

13. Heleluyvn Yvhikvres

Heleluyan We Are Singing

♩ = 66-68

All

He - le - lu - yvn yv - hi - kv - res
He - le - lu - yan we are sing - ing.

he - le, he - le - lu - yvn He - le - lu - yvn
He - le, He - le - lu - yan He - le - lu - yan,

Fine

yv - hi - kv - res he - le, he - le - lu - yvn
now and al - ways. He - le, He - le - lu - yan

Leader

1. Me - ko - sa - pvl - ket m - in - vn vpo - kes,
2. Pu - me - tvl - wvl - ke m - in - vn vpo - kes,
3. Je - sus - A - pvl - ket m - in - vn vpo - kes,
1. Chris - tians eve - ry - where shall sing now and al - ways
2. Town and coun - try peo - ple sing to — Je - sus
3. Peo - ple far and near will join the — cho - rus:

All


He - le, he - le - lu - yvn
He - le, He - le - lu - yan.

WORDS: Muskogee (Creek) hymn from *Muskoke Hymns of Faith*;
English versification, Brian Wren

MUSIC: Traditional Muskogee (Creek); transcribed by Carlton R. Young from *Yvhiketv
Vhecicvlke, The Songkeepers, Part One*

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Leader



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All D.C. al Fine



He - le, he - le - lu - yvn
 He - le, He - le - lu - yan.

“Heleluyan” is the one song that defines the people that are commonly called “Creek Indians.” They call themselves “Muskokulke,” or Muscogee. The Muscogee people were originally from Alabama and Georgia. In the 1700s they formed alliances with the British and the Spaniards, and were a formidable foe to all who challenged them. Their villages were permanent sites along four rivers in Alabama and Georgia, which is why they were called “Creek” Indians. It is believed that when John Wesley landed on the shores of Georgia in 1736, that his intention was to be a missionary to the Muscogee. By the time of the Muscogee removal from the southeastern United States in the mid-1830s, Christianity had been among the Muscogee for almost 100 years.

This is one of the Trail of Tears songs. A literal translation of the Muscogee text speaks of our people being “there.” “There” could be interpreted as the end of the Trail of Tears, and thus an encouragement song for the people to keep going. “There” could also be referring to heaven, and thus the encouragement is that even if you don’t make it, our people are also living “there.” To sing “Heleluyan (Hallelujah)” on the Trail is a testimony that their Christian faith was more powerful to the Muscogee people than the betrayal of the US government in seizing their ancestral homelands.

Today this song has the status of an anthem to the Muscogee people. It is considered a national hymn, a song of praise that is very sacred to them, and is the most popular Muscogee hymn sung in churches in Oklahoma. Other tribes have learned the song, which has been featured at national events. While it can be sung slowly, it is also acceptable to sing it at a brisk pace. Every time it is sung “Heleluyan” reminds us that God is always at the end of our road, ready to meet us there no matter what we encounter on our trail of life. Three verses are sung

in the recording that accompanies this resource, but the actual song continues to name the children, the elderly, and indeed all the people of the community.

SHARING THE GIFT

The refrain of “Heleluyan” is familiar to many faith communities, and now we are able to add the stanzas to our repertoire. Consider singing this as a response to a baptism or profession of faith, including a stanza with the person’s name. It would be appropriate to sing it at times when you are celebrating the richness of your community of faith, such as homecomings, anniversaries, celebrations of marriage, and graduations.

*A recording of this song is available on the CD *Singing the Sacred: Musical Gifts from Native American Communities*, CD 978-1-933663-24-1*

