

## Lead Kindly Light

The Hymn "Lead Kindly Light" was one of those sung at the hymn service lead by Revd. Ernest Courtenay Carter.

Verses 1-3 were written in 1833 by John Henry Newman (1801-1890).

While traveling in Italy as a young priest, John Newman fell ill and stayed at Castle Giovanni almost three weeks. Finally, he was well enough continue his journey to Palermo:

'Before starting from my inn, I sat down on my bed and began to sob bitterly. My servant, who had acted as my nurse, asked what ailed me. I could only answer, "I have a work to do in England." I was aching to get home, yet for want of a vessel I was kept at Palermo for three weeks. I began to visit the churches, and they calmed my impatience, though I did not attend any services. At last I got off in an orange boat, bound for Marseilles. We were becalmed for whole week in the Straits of Bonifacio, and it was there that I wrote the lines, "Lead, Kindly Light," which have since become so well known.'

Verse 4 was added by Edward Henry Bickersteth, Jr. (1825-1906) who also wrote an extra verse to the hymn "Nearer, My God, to Thee", which may also have been played on the *Titanic*.

The usual tune to "Lead Kindly Light" is "Lux Benigna" (Kindly Light), written in 1865, by John Bacchus Dykes (1823-1876) but there is an alternative tune: "Sandon," by Charles Henry Purday (1799-1885 ) written in 1857. It is not known which setting was used on the *Titanic*.

Lead, kindly Light, amid th'encircling gloom, lead Thou me on!  
The night is dark, and I am far from home; lead Thou me on!  
Keep Thou my feet; I do not ask to see  
The distant scene; one step enough for me.

I was not ever thus, nor prayed that Thou shouldst lead me on;  
I loved to choose and see my path; but now lead Thou me on!  
I loved the garish day, and, spite of fears,  
Pride ruled my will. Remember not past years!

So long Thy power hath blessed me, sure it will, will lead me on.  
O'er moor and fen, o'er crag and torrent, till the night is gone,  
And with the morn those angel faces smile, which I  
Have loved long since, and lost awhile!

Meantime, along the narrow rugged path, Thyself hast trod,  
Lead, Savior, lead me home in childlike faith, home to my God.  
To rest forever after earthly strife  
In the calm light of everlasting life.

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### Samples

*Lux Benigna* (Dykes) (midi)

*Sandos (Purday) (midi)*

### Links

*The Cyber Hymnal* (<http://www.cyberhymnal.org/>)

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**www.encyclopedia-titanica.org** 1996-2011 and third parties (ref: #4833)

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