

EPIPHANY OF THE LORD



Sunday, January 7, 2024 10am

The First Church in Albany (Reformed Church in America)

In response to God's unconditional love for all people made known to us in Jesus Christ, we are called to be a welcoming and affirming community. The First Church in Albany includes young and old, families, couples and singles, rich and poor, persons of various races, ethnicities, backgrounds, sexual orientation and gender identities, differing physical and mental abilities, believers and seekers. We welcome into the full life of the church all those whom God sends us. Centered in Christ, we commit ourselves to breaking down dividing walls and building a community where we are loved.

Founded in 1642; Continuing in Ministry Today.

Prelude Reflection Proverbs 4:23

*Above all else, guard your heart,
for everything you do flows from it.*

Prelude "Thy Goodness Is Our Salvation"

Tolling of Bell: *Bell tolled by children of First Church*

Welcome, Announcements, & Blessing Numbers 6:22-27

The LORD spoke to Moses, saying: Speak to Aaron and his sons, saying, Thus you shall bless the Israelites: You shall say to them, The LORD bless you and keep you; the LORD make his face to shine upon you, and be gracious to

Call to Worship *Based on Psalm 8*

Leader: LORD, our Sovereign, how majestic is your name in all the earth!

People: You have set your glory above the heavens. Out of the mouths of babes and infants, you have found a bulwark because of your foes, to silence the enemy and the avenger. When I look at your heavens, the work of your fingers, the moon and the stars that you have established;

Leader: What are human beings that you are mindful of them?

People: Yet you have made them a little lower than God, and crowned them with glory and honor. You have given them dominion over the works of your hands; you have put all things under their feet, all sheep and oxen, and also the beasts of the field, the birds of the air, and the fish of the sea, whatever passes along the paths of the seas.

Leader: O LORD, our Sovereign, how majestic is your name in all the earth!:

***Opening Hymn** *"Mary and Joseph Came to the Temple"* (see insert)

Prayer of Confession

Dear Lord, please forgive us for all the times we have not guarded our hearts. Too often we have held on to ideas and values that do not glorify you. Mary listened to the words spoken in your temple and held them in our hearts. Help us to always enter your temple listening for treasures to hold in our hearts.

Time of silence

Assurance of Pardon & Fulfillment of the Law Galatians 4:4-7

But when the fullness of time had come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, in order to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as children. And because you are children, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, "Abba! Father! "So you are no longer a slave but a child, and if a child then also an heir, through God.

*Passing the Peace

Leader: The peace of Christ be with you.

People: And also with you.

Leader: Let us greet one another with a hand-sign of peace.

Touch your thumb to the tip of your ring finger, and wave to one another. This hand-sign makes Christ's gesture of blessing in a lot of iconography in the Orthodox Tradition.



Children's Message & Blessing *Remember Your Baptism*

Prayer for Illumination *Please sing*

Spirit of the Living God, fall afresh on me. Spirit of the Living God, fall afresh on me. Melt me. Mold me. Fill me. Use me. Spirit of the Living God, fall afresh on me!

Sermon Text Luke 2:15-21

When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us." So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph and the child lying in the manger. When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child, and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them, and Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, just as it had been told them.

When the eighth day came, it was time to circumcise the child, and he was called Jesus, the name given by the angel before he was conceived in the womb.

Leader: The Gospel of the Lord.

People: Praise to you, O Christ!

Sermon: *To Be or Not*

A Prayer of Blessing on the Word

***Hymn of Response:** *O Lord of Life, to Thee We Lift Your Blessing*

New Year Re-Commitment First Church's Mission Statement

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Tithes & Offerings: *If you would like to connect more with the life and mission of First Church, please fill out a Welcome Card found in your pew and place it in the offering as it goes by. Giving is an act of worship. We pray you participate in this meaningful moment.*

Offertory “Ar Hyd y Nos”

***Doxology #592** in pew hymnal

**Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;
Praise God, all creatures here below;
Praise God above, ye heavenly hosts:
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.**

Sacramental Anthem *We Know That Christ Is Raised GTG #485*

Sacrament of the Lord's Supper

Communion Prayer

Leader: The Lord be with you.

