

Liturgy We Live *by Dr. Gil Haas*

Before Christmas, the airways are filled with Christmas carols and hymns. Hymns are usually paraphrased from the Psalms and are often sung by congregations in public worship while carols may or may not be sung during religious ceremonies. Hymns have a musical pattern called chordal, while carols may have either traditional or popular music. The first hymns specifically written for Christmas were written in Latin in fourth century Rome. Most Christmas hymns are created for religious singing and include: "O Holy Night", "Away in a Manger", and "Silent Night". Although the difference is not clear-cut, carols are characterized by simpler rhythms than hymns. The "Holly and the Ivy" was the first Christmas carol sung in Rome in the fourth century, however, new carols are written every year. English Christmas carols first appeared in 1426 and were sung by wassailers going from house to house. The popularity of carols was fueled by Lutheran churches following the Reformation, but most well-known carols were not sung in English churches until the second half of the 19th century when *Hymns Ancient and Modern* was published. It contained "Joy to the World" and "Hark! the Herald Angels Sing".

If you have a liturgical question or an inquiry about anything that transpires during or around our worship service, please forward the question you would like researched to: gghaas@aol.com, or drop the question in the offering basin. Please note whether we can credit you as the source of the question.