



Welcome

to the First Church in Albany

Sunday, October 8, 2023

10am

The First Church in Albany (Reformed Church in America)

Founded in 1642; Continuing in Ministry Today.

**Sunday, October 8, 2023 10am
Nineteenth Sunday After Pentecost**

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.

Prelude Reflection *Matthew 6:21*

"For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also."

Prelude

"What Only God Ordains"

J.C.H. Rinck

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

Welcome, Announcements, & Blessing *based on Psalm 118:24a*

This is the day that the LORD has made; we will rejoice and be glad in it.
Amen

Call to Worship *Based on Psalm 24*

Votum: Our help is in the name of the Lord who made heaven and earth.
Amen.

Leader: Lift up your heads, you gates;
be lifted up, you ancient doors,
that the King of glory may come in.

People: Who is this King of glory?
The LORD strong and mighty,
the LORD mighty in battle.

Leader: *Lift up your heads, you gates;*
lift them up, you ancient doors,
that the King of glory may come in.

People: Who is he, this King of glory?
The LORD Almighty—
he is the King of glory.

***Opening Hymn** *“I Long for Your Commandments”* (see insert)

Prayer of Confession

Lord, we do not find it easy or simple to live according to your values. We exist everyday in a world that has different measure for success. When we give in to the world’s standards we often find our selves depleted and defeated despite what we have begged, borrowed, or stolen. Strengthen us to heed your call to live according to your word daily. May by your Spirit we find ourselves refreshed, restored and renewed. You are Lord of all and will not let us fall. But if, forgetful, we should find your yoke is hard to bear; if world-ly pressures fray the mind and love it-self cannot unwind its tangled cares; may we meet you in the sweet our of prayer that calls us from a world of care.

Time of silence

Assurance of Pardon & Fulfillment of the Law *based on Rev. 3:20*

God initiates relationship with us. God stands at the door of our inner selves, our souls waiting for us to be open to God’s move in our lives.

***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 *Children, please sit at the Communion Table in the aisle.*

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!

Scripture Reading *Exodus 20:1-4, 7-9, 12-20*

Then God spoke all these words:

I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery; you shall have no other gods before me.

You shall not make for yourself an idol, whether in the form of anything that is in heaven above, or that is on the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth.

You shall not make wrongful use of the name of the LORD your God, for the LORD will not acquit anyone who misuses his name.

Remember the sabbath day, and keep it holy. Six days you shall labor and do all your work.

Honor your father and your mother, so that your days may be long in the land that the LORD your God is giving you.

You shall not murder.

You shall not commit adultery.

You shall not steal.

You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.

You shall not covet your neighbor's house; you shall not covet your neighbor's wife, or male or female slave, or ox, or donkey, or anything that belongs to your neighbor.

When all the people witnessed the thunder and lightning, the sound of the trumpet, and the mountain smoking, they were afraid and trembled and stood at a distance, and said to Moses, "You speak to us, and we will listen; but do not let God speak to us, or we will die."

Moses said to the people, "Do not be afraid; for God has come only to test you and to put the fear of him upon you so that you do not sin."

Leader: The Word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

Sermon Text

Philippians 3:4b-14

If anyone else has reason to be confident in the flesh, I have more: circumcised on the eighth day, a member of the people of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew born of Hebrews; as to the law, a Pharisee; as to zeal, a persecutor of the church; as to righteousness under the law, blameless.

Yet whatever gains I had, these I have come to regard as loss because of Christ. More than that, I regard everything as loss because of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have suffered the loss of all things, and I regard them as rubbish, in order that I may gain Christ and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but one that comes through faith in Christ, the righteousness from God based on faith. I want to know Christ and the power of his resurrection and the sharing of his sufferings by becoming like him in his death, if somehow I may attain the resurrection from the dead.

Not that I have already obtained this or have already reached the goal; but I press on to make it my own, because Christ Jesus has made me his own.

Beloved, I do not consider that I have made it my own; but this one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the heavenly call of God in Christ Jesus.

Leader: The Word of the Lord.

People: Praise to you, O Christ!

Sermon

Is God Worth it?