People: And also with you.

Leader: Lift up your hearts!

People: We lift them up to the Lord.

Leader: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

People: It is right to give our thanks and praise.

Sanctus

Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of power and might. Heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest!

Mystery of the Faith

Christ has died!

Christ has risen!

Christ will come again!

Celebration of Communion

Intercession

We, indeed, praise and thank you, O Lord, that you have fed us at your Table. Grateful for this gift and mindful of the communion of your saints, here and in all places, we offer to you our prayers for all people:

Prayers offered

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name,
thy kingdom come, thy will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.
And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory,
forever. Amen.

***Sending Hymn** *"Go My Children, With My Blessing"*

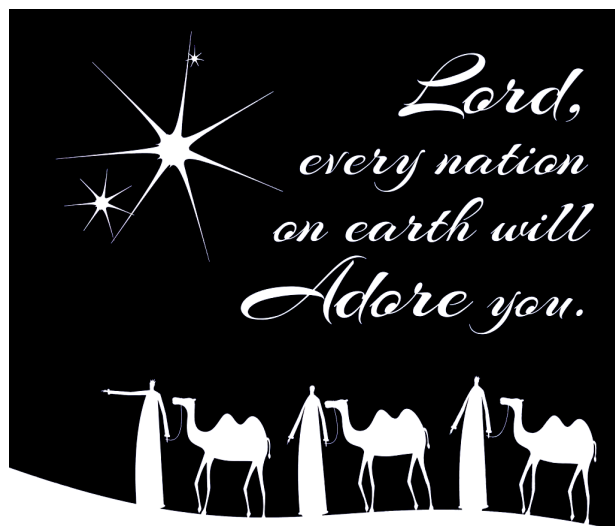
***Charge & Blessing**

Postlude *"Guide Me"*



Minister: Rev. Dr. Mashona Walston
Liturgist: Rev. Trey Tirpak
Consistory Chaplain of the Day: TBD
Organist: Iteke Prins
Audio/Visual: Joshua Bliss, Stephen Reohr

*CCLI License #463379;
One License #A-700689*



Note 1: Join Rev. Trey after coffee time in the chapel to discuss what baptism is (bring your refreshments with you!)

Note 2: Members will begin to take down the Christmas & Advent decorations today – feel free to help!

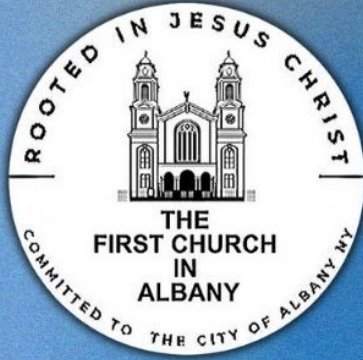
Note 3: The Ecumenical Witness of Baptism Renewal Service will be held today at 1pm at The First United Methodist Church of Delmar (428 Kenwood Ave, Delmar, NY 12054).

They ask that you enter the church parking lot from Kenwood Avenue. (There is a one-way directional sign). Enter the church utilizing the new entrance in the back of the building.

Prayers, Concerns & Joys

- Friends & family of Norma McClement as they reflect on her passing. We give thanks for the joyous celebration of Norma's life, held this week at First Church
- Rose Hunsberger, for her dad in hospice care
- Mia Westman
- Kathleen Claydon, for continued healing from surgery
- Rev. Dr. Mashona Walston, for healthy transition back to work
- Requests for the Tirpak Family
 - Trey's uncle, with cancer, family friend, with cancer, and a family friend who is caring for a terminally ill child
- Marian Lais, our office manager's mother in hospice care
- Ginny Giguere
- Donna Schultz
- Jeff Curry
- Family of Gillian Persons and for her sister Sylvia
- Becky Gardner
- Sam, son of Barb and Dave Andrews, recovering
- Carol LaBatte
- Sam, son of Barb and Dave Andrews, recovering
- Charnelle Jones
- Sam, cousin of Barb Andrews
- For Barb and Dave Andrews as they take on the role of caretakers
- Family of Norma Jean Ballou
- Ken Lucas, friend of Philip Labatte
- Kokese Ballou
- For Jennifer Recene Gallagher
- Alexis Parry, niece of Cheryl Gowie
- Gail Santimaw, friend of Judith Utley-Suess
- John Utley, brother of Judith Utley-Suess
- Judith Utley-Suess, for strength
- Harold Bushnel
- Alex Bliss
- Mary Weijola
- Cheryl Gowie
- Ralph McNeil, brother of Norma Jean Ballou
- Anthony, of the Brown Family
- Olivia Gaydushek
- Clergy, staff and leaders of the First Church in Albany as they begin a new year of planning and programming.
- Prayers for Ukraine, Israel and Palestine and all areas of conflict across the globe. May we all remember to lead with love.
- For an end to gun violence here in Albany, in the U.S., and around the world.

