



Sunday, March 3, 2024 — The Third Sunday of Lent

**The First Church in Albany
(Reformed Church in America)**

Founded in 1642; Continuing in Ministry Today.

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 *As for inflicting our sorrow on other people, one does not want to go around blathering and crying all the time. But perhaps it is our gift to others to trust them enough to share our feelings with them. It may help them deal with some of their own. — Martha Whitmore Hickman*

Prelude

"Jesus Priceless Treasure"

M.Burkhardt

Tolling of Bell

Processional Hymn

"We Are People on a Journey"

(see insert)

For each Sunday leading up to Palm Sunday during this season of Lent, five congregants will process with common Christian symbols of worship, signifying our Lenten journey to the cross. These common Christian symbols of worship are a cross (or cloth to drape the cross with), a candle lighter, the church's bible, and the sacramental elements of water, wheat, and vines.

Welcome, Announcements, & Blessing

This is the day that the Lord has made. We shall rejoice and be glad in it.

Call to Worship parts of Psalm 19

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

Leader: The heavens are telling the glory of God, and the firmament proclaims his handiwork.

People: Day to day pours forth speech, and night to night declares knowledge.

Leader: There is no speech, nor are there words; their voice is not heard;

People: yet their voice goes out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world. In the heavens he has set a tent for the sun.

ALL: Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable to you, O LORD, my rock and my redeemer.

***Opening Hymn** *"Guide Me, O Thou Great Jehovah "* (see insert)

Prayer of Confession Based on a meditation from *Healing After Loss* by Martha Whitmore Hickman

Lord, forgive us for all the times we are not honest about how we feel. Forgive us for not trusting you to be with us in the good and difficult times. We like Naomi, are allowed and helped when we are honest feelings during times our grief and loss. We acknowledge that the attempt to only 'be brave,' to 'keep a stiff upper lip' and otherwise be controlled and poised in the face of grief is a false god."

Time of silence

Assurance of Pardon & Fulfillment of the Law *based on the 10 commandments*

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 bow down to them or worship them; for I the LORD your God am a jealous God, punishing children for the iniquity of parents, to the third and the fourth generation of those who reject me, but showing steadfast love to the thousandth generation of those who love me and keep my commandments.

***Passing the Peace**

Leader: The peace of Christ be with you.

People: And also with you.

Leader: Let us spend a few moments greeting one another.

Children's Message & Blessing

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 Ruth 1:1-22

In the days when the judges ruled, there was a famine in the land, and a certain man of Bethlehem in Judah went to live in the country of Moab, he and his wife and two sons. The name of the man was Elimelech and the name of his wife Naomi, and the names of his two sons were Mahlon and Chilion; they were Ephrathites from Bethlehem in Judah. They went into the country of Moab and remained there. But Elimelech, the husband of Naomi, died, and she was left with her two sons. These took Moabite wives; the name of the one was Orpah and the name of the other Ruth. When they had lived there about ten years, both Mahlon and Chilion also died, so that the woman was left without her two sons and her husband.

Then she started to return with her daughters-in-law from the country of Moab, for she had heard in the country of Moab that the Lord had considered his people and given them food. So she set out from the place where she had been living, she and her two daughters-in-law, and they went on their way to go back to the land of Judah. But Naomi said to her two daughters-in-law, "Go back each of you to your mother's house. May the Lord deal kindly with you, as you have dealt with the dead and with me. The Lord grant that you may find security, each of you in the house of your husband." Then she kissed them, and they wept aloud. They said to her, "No, we will return with you to your people." But Naomi said, "Turn back, my daughters. Why will you go with me? Do I still have sons in my womb that they may become your husbands? Turn back, my daughters, go your way, for I am too old to have a husband. Even if I thought there was hope for me, even if I should have a husband tonight and bear sons, would you then wait until they were grown? Would you then refrain from marrying? No, my daughters, it has been far more bitter for me than for you, because the hand of the Lord has turned against me." Then they wept aloud again. Orpah kissed her mother-in-law goodbye, but Ruth clung to her.

So she said, "Look, your sister-in-law has gone back to her people and to her gods; return after your sister-in-law." But Ruth said,

"Do not press me to leave you,
to turn back from following you!

Where you go, I will go;
where you lodge, I will lodge;
your people shall be my people
and your God my God.

Where you die, I will die,
and there will I be buried.

May the Lord do thus to me,
and more as well,
if even death parts me from you!"

When Naomi saw that she was determined to go with her, she said no more to her.

