

Look at the birds of the air: they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they? (Matthew 6:26 ESV)

The hymn “Children of the Heavenly Father” has been with me all my life. It was sung in my baptismal service, as a lullaby by my mother, as a quartet by my and my husband’s godparents at our wedding, in the baptismal service for all four of our children, and now as a lullaby for our family.

It was in my preparations for this devotion that I learned that Carolina Sandell Berg wrote these verses while living with the grief of losing her beloved father when she was 26 years old. The tragedy of her father’s death did not turn Carolina away from God but instead drew her to study His Word and strengthen her faith. The words she penned speak to the hope that is ours in Christ Jesus.

Her words proclaim our faith in the Gospel message as given to us in the Scriptures. *For God so loved the world, that He gave His only Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life* (John 3:16 ESV).



## Children of the Heavenly Father

by Gaylene Haugen,  
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*Children of the heav'nly Father  
Safely in His bosom gather;  
Nestling bird nor star in heaven  
Such a refuge e'er was given.*

*God His own doth tend and nourish;  
In His holy courts they flourish.  
From all evil things He spares them;  
In His mighty arms He bears them.*

*Neither life nor death shall ever  
From the Lord His children sever;  
Unto them His grace He showeth,  
And their sorrows all He knoweth.*

*Though He giveth or He taketh,  
God His children ne'er forsaketh;  
His the loving purpose solely  
To preserve them pure and holy.*

Carolina Sandell Berg (LSB 725)

- We read in Romans, “Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. Through Him we have also obtained access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and we rejoice in hope of the glory of God” (Romans 5: 1-2 ESV).
- We begin the Apostle's Creed, “I believe in God, the Father almighty.”
- We begin the prayer Jesus taught us, “Our Father who art in heaven.”
- We hear this prayer when a child is baptized (Lutheran Service Book baptismal service), “In Holy Baptism God the Father has made you a member of His Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, and an heir with us of all the treasures of heaven in the holy Christian and apostolic Church. We receive you in Jesus' name as our brother/sister in Christ, that together we might hear His Word, receive His gifts, and proclaim the praises of Him who called us out of darkness into His marvelous light.” Amen.

May each of us experience the joy that is ours because we can sing: “Children of the heav’nly Father ... In His mighty arms He bears them .... unto them His grace He showeth ... God His children ne'er forsaketh ... to preserve them pure and holy.” Go in peace and serve the Lord. Thanks be to God. Amen.



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