morning,
dawn on our darkness, and lend us thine aid;
star of the east, the horizon adorning,
guide where our infant Redeemer is laid.

Cold on his cradle the dew-drops are shining;
low lies his head with the beasts of the stall;
angels adore him in slumber reclining,
Maker and Monarch and Saviour of all.

Say, shall we yield him, in costly devotion,
odours of Edom, and offerings divine,
gems of the mountain and pearls of the ocean,
myrrh from the forest, or gold from the mine?

Vainly we offer each ample oblation,
vainly with gifts would his favour secure:
richer by far is the heart's adoration,
dearer to God are the prayers of the poor.

Brightest and best of the sons of the morning,
dawn on our darkness, and lend us thine aid;
star of the east, the horizon adorning,
guide where our infant Redeemer is laid.

O God, you search me, and you know me
All my thoughts lie open to your gaze
When I walk or lie down, you are before me
Ever the maker and keeper of my days

You know my resting and my rising
You discern my purpose from afar
And with love everlasting, you besiege me
In ev'ry moment of life or death, you are

Before a word is on my tongue, Lord
You have known its meaning through and through
You are with me beyond my understanding
God of my present, my past and future, too

Although your Spirit is upon me
Still I search for shelter from your light
There is nowhere on Earth I can escape you
Even the darkness is radiant in your sight

For you created me and shaped me
Gave me life within my mother's womb
For the wonder of who I am, I praise you
Safe in your hands, all creation is made new

Bernadette Farrell

John Rutter – New Year

Turn your eyes to the light;
Cast away the works of darkness, let them go:
Turn your eyes to the light.
Turn your face to the sun:
Feel the warmth, the hope of new beginnings
With each new year.
The light was always there if we could but see it;
And warmth was in the air if we'd known how to feel.
Turn your eyes to the light,
Turn your face to the sun:
New light, new hope, new year.
Turn your ears to the sound;
Somewhere near, a voice is calling:
Hear the news,
Turn your ears to the sound.
Turn your heart to the love;
Christ is come to bring the world new life.
The voice is always there, if the world will hear it;
And love is always there, if you search in your heart.
Turn your ears to the sound,
Turn your heart to the love:
New life, new love, new year.
New life and love, and light and hope, this good
New Year.

This Year (Happy New Year) by JJ Heller

This year, I'm not looking back to who I was
Because I'm gonna be someone I've never been
This year, I'm not focussed on the cracks in the walls
Not keeping track of all the times I fall
This year. So long to the last year

It's all becoming so clear
There's no use living in regret
Let's fight the good fight
Train our eyes to find the light
And make this year the best one yet
Starting right here. Happy New Year!
This year, I can't wait to see what good will come
To feel alive instead of feeling numb
This year, I plan on thinking less of I and me
I resolve to think of *us* and *we*
This year. So long to the last year
It's all becoming so clear
There's no use living in regret
Let's fight the good fight
Train our eyes to find the light
And make this year the best one yet
Starting right here. Happy New Year!

Lord, for the years your love has kept and guided,
urged and inspired us, cheered us on our way,
sought us and saved us, pardoned and provided,
Lord of the years, we bring our thanks today.

Lord, for that word, the word of life which fires us,
speaks to our hearts and sets our souls ablaze,
teaches and trains, rebukes us and inspires us,
Lord of the word, receive your people's praise.

Lord, for our land, in this our generation,
spirits oppressed by pleasure, wealth and care;
for young and old, for commonwealth and nation,
Lord of our land, be pleased to hear our prayer.

Lord, for our world; when we disown and doubt him,
loveless in strength, and comfortless in pain;
hungry and helpless, lost indeed without him,
Lord of the world, we pray that Christ may reign.

Lord, for ourselves; in living power remake us,
self on the cross and Christ upon the throne;
past put behind us, for the future take us,
Lord of our lives, to live for Christ alone.

Timothy Dudley-Smith (born 1926)