So the two of them went on until they came to Bethlehem. When they came to Bethlehem, the whole town was stirred because of them, and the women said, "Is this Naomi?" She said to them,

"Call me no longer Naomi;
call me Mara,
for the Almighty has dealt bitterly with me.

I went away full,
but the Lord has brought me back empty;
why call me Naomi
when the Lord has dealt harshly with me
and the Almighty has brought calamity upon me?"

So Naomi returned together with Ruth the Moabite, her daughter-in-law, who came back with her from the country of Moab. They came to Bethlehem at the beginning of the barley harvest.

Leader: The Word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God!

Sermon

Naomi

A Prayer of Blessing on the Word

***Hymn of Response**

"Reflect Upon Naomi's Plight"

(see insert)

Profession of Faith *THE BELGIC CONFESSION (part of Article 2: How do we know God?)*

We know God by two means:

First, by the creation, preservation, and government of the universe, since that universe is before our eyes like a beautiful book in which all creatures, great and small, are as letters to make us ponder the invisible things of God:

Second, God makes himself known to us more clearly by his holy and divine Word, as much as we need in life, for God's glory and our salvation.

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 *"Jesus Keep Me Near the Cross"* C. Callahan

***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.**

Eucharistic Hymn *"Something Happens Here"* (see insert)

Celebration 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 *"Bless the Lord, My Soul and Being!"* (see insert)

*Charge & Blessing

Postlude *"In the Cross of Christ I Glory"* J. Engel

Note: Please join Rev. Trey in Zimmerman Hall for the start of our Second Hour Lenten series on worship following coffee time.



Preacher: Rev. Dr. Mashona Walston
Liturgist: Rev. Trey Tirpak
Organist: Iteke Prins
Vocalist and/or Specialist: Choir
Audio/Visual: Joshua Bliss and Stephen Reohr

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Prayers, Concerns & Joys

- Jill Persons and Jill's mother in England who is transitioning to nursing care.
- Rose Hunsberger and family as they mourn the death of her father
- Ned Monthie, recovering from surgery
- Michelle Williams, for recovery
- Matt, cousin of Barb Andrews with health issues
- Rev. Dr. Mashona as she continues her health journey
- Mia Westman
- Becky Gardner
- 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
- Ginny Giguere
- Donna Schultz
- Jeff Curry
- Family of Gillian Persons and for her sister Sylvia
- Carol LaBatte
- Sam, son of Barb and Dave Andrews, with continued health concerns
- Charnelle Jones
- 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 plan Lent and Holy Week Events.
- For those dealing with climate disasters like blizzards and wildfires.
- 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

Come Join the



CHOIR

**Dear Church Family,
The Psalmist mandates us to sing a new
song!!!**

**The Choir will meet each Thursday in
Lent, from 6:30pm - 7:30pm. We need
your voices to join us as we “Praise the
Lord”!**

JR. CHOIR

**We are going to try for a Junior Choir to
help us sing on Easter. Any youngster, 9
and up, is welcome.**

**We will meet for a 1/2 hour right after
the worship service in the choir room.**





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

Holy Week Services

**FCIA
2024**

PALM SUNDAY 3.24.24

- 10am, We process with Palms like those in Jerusalem to begin Holy Week.

MAUNDAY THURSDAY, TENEBRAE: A SERVICE OF SHADOWS 3.28.24

- 7pm, A time of meditation and song around Christ's suffering.

GOOD FRIDAY, CAPITAL AREA COUNCIL OF CHURCHES 3.29.24

- 12pm @ St. Stephens Episcopal Church, 16 Elsmere Ave., Delmar NY

HOLY SATURDAY 3.30.24

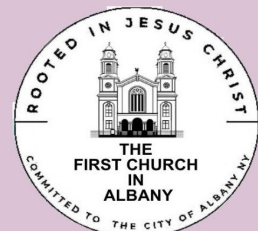
- 12pm, We remember the dead as we remember Christ's death.

FOCUS EASTER SUNRISE SERVICE 3.31.24

- 6:30am, West Capitol Park on the Swan Street Stairs

EASTER SUNDAY 3.31.24

- 10am, We celebrate Christ's resurrection and the new life it gives us.



