

In February of 2013, Jim Hanks delivered the following as our invocation. I ask you to hear his voice, his strength of character, and his pride in Rotary as I read his words today. Jim said:

If there's one poem that best captures the hearts of Hoosiers, I nominate William Herschell's classic "Ain't God Good to Indiana?" Its lines are inscribed on a pillar in the state capital in Indianapolis. Herschell's lines, familiar to every Indiana school child, is more a ringing declaration of affirmation, almost a boast, rather than a question in the title. Remember:

"Ain't God good to Indiana?
Other spots may look as fair,
But they lack th' soothin' somethin'
In th' Hoosier sky an' air.
They don't have that snug-up feelin'
Like a mother gives a child;
They don't soothe your soul an' body,
With their breezes soft an' mild.
They don't know th' joys o' heaven
Have their birthplace here below:
Ain't God good to Indiana?
Ain't He fellers? Ain't He though?"

Jim continued, "Forgive me William Herschell, I just must share the following as part of today's invocation:

Ain't God Good To Rotary?

Ain't God good to Rotary?
Other clubs may lay a claim
But they lack that certain somethin'
Inherent in our honored name.
We who man this club are not alone.
Paul Harris and past leaders set the tone
And thru such endeavors as Polio Plus
The whole world learned to count on us.
Ain't God good to Rotary,
Ain't He, fellers, ain't He though?

Ain't God good to Rotary"
That's my prayer and my plea
For blessings great our gratitude
We bow now in thankful attitude.
For hungry school kids we do our best.
The world is better because of the 4 way test.

Founded here 98 years ago
Our Club has helped our towns to grow.

The first president was Tom Moran's grandpa
Rotary's like a family though that's no law.
Our leader now is President Chris
To guide us well this time is his

Our leader you've been called to be
Chris, you'll build an even better Rotary
To keep us straight throughout each reign
Our happy thanks go to faithful Jane.

Now I should shut up – I've had my say
But today is Abe Lincoln's 205th birthday.
Ain't God good to this country?
Ain't He, Rotarians, ain't He though?
Our forefathers made our nation great
We pray to stay masters of our fate
Thru depressions, attacks, too many wars
We're marked by cruel cuts and psychic scars
But above all 50 states our flag still glows
With red, white and blue our freedom shows.
Oh, I don't know how to say it
But this I surely know
Ain't God good to this country?
Ain't He, Rotarians, ain't He though?

We give thanks for this day, this Rotary Club, this country, and for wonderful men like Jim Hanks.
Amen