If you have a concern or joy you would like to share with our church family,
email office@firstchurchinalbany.org or call the office at 518-463-4449



Congregational Meeting

Sunday, January 28, after worship

Focus: General Information and the Presentation of the 2024 Budget



The First Church in Albany is committed to the city and people of Albany NY.

This feeding ministry is part of our commitment.

Pantry Hours

Monday and

Wednesday

9am - 11:30am

The pantry entrance is on Orange St.

518-463-4449

www.firstchurchinalbany.org

The First Church in Albany

110 North Pearl St.

Albany NY 12207



January 2024

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
31 January 7, Witness of Baptism Service First United Methodist of Delmar 1pm	1 Pantry & Office Closed	2 	3 AA	4 Viewing & Funeral 9:30am Potluck & First Thursday Night of Worship	5	6
7 <i>M</i> Communion Sunday Deco Teardown	8 Preacher: Prayer Shawl Meeting	9 	10 AA	11 	12	13
14 Trustees Meeting	15 MLK Jr. Day Pantry & Office Closed MLK Jr. Interfaith Celebration 7pm	16 Consistory Meeting	17 AA Weathervanes	18 	19	20
21 Trustees Meeting	22 	23 	24 AA	25 		27
28 Congregational Meeting	29 	30 	31 AA			

Key:

Indoor Worship 10am

Communion Sunday

Coffee Hour

Pantry 9am

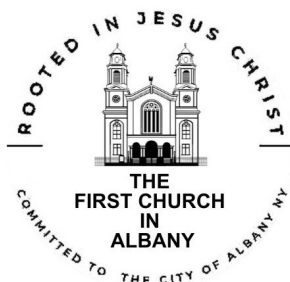
Centering Prayer 12pm

Book Study

Soup & PB&J 11:30am

Choir Rehearsal

Preacher: *M* Rev. Dr. Mashona Walston *T* Rev. Trey Tirpak *G* Guest



First Church in Albany

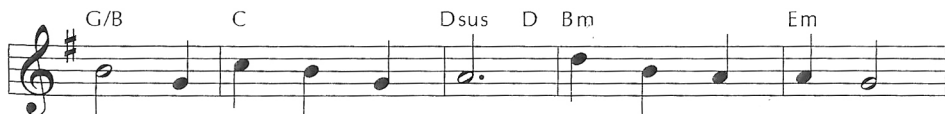
110 North Pearl St.
Albany NY 12207
518-463-4449

www.firstchurchinalbany.org

Mary and Joseph Came to the Temple



1 Mar-y and Jo - seph came to the tem - ple brought the boy
 2 An - na had prayed there, wid - owed, long wait - ing, wor - ship - ing
 3 Sim - e - on sings now: God prof - fers bless - ing, bril - liant - ly



Je - sus, of - fered him there. Peo - ple were wait - ing
 God by day and by night. Now she is prais - ing,
 gild - ing dawn of his day. Light in the dark - ness,



want - ing to greet him; long had they sought him, so - lace for care.
 filled with e - la - tion: here is God's prom - ise, Christ is her light.
 nev - er ex - tin - guished, Light of all na - tions, light up our way.

This text retells the story in Luke 2:22-39, usually called the Presentation of Christ in the Temple, which took place forty days after his birth. Mary, Joseph, and the Christ-child encounter there two devout people, Anna and Simeon, who identify this baby as the promised Messiah.