A Prayer of Blessing on the Word

***Hymn of Response** *“How Clear Is Our Vocation, God “* (see insert)

Profession of Faith HEIDELBERG CATECHISM

QUESTION 93.

How are the Ten Commandments divided?

ANSWER

Into two [a] tables; the first of which teaches us how we must behave towards God; the second, what duties we owe to our neighbor.

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.*

Offertory

“O God, Who Gives Us Life”

(see insert)

***Doxology**

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.

Prayers of the People

Leader: O Lord,
People: Hear our prayer.

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.
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***Sending Hymn** *"Fight the Good Fight"* (see insert)

***Charge & Blessing**

Postlude *"Christ Is My Life"* M. Vulpius

Note: Join us after worship downstairs in Zimmerman Hall for Coffee Hour & Fellowship.

There is a Meeting of the Joint Boards after as well.

Staff Note: Office Manager Colleen will be on vacation this week and will return Tuesday, October 17.

Ministers: Rev. Dr. Mashona Walston (preaching), Rev. Trey Tirpak

Liturgist: Imani Brewer

Organist: Iteke Prins

Audio/Visual: Joshua Bliss, Stephen Reohr

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Prayers, Joys & Concerns

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

- For Rev. Trey Tirpak and Cameron Carley, marrying on Sunday
- Avery Bradley, granddaughter of Marilyn and David, an athlete recovering from a leg injury that required surgery
- Norma McClement
- From our pantry family, Maureen Jackson and her brother Maurice, both dealing with health issues
- Family of Gillian Persons
- Jean Lamere
- Baby Dana in the NICU. Dana is the daughter of an acquaintance of the Andrews
- For Shirley Mockel, good friend of Marilyn Bradley, with health concerns.
- Kathleen Claydon
- Doug Plummer, friend of the Bradley family, as he begins treatment for health concerns
- For Barbara, friend of Barb Andrews and Donna Jones
- Becky Gardner
- Virginia Giguere and family as they mourn the passing of her brother Jason Miller in June.
- Sam, son of Barb and Dave Andrews, recovering from surgery
- Carol LaBatte
- Sharnelle Jones
- Joeanna Brown
- Family of Norma Jean Ballou
- Sam, cousin of Barb Andrews
- For Barb and Dave Andrews as they take on the role of caretakers
- Ken Lucas, friend of Philip Labatte
- Kokese Ballou
- For Jennifer Recene Gallagher
- Ruth and Josue Torres
- For Jim, Rose Hunsberger's father
- 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
- Donna Schultz
- Olivia Gaydushek
- Clergy, staff and leaders of the First Church in Albany
- Prayers for 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.

Join Us for This Week's Events

SUN OCT
8

- 10am: Sunday Worship (also on Zoom and YouTube), See our website for links to worship info.

MON 9

The Pantry and Office are closed for the Indigenous Peoples Day Holiday

TUE 10

- Noon: Adult Book Study

WED

11

- 9am: Food Pantry in original location
- Noon: Centering Prayer (Powell), AA Mtg (Parlor)



Scan for
full event
calendar

Worship now streaming live on YouTube.



2023 OCTOBER

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
1  Communion Sunday	2 Prayer Shawl Meeting	3 Book Study Consistory Meeting	4	5 A Night of Worship 	6	7
8 Joint Board Meeting  	9  Columbus Day Office Closed	10 Book Study	11  AA	12	13 Castle Island School Event	14
15  	16 	17 Book Study	18 Weathervanes  AA Dutch Settlers Meeting	19	20	21
22  	23 	24 Book Study	25  AA	26	27	28
29  	30 	31  HALLOWEEN Book Study				

Key:



Indoor
Worship
10am



Coffee
Hour



Pantry
9am



Centering
Prayer 12pm



FCIA DIRECTORY

Please take one per family initially.

We will print more.

Contact the office with any corrections or updates.



Hey NEIGHBOR

I'M TRYING TO FIND A GOOD COFFEE SHOP



OH, YOU HAVE TO TRY MR. MAC-JAVA KING. IT'S THE ABSOLUTE BEST!!! YOU WILL LOVE IT!!!



WE WERE THINKING OF SEEING A MOVIE TONIGHT.



