**My Song Is Love Unknown** is a [hymn](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hymn) by [Samuel Crossman](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Samuel_Crossman), written in 1664.

This hymn, set for use in Holy Week, reveals the love of God for his people by sending his Son into our world and giving him up to death at the hands of evil people. The climax of the hymn comes in the final verse

Here might I stay and sing,   
No story so divine;  
Never was love, dear King!  
Never was grief like Thine.  
This is my Friend,  
in Whose sweet praise  
I all my days  
could gladly spend.

The [hymn tune](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hymn_tune) to which it is usually sung is called *Love Unknown* by [John Ireland](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_Ireland_(composer)) (1879-1962). Ireland composed the melody over lunch one day in 1919 at the suggestion of organist and fellow-composer [Geoffrey Shaw](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Geoffrey_Shaw_(composer)).[[1]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/My_Song_Is_Love_Unknown#cite_note-1)

John Ireland was born in [Bowdon](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bowdon,_Greater_Manchester), near [Altrincham](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Altrincham), Cheshire. **John Nicholson Ireland** (13 August 1879 – 12 June 1962) was an English composer and teacher of classical music. The majority of his output consists of piano miniatures and of songs with piano.

British rock band [Coldplay](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Coldplay) has a song entitled "A Message", released on the album [*X&Y*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/X%26Y), the lyrics and melody of which were inspired by this hymn. However, there is no religious connotation with the song – simply the use of some of the lines.

**I vow to thee my country**

is a patriotic poem written by Cecil Spring Rice, a diplomat who served as Ambassador to the British Government in the United States from 1912 to 1918. He is credited with ending American neutrality during the First World War. Curiously, he served as best man at President Theodore Roosevelt’s second marriage! The poem is entitled *Urbs Dei* ("The City of God") or *The Two Fatherlands*. The poem described how a Christian owes his loyalties to both his homeland and the heavenly kingdom.

The original first verse reads:

The original first verse of Spring-Rice's poem *Urbs Dei/The Two Father Lands* (1908–1912), never set to music, was as follows:[[10]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/I_Vow_to_Thee,_My_Country#cite_note-10)

I heard my country calling, away across the sea,  
Across the waste of waters, she calls and calls to me.  
Her sword is girded at her side, her helmet on her head,  
And around her feet are lying the dying and the dead;  
I hear the noise of battle, the thunder of her guns;  
I haste to thee, my mother, a son among thy sons.

It was significantly re-written in 1918, focusing more on the themes of love and sacrifice, reflecting Rice’s view of the dreadful loss of life suffered during the War. Published in 1926, it has become a central part of many Remembrance Day

The words were set to music by Gustav Holst, who wrote the well-known Planets Suite. He took a tune from Jupiter and adapted it to fit the words. The tune is called Thaxted, the village in Suffolk where Holst lived for many years.

**"Blessed Assurance"** is a well-known [Christian](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christianity) [hymn](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hymn). The lyrics were written in 1873 by blind hymn writer [Fanny Crosby](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fanny_Crosby) to the music written in 1873 by [Phoebe Knapp](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Phoebe_Knapp).

Crosby was visiting her friend Phoebe Knapp as the Knapp home was having a large pipe organ installed. The organ was incomplete, so Mrs. Knapp, using the piano, played a new melody she had just composed. When Knapp asked Crosby, "What do you think the tune says?", Crosby replied, "Blessed assurance; Jesus is mine."

Though blind, Fanny Crosby was a prolific hymn writer, producing over 8,000 hymns during her lifetime. Another of her hymns is “To God be the glory” which we also sing from time to time her at St Andrew’s.

**How sweet the name of Jesus sounds**

**John Newton** ([/ˈnjuːtən/](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Help:IPA/English); 4 August [[O.S.](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Old_Style_and_New_Style_dates) 24 July] 1725[[1]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_Newton#cite_note-FOOTNOTEHatfield1884-1) – 21 December 1807) was an Anglican clergyman in England and the founder of the evangelical [Clapham Sect](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Clapham_Sect). He started as an English sailor, in the [Royal Navy](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Royal_Navy) for a period, and later a captain of [slave ships](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Slave_ship). He became ordained as an evangelical [Anglican](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Anglican) cleric, served [Olney, Buckinghamshire](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Olney,_Buckinghamshire) for two decades, and also wrote hymns, known for "[Amazing Grace](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Amazing_Grace)" and "[Glorious Things of Thee Are Spoken](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Glorious_Things_of_Thee_Are_Spoken)".

Newton started his career at sea at a young age, and worked on slave ships in the [slave trade](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Slave_trade) for several years. After experiencing a period of [Christian conversion](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Conversion_to_Christianity) Newton eventually renounced his trade and became a prominent supporter of [abolitionism](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Abolitionism_in_the_United_Kingdom), living to see Britain's abolition of the African slave trade in 1807. It was his conversion to Christianity that caused him to write Amazing Grace. It was some time later that he wrote Amazing Grace.