TEXT: Andrew Pratt, 1994

MUSIC: David Haas, 1985

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Music © 1985 GIA Publications, Inc.

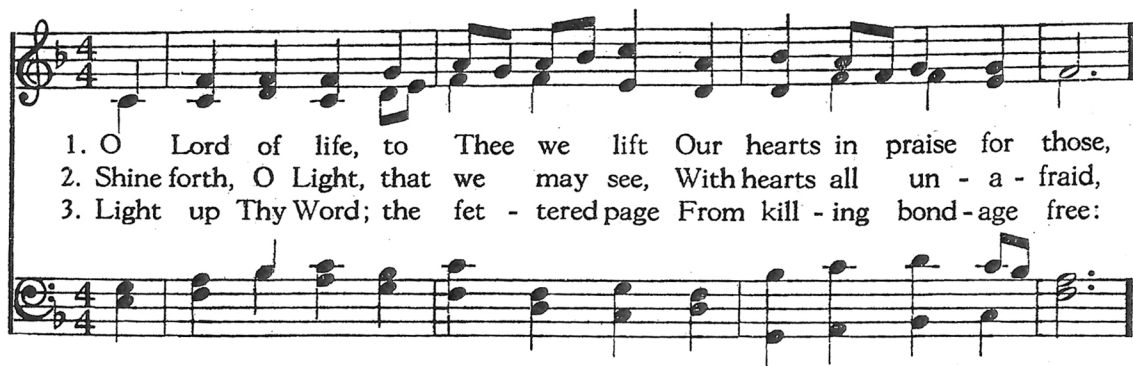
EVENING HYMN

5.5.5.4.D

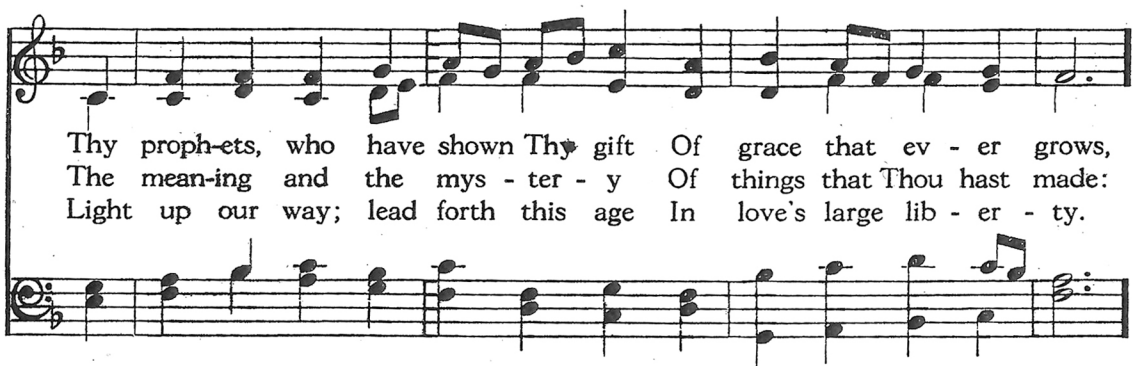
O Lord of Life, to Thee We Lift

Washington Gladden, 1897

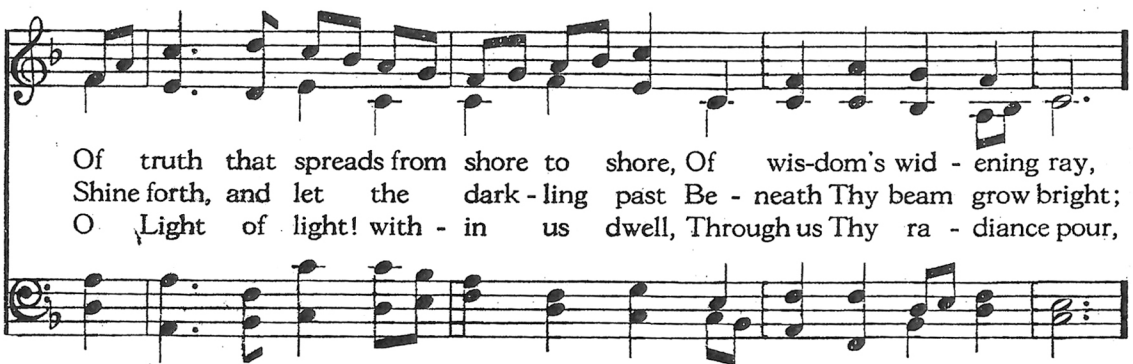
FOREST GREEN: C. M. D.
Traditional English melody
Arr. by R. Vaughan Williams, 1906