YOU SHOULD SEE WILD CROWS. I SAW IT AND IT'S GREAT!



I'M LOOKING FOR A CHURCH.



I'M NOT SURE.

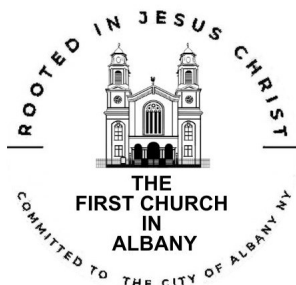
UH, UM...

GEE...



We easily share about our favorite book or a great new pizza place. Why is it sometimes hard for us to offer an invite to church? Imagine if you ask and they say yes...God's Kingdom continues to grow!

WHO WILL YOU INVITE TO FIRST THIS WEEK?



First Church in Albany

110 North Pearl St.

Albany NY 12207

518-463-4449

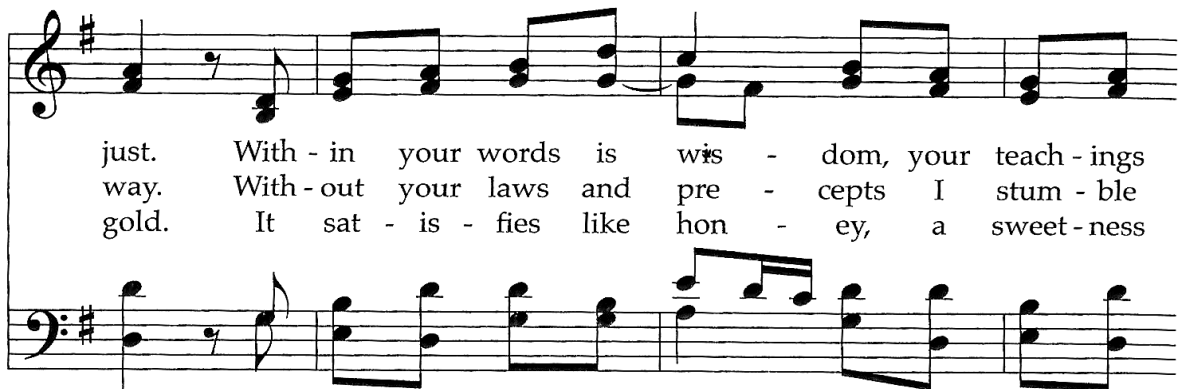
www.firstchurchinalbany.org

I Long for Your Commandments

(Psalm 119)



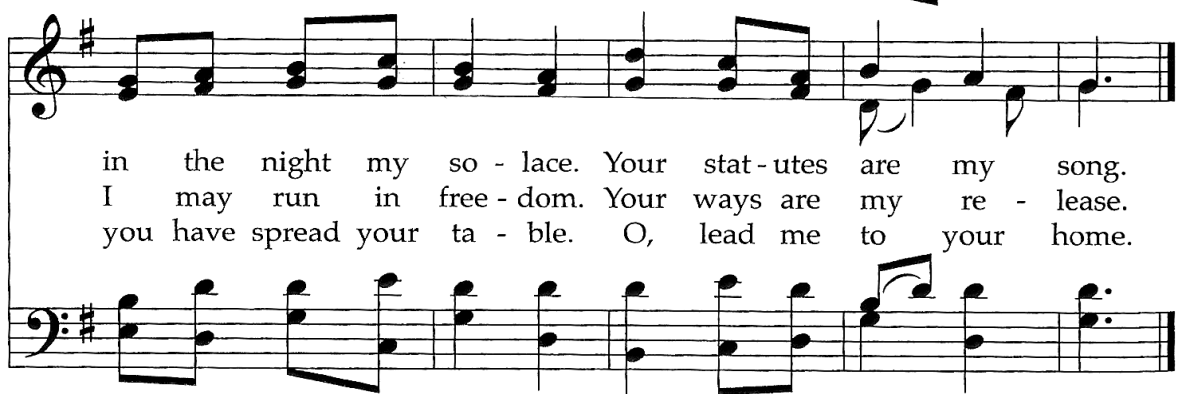
1 I long for your com - mand - ments; your judg - ments all are
2 With - out your lamp to guide me I wan - der from the
3 O God, I love your knowl - edge, more pre - cious than pure



just. With - in your words is wis - dom, your teach - ings
way. With - out your laws and pre - cepts I stum - ble
gold. It sat - is - fies like hon - ey, a sweet - ness