MARCH 2024

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
 WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH <i>March</i>				 T FOCUS Easter Sunrise Service March 31 6:30am West Capital Park	1	2 2024 Poor People's State of the State Assembly at the NYS Capitol
3   M Communion Sunday Indoor Worship 10am  Coffee Hour	4 	5  Consistory Mtg.	6   AA	7   Soup & PB&J 11:30am  Choir Rehearsal Potluck & First Thursday Night of Worship	8	9
10   M Coffee Hour Indoor Worship 10am  DAYLIGHT SAVING TIME BEGINS	11 	12 	13   AA	14   Soup & PB&J 11:30am  Choir Rehearsal	15	16
17   M Coffee Hour Indoor Worship 10am Happy St. Patrick's Day	18 	19 	20   AA  Weathervanes	21   Soup & PB&J 11:30am  Choir Rehearsal	22	23
24  Palm Sunday Indoor Worship 10am M Happy Easter 31	25 	26  FOCUS Board Mtg.	27   AA	28  M Maundy Thursday 7pm	29  Good Friday	30  Holy Saturday noon

Key:



Indoor
Worship
10am



Communion
Sunday



Coffee
Hour



Pantry
9am



Centering
Prayer 12pm



Book
Study



Soup &
PB&J
11:30am

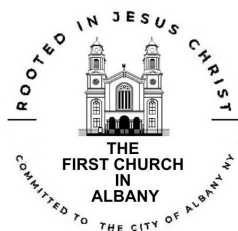


Choir
Rehearsal



Weathervanes

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



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Albany NY 12207
518-463-4449

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We Are People on a Journey

A E A E E/D#

1 We are peo - ple on a jour - ney, fol - lowing
 2 We are peo - ple on a jour - ney, tak - ing
 3 We are peo - ple on a jour - ney to the

C#m7 A2 E A

where the Mas - ter walks. We are peo - ple on a
 up the cross of Christ. We are peo - ple on a
 ta - ble of the Lord. We are peo - ple on a

E F#m7 E A E

jour - ney in the sha - dow of the cross.
 jour - ney, mov - ing on from death to life.
 jour - ney, fed by wa - ter and the Word.

A2 E

What com - pels? The face of Je - sus!
 We re - lease the sin that tan - gles.
 We re - mem - ber, we re - mem - ber
 We are walk - ing toward a home - land,

A2 D A

Who pro - tects? Our faith - ful guide:
 We re - lin - quish all ac - claim.
 how you wash dis - ci - ples' feet;

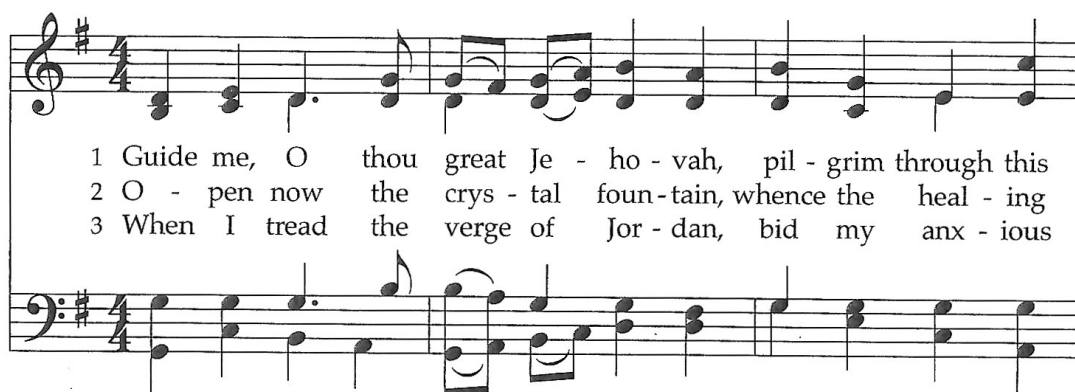
he who treads the road of ser - vice,
We re - ceive the suf - fering Sav - ior,
we re - mem - ber on the last night

Christ the Lord, the cru - ci - fied.
he our glo - ry, wealth, and fame.
gifts of wine and bread to eat.

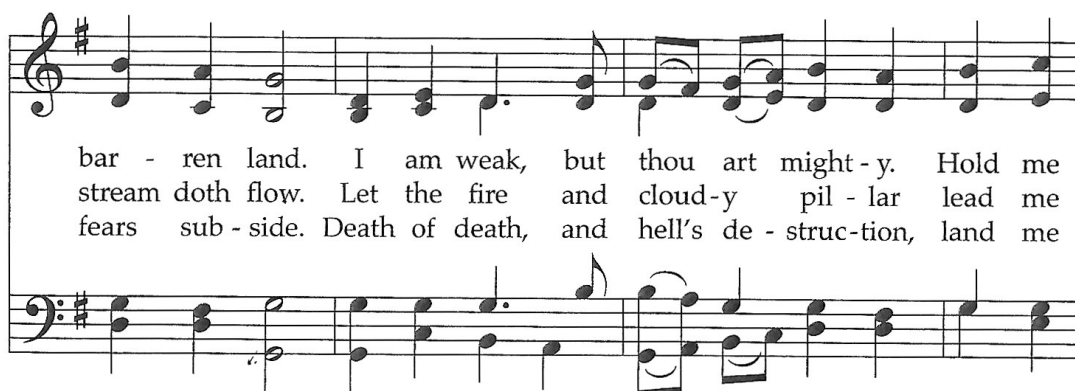
A2 To stanzas / E Final ending

Words and Music (DEEPER JOURNEY 8.7.8.7 D): Gregg DeMey © 2008, 2010 Re:Create Music, admin. Faith Alive Christian Resources

