



## MAY NEWSLETTER 2026 NEW SCANDINAVIA LUTHERAN CHURCH

*Lo their very hairs He numbers, And no daily  
care encumbers*

*Them that share His ev'ry blessing, And His  
help in woes distressing*

We all have that one song that we knew deep in our hearts since birth. Maybe it is because our mother sang it to us when we were still in her womb. It is a song that brings our inner beings to a place of comfort and safety. I'm not sure of that song for you, but for me the song *Children of the Heavenly Father* has always been part of my soul. I make a comment about our mothers singing it because I can imagine my mother humming this tune as it was probably her favorite hymn; at least it is the only hymn I ever remember her saying that she loved. This song was sung at my mother's funeral, and I chose it for my ordination so as to have a piece of my mother in that moment. But songs have a way of doing that, don't they? Hymns that are embedded deep within?

Over this next year, I'm choosing to focus on hymns that we know, and maybe some songs that are new to us. I will give you a little background on the song and maybe even get input from all of you as to the songs you connect with and why.

*Children of the Heavenly Father* is believed to be the earliest of the roughly 650 hymns written by Lina Sandell and written around 1850, when Sandell was about seventeen or eighteen years old. It appears to have been written with six stanzas but over the years the last two seem to have been dropped. I began this article with one of the original stanzas that has since disappeared. With or without these extra stanzas, the song is able to stand alone as a favorite for the last century.

*Children of the Heavenly Father, Safely in His bosom gather  
Nestling bird nor star in heaven, Such a refuge e'er was given*

Though the words to this hymn feel like they come from the Psalms, with the language of being gathered in God's bosom and being under the refuge of God, one can't deny the use of Romans 8, when St Paul writes "For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, ... will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord."

*Neither life nor death shall ever, From the Lord His children sever*

One final thing to ponder, *Children of the Heavenly Father* is considered the baptismal hymn in Sweden, however, it says nothing about baptism. And now that I think about it, this WAS the song sung in my congregation many years ago as a baptismal hymn. Was that the tradition here too?

God's peace and blessings to you

Pastor Sara