

# This Little Light of Mine

Music and lyrics by Harry Dixon Loes and Avis B. Christiansen © 1920 all rights reserved

*E* *E7*  
This little light of mine, I'm going to let it shine,  
*A* *E*  
This little light of mine, I'm going to let it shine,  
*E* *G# A*  
This little light of mine, I'm going to let it shine,  
*E B7 A7 E*  
Let it shine, let shine, let it shine!

} Intro

Hide it under a bushel; No! I'm going to let it shine . . .

Won't let Satan blow it out. I'm going to let it shine . . .

Let it shine till Jesus comes. I'm going to let it shine . . .

God breathed life into everyone; He wants us to let it shine,

We've all got a home in Gloryland that outshines the sun . . .

Look away beyond the blue!

BACK TO THE FIRST VERSE

## Scripture and History

**Luke 11:33** “No one after lighting a lamp puts it in a cellar or under a basket, but on a stand, so that those who enter may see the light.”

**Matthew 5:14-16** “You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden. Nor do people light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a stand, and it gives light to all in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven.”

"**This Little Light of Mine**" is a gospel children's song possibly written by Harry Dixon Loes (1892–1965) and Avis B. Christiansen. The song has since entered the folk tradition, first being collected by John Lomax in 1939.



Harry Dixon Loes  
Photograph from  
[hymnary.org](http://hymnary.org)

Harry Dixon Loes studied at the Moody Bible Institute and the America Conservatory of Music and then taught there until his death in 1965. He was a well-known Christian hymn writer, composer and teacher, who wrote or co-wrote several other gospel songs.

He wrote several notable compositions with Avis Christiansen including “Blessed Redeemer, “This Little Light of Mine” in circa 1920 with, and "Love Found a Way.”

Avis Marguerite Burgeson was born in 1895 and lived in Chicago all her life.

She attended the Moody Church, pastored

for many years by Dr. Harry Ironside. In 1917, Avis Burgeson married Ernest Christiansen who later became a vice president of Moody Bible Institute. She was a modest and retiring woman, and sometimes used pen names: Avis Burgesson, Christian B. Anson and Constance B. Reid. She began writing poems in childhood, and before her death in 1985 had written thousands of them. She died in 1985.

*Hymnary.org and Wikipedia*

Daniel Harper has dug deeply into the provenance of this song and the many open questions surrounding who may have written it. Based on that research, he concludes that the most careful attribution for this song would be “Unknown.”

See [www.danielharper.org/](http://www.danielharper.org/) for his full article on this controversy.

Mr. Harper (self described as yet another Unitarian Universalist and postmodern heretic on a spiritual journey) is assistant Minister of Religious Education at the Unitarian Universalist Church of Palo Alto, California.



Avis B. Christiansen  
Photograph from  
[hymnary.org](http://hymnary.org)