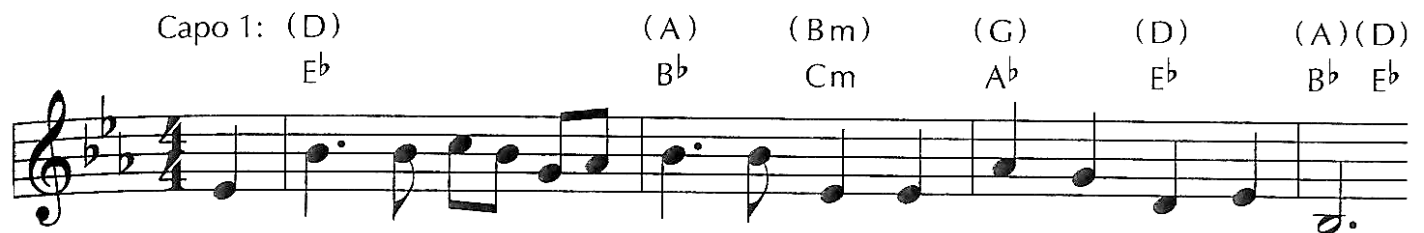
un - der - stood are com - fort to my spir - it's need and
in the dark. Your un - der - stand - ings are my hope that
on my tongue. It leads me to sal - va - tion's door where



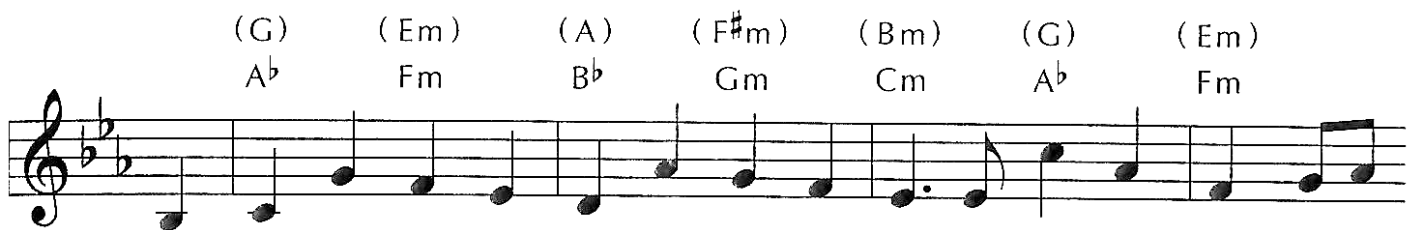
in the night my so - lace. Your stat - utes are my song.
I may run in free - dom. Your ways are my re - lease.
you have spread your ta - ble. O, lead me to your home.

Although this paraphrase is based on only a small part of Psalm 119, it incorporates many of the synonyms that weave through this extended acrostic psalm celebrating God's Law: commandments, judgments, words, teachings, wisdom, statutes, laws, precepts, understandings, ways.

How Clear Is Our Vocation, Lord



1 How clear is our vo - ca - tion, Lord, when once we heed your call
 2 But if, for-get - ful, we should find your yoke is hard to bear;
 3 We mar - vel how your saints be-came in hin-dranc-es more sure:
 4 In what you give us, Lord, to do, to - geth - er or a - lone,