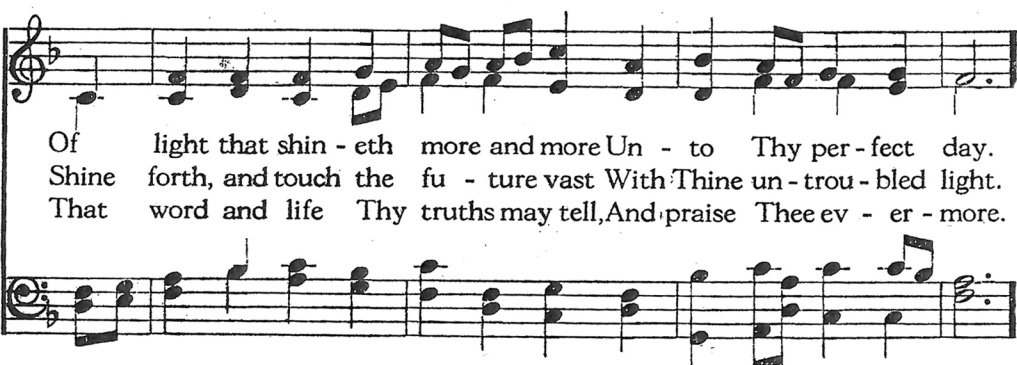
1. O Lord of life, to Thee we lift Our hearts in praise for those,
2. Shine forth, O Light, that we may see, With hearts all un - a - fraid,
3. Light up Thy Word; the fet - tered page From kill - ing bond - age free:



Thy proph-ets, who have shown Thy gift Of grace that ev - er grows,
The mean-ing and the mys - ter - y Of things that Thou hast made:
Light up our way; lead forth this age In love's large lib - er - ty.

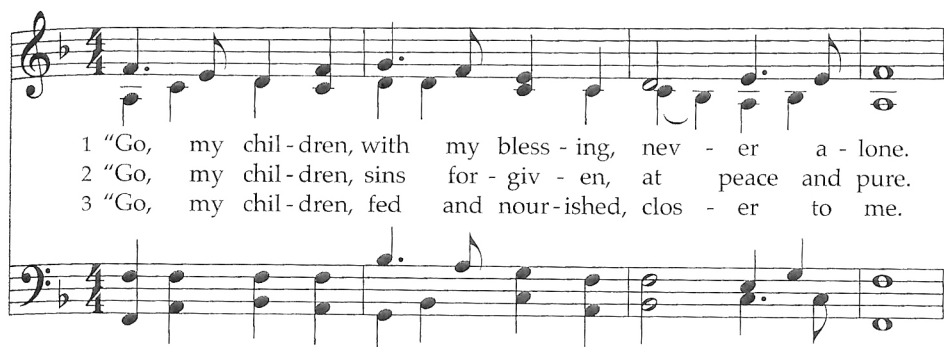


Of truth that spreads from shore to shore, Of wis-dom's wid - ening ray,
Shine forth, and let the dark - ling past Be - neath Thy beam grow bright;
O Light of light! with - in us dwell, Through us Thy ra - diance pour,

