

Hymns of Assurance in the Midst of World Tragedy (Especially Thought of: The Bloodshed in Iraq, the
Tsunami Deaths in South Asia, and the Hurricane Carnage in our Southern Coast States)

Note: These two hymns were joined together in an attempt to emphasize the presence and care of the Lord in this midst of our world's tragedies. The first hymn accents the fierceness of such tragedy and cries out for the Lord's help. While the congregation sings the fourth verse of "O Help Us, Lord", a solo voice is heard in the background intoning a different tune, "Away in a Manger". The obvious clashing of the harmony suggests the battle between our human fears and anxieties and the Lord's promises of help. As the new tune gains in volume we are reminded that the Lord's promises of aid overcome our fears and anxieties and assure us that He is in charge. The second hymn then voices that assurance of our Lord that His grace will sustain us.

O Help Us, Lord

1. The world is in great pain;
We know not where to turn;
But come to You again.,
Our plea You will not spurn.
 We need You, O we need You,
 For our ills we need You.
 O help us now, O Savior;
 We need You now

2. The bombs are crushing dreams
Of folks who long for peace.
O Lord, what does it mean,
When human hate won't cease?
 We need You, O we need You;
 For our sins we need You.
 Forgive us now, O Savior;
 We need You now.

3. All nature strikes with power
Its fury wounds and kills
While nations face death's hour
And medics treat our ills.
 We need You, O we need You;
 In our woes we need you.
 Give strength, O Lord, our Savior;
 We need You now.

4. Where are you, Lord, our God,
When death and trouble reign?
Where is Your Shepherd's rod?
Our path is fraught with pain.
 We need You, O we need You.
 Where's Your hand? We need You.
 O give us, Lord, Your answer.
 We need You now.

Text: Norman C. Meyer
Tune: Robert Lowry; "I Need Thee Every Hour"

I'm Here

(Solo) 1. "I'm here right beside you; O be not afraid.
For I am your refuge and I am your aid;
My promise goes with you, my care is assured;
Just trust in my mercy; my grace will endure.

(Cong.) 2. Though hurricanes lash you and seas surge and roar,
Though bombs scorch the earth and man's hate turns to war,
I will not forsake you, I will not forget
The vow I made with you, 'twas when we first met:

(Cong.) 3. The water of Baptism splashed on your head;
My Spirit was with you, and to you I said,
'You're mine to deliver, you're mine to embrace,
You're mine, my beloved; you stand in my grace.'

(Cong.) 4. Be still now, my children, and know I am God;
I'll lead you, I'll guide you to verdant green sod;
The tempests I'll quiet, I'll make all war cease.
Lo, I am e'er with you, to you I say, 'Peace!'"

Text: Norman C. Meyer
Tune: James R. Murray; "Away in a Manger"

By all means use my hymn/poem in whatever way you can. It would please me immensely if some churches might be able to use it in their worship as we together struggle to find meaning in all the torments happening around us and wondering, Where is the Lord in all this? The answer is of course clear and comforting; but

difficult to assimilate into our being.