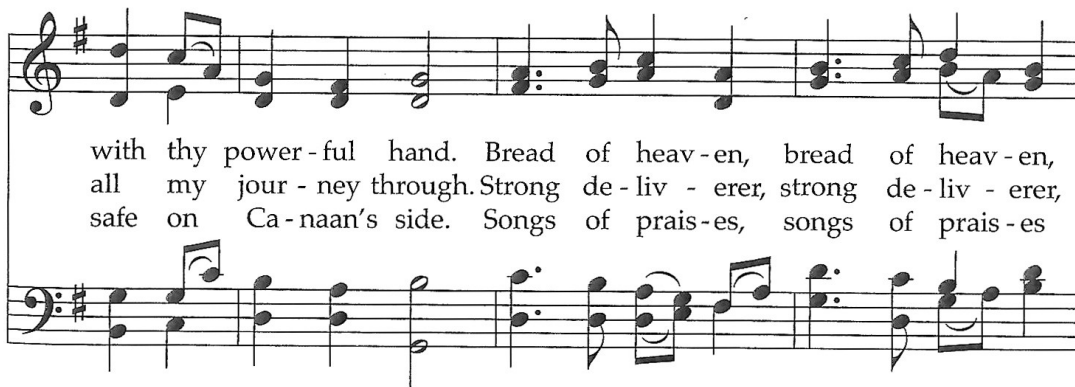
Guide Me, O Thou Great Jehovah



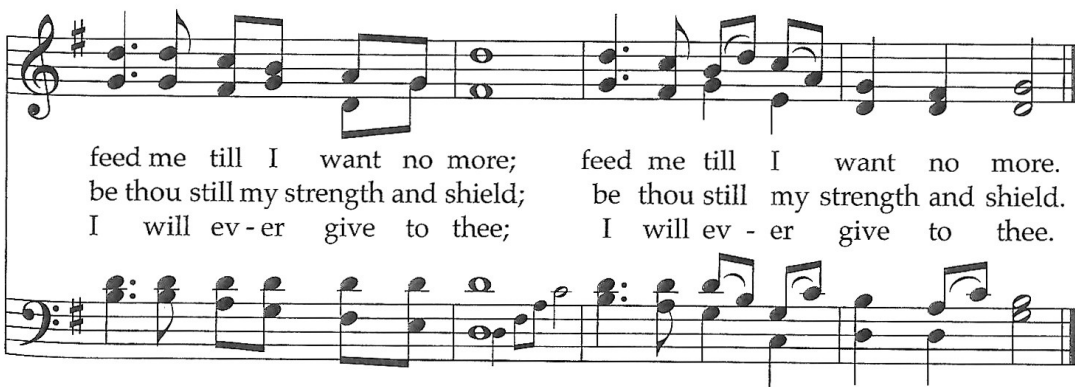
1 Guide me, O thou great Je - ho - vah, pil - grim through this
 2 O - pen now the crys - tal foun - tain, whence the heal - ing
 3 When I tread the verge of Jor - dan, bid my anx - ious



bar - ren land. I am weak, but thou art might - y. Hold me
 stream doth flow. Let the fire and cloud - y pil - lar lead me
 fears sub - side. Death of death, and hell's de - struc - tion, land me



with thy power - ful hand. Bread of heav - en, bread of heav - en,
 all my jour - ney through. Strong de - liv - erer, strong de - liv - erer,
 safe on Ca - naan's side. Songs of prais - es, songs of prais - es



feed me till I want no more; feed me till I want no more.
 be thou still my strength and shield; be thou still my strength and shield.
 I will ev - er give to thee; I will ev - er give to thee.

Few Welsh hymns are as well known or loved as this 18th-century text that did not gain its popular tune until the early 20th century. In both its original text and in English translation, it is a stirring hymn of pilgrimage filled with vivid imagery from Hebrew Scripture.