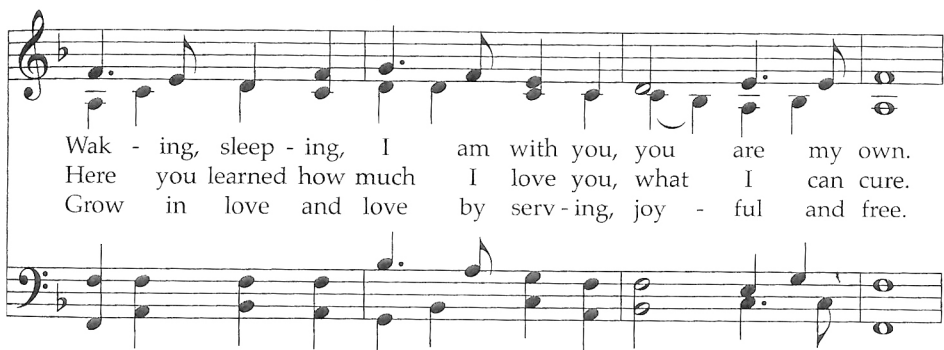


Of light that shin - eth more and more Un - to Thy per - fect day.
Shine forth, and touch the fu - ture vast With Thine un - trou - bled light.
That word and life Thy truths may tell, And praise Thee ev - er - more.

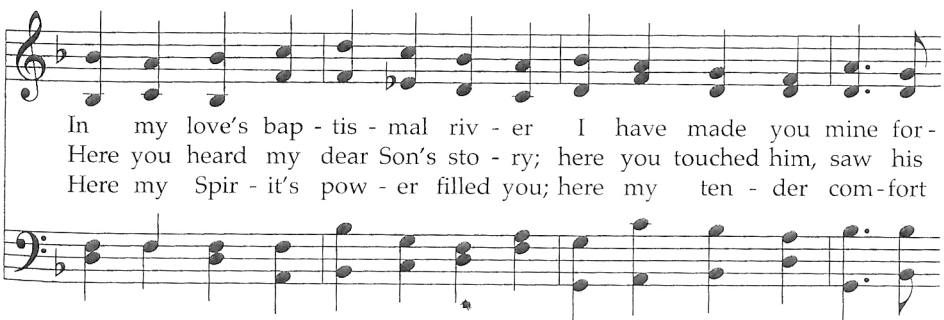
Go, My Children, with My Blessing



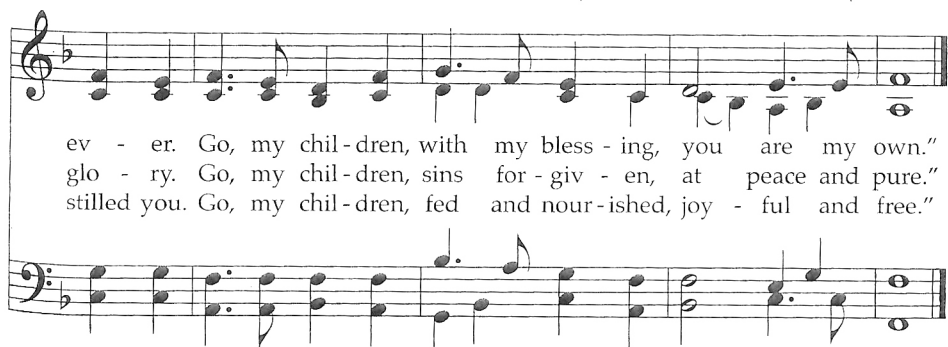
1 "Go, my chil-dren, with my bless-ing, nev-er a-lone.
 2 "Go, my chil-dren, sins for-giv-en, at peace and pure.
 3 "Go, my chil-dren, fed and nour-ished, clos-er to me.



Wak-ing, sleep-ing, I am with you, you are my own.
 Here you learned how much I love you, what I can cure.
 Grow in love and love by serv-ing, joy-ful and free.



In my love's bap-tis-mal riv-er I have made you mine for-
 Here you heard my dear Son's sto-ry; here you touched him, saw his
 Here my Spir-it's pow-er filled you; here my ten-der com-fort



ev-er. Go, my chil-dren, with my bless-ing, you are my own."
 glo-ry. Go, my chil-dren, sins for-giv-en, at peace and pure."
 stilled you. Go, my chil-dren, fed and nour-ished, joy-ful and free."

Because this Welsh melody usually sets evening texts, the author was asked to create one for use in daytime. His recasting of the Aaronic blessing in Numbers 6:22-27 imagines that passage as a benediction that might be spoken by God at the conclusion of a worship service.