

## **Moments in Our History**

### **(Excerpts from the Dissenting Church of Christ at St. John's 1775 – 1975)**

#### **Worship (Part 5)**

What did they sing? Presbyterians and old Dissenters would not sing hymns. Calvin believed that only the Psalms of David were suitable for Christian worship. The moderates were already singing the new “paraphrases of Scripture.” The first mention of hymn books is again 1821 when it was resolved that “Dr. Rippon Hymns be used in Public Worship in addition to Dr. Wallis.” (The same hymnbook is mentioned in 1815 in connection with W.J. Hyde’s Royal Military Missionary Society). Jones, while a strict Calvinist in doctrine, was brought up during the revivalist period in Wales and greatly influenced by the evangelical movement, which was born in song.

Only one hymn is mentioned in the records. Greatheed tells us that on his death bed, John Jones requested his friends to sing “*Now begin the heavenly theme*”. .... The authorship is unknown but it was a very popular evangelical hymn of the period....:

Now begin the heavenly theme,  
Sing aloud in Jesus’ name;  
Ye who Jesus’ kindness prove  
Triumph in Redeeming Love.

Ye who see the Father’s Grace  
Beaming in the Saviour’s Face  
As to Canaan on ye move  
Praise and bless Redeeming Love.

Mourning souls, dry up your tears  
Banish all your guilty fears;  
See your guilt and curse remove,  
Cancelled by Redeeming Love.

Welcome all by sin opprest  
Welcome to His sacred rest;  
Nothing brought Him from above  
Nothing but Redeeming Love.

When His Spirit leads us home  
When we to His glory come,  
We shall all the fullness prove  
Of our Lord’s Redeeming Love

Hither then, your music bring  
Strike aloud each joyful string,  
Mortals, join the hosts above,  
Join to praise Redeeming Love