Reflect Upon Naomi's Plight

Edith Sinclair Downing

CMD

Iteke Prins 2023

NAOMI

The musical score is written for a choir and everyone, with a piano accompaniment. It is in 6/8 time and consists of three systems of music. The first system has two staves, the second has two staves, and the third has two staves. The lyrics are written below the staves, with some lines for 'Choir only' and others for 'Everyone'. The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, and bar lines.

Choir only

1. Re - flect up - on Na - o mi's plight, a
2. "May God help you to be se - cure, find

Everyone

3. When they ar - rived in Beth - le - hem, the
4. At har - vest home Na - o - me planned to
5. Then Bo - az bought Na - o - mi's land, took

Choir only

wi - dow far from home. Be - fore the har - vest time,
hus - bands, start a - new." She kissed them, but they plead

Everyone

fields were ripe to glean. The ow - ner wel - comed Ruth
help Ruth look her best. "Go, ce - le - brate with them
Ruth as wife, and she bore O - bed who would be

Choir only

her sons had died, left her a lone.
with her: "we want to go with you.

Everyone

and said, "I hold you in es - teem."
to - night. Lie close to him and rest.
the link to Da - vid's an - ces try.

Choir only
 She dear - ly loved the wives they left, yet could not still her
 Soon tear - ful Or - pah gave a ring to Ruth and turned a -

Everyone
 Na - o - mi heard this news with joy for Bo - az was her
 Ruth stayed with Bo - az till the dawn, then left the thresh - ing
 Through Ruth, Na - o - mi was ful - filled. To her God's love was

Choir only
 heart. She said to Or - pah and to Ruth: "the
 way. But Ruth vowed she would ne - ver leave; for -

Everyone
 kin. "He shows great kind - ness un - to us. Blessed
 floor. Na - o - mi saw her, heard the news that
 shown this child de - ligh - ted her old age. She

Choir only
 time has come to part.
 e - ver she would stay.

Everyone
 be our God for him.
 they had grain to store.
 would not be a lone.

Topics: Biblical People (Boaz, Ruth, Obed, Naomi, David, Orpah).

Source: The Book of Ruth

Something Happens Here

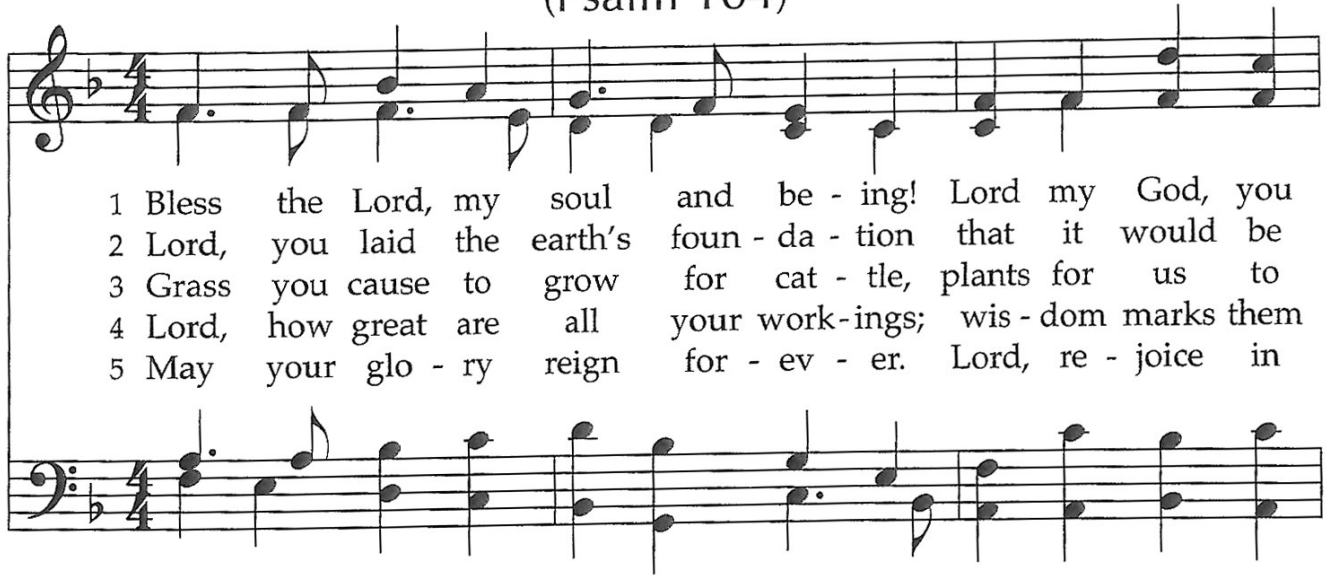
Refrain

Avery & Marsh