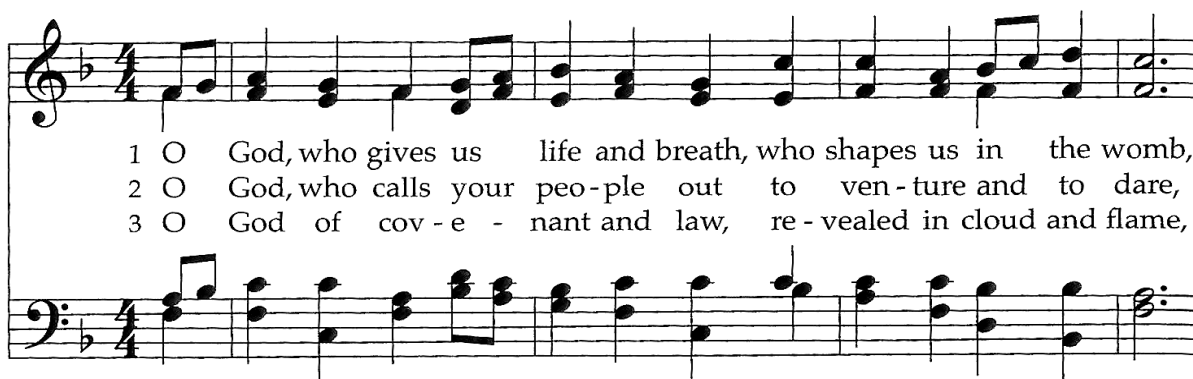
to live ac-cord-ing to your word and dai - ly learn, re-freshed, re -
 if world-ly pres-sures fray the mind and love it - self can - not un -
 whose joy - ful vir-tues put to shame the ca-sual way we wear your
 in old rou-tines or ven-tures new, may we not cease to look to



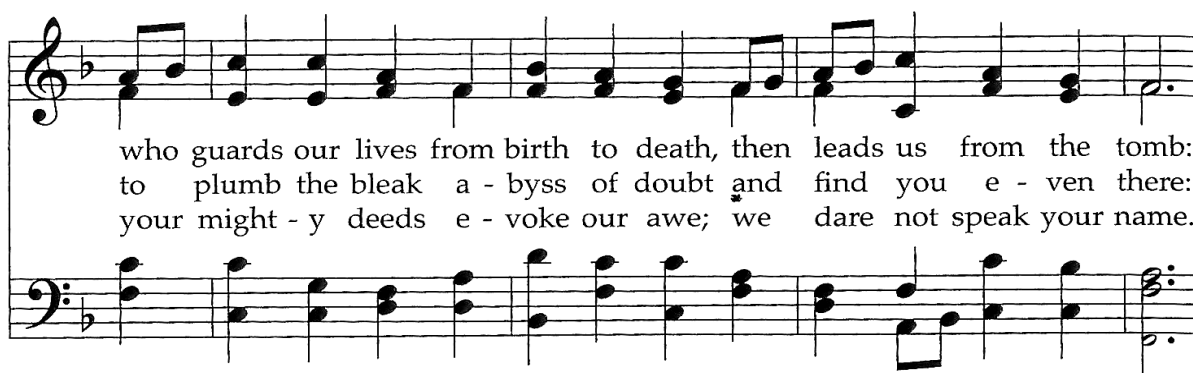
stored, that you are Lord of all and will not let us fall.
 wind its tan-gled skein of care: our in-ward life re - pair.
 name, and by our faults ob - scure your power to cleanse and cure.
 you: the cross you hung up - on, all you en - deav-ored, done.

This reflection on Christian vocation was written to provide a new text for a pre-existing tune, and the poet has crafted his words so well that the two parts mesh smoothly. The tune is named for a noted British boarding school, whose music director was a friend of the composer.

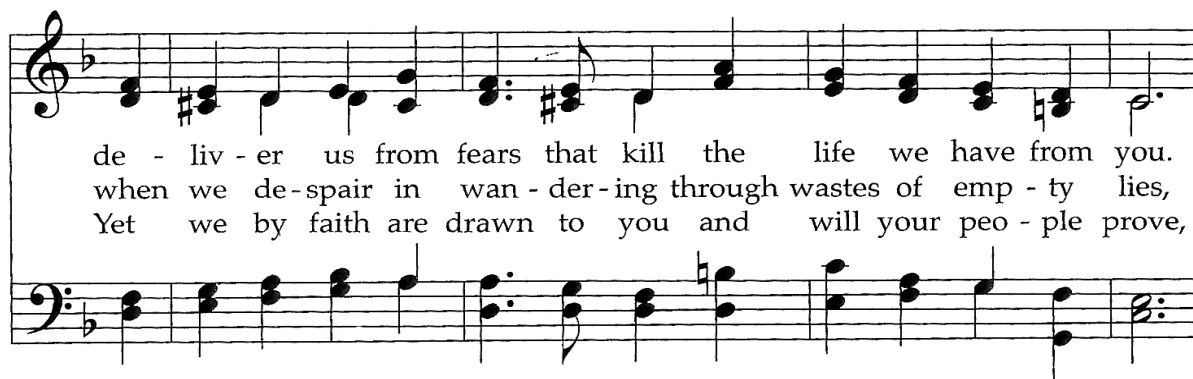
O God, Who Gives Us Life



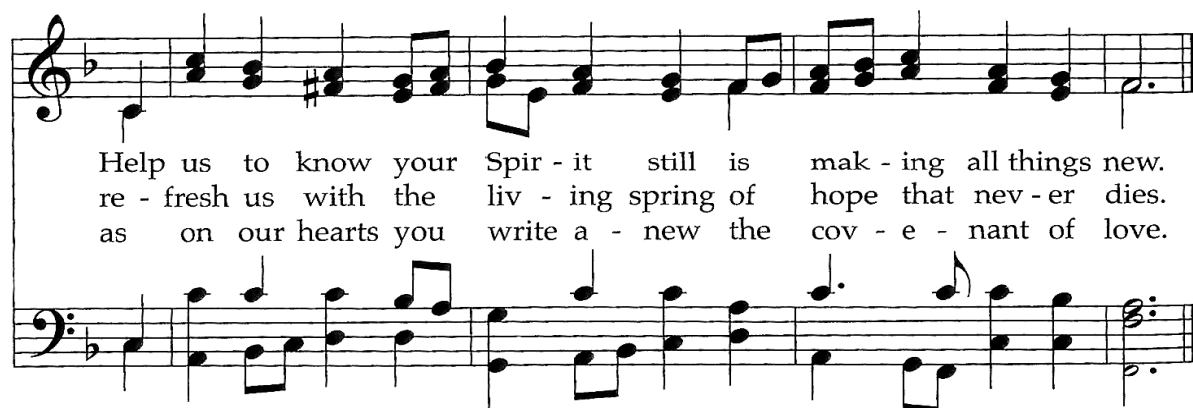
1 O God, who gives us life and breath, who shapes us in the womb,
2 O God, who calls your peo-ple out to ven-ture and to dare,
3 O God of cov-e - nant and law, re - vealed in cloud and flame,



who guards our lives from birth to death, then leads us from the tomb:
to plumb the bleak a - byss of doubt and find you e - ven there:
your might - y deeds e - voke our awe; we dare not speak your name.



de - liv - er us from fears that kill the life we have from you.
when we de-spair in wan - der - ing through wastes of emp - ty lies,
Yet we by faith are drawn to you and will your peo - ple prove,



Help us to know your Spir - it still is mak - ing all things new.
re - fresh us with the liv - ing spring of hope that nev - er dies.
as on our hearts you write a - new the cov - e - nant of love.

Christians often fail to appreciate how much we can learn about God from the Hebrew Scriptures. This text draws on a variety of passages that call attention to God's faithfulness toward the Chosen People and the promise of a new covenant written on the heart (Jeremiah 31:31-34).

Fight the Good Fight

1 Fight the good fight with all thy might.
 2 Run the straight race through God's good grace;
 3 Cast care a - side; lean on thy guide.
 4 Faint not nor fear: God's arms are near.

Christ is thy strength and Christ thy right.
 lift up thine eyes, and seek Christ's face.
 God's bound - less mer - cy will pro - vide.
 God chang - eth not, and thou art dear.

Lay hold on life, and it shall be
 Life with its way be - fore us lies;
 Trust, and thy trust - ing soul shall prove
 On - ly be - lieve, and thou shalt see

thy joy and crown e - ter - nal - ly.
 Christ is the path, and Christ the prize.
 Christ is its life, and Christ its love.
 that Christ is all in all to thee.

The opening phrase here (based on 1 Timothy 6:12) is not a military image but an athletic one, from a Greek verb meaning "struggle" or "grapple" or "wrestle." The sports context continues in later stanzas reflecting the experience of a runner (recalling Hebrews 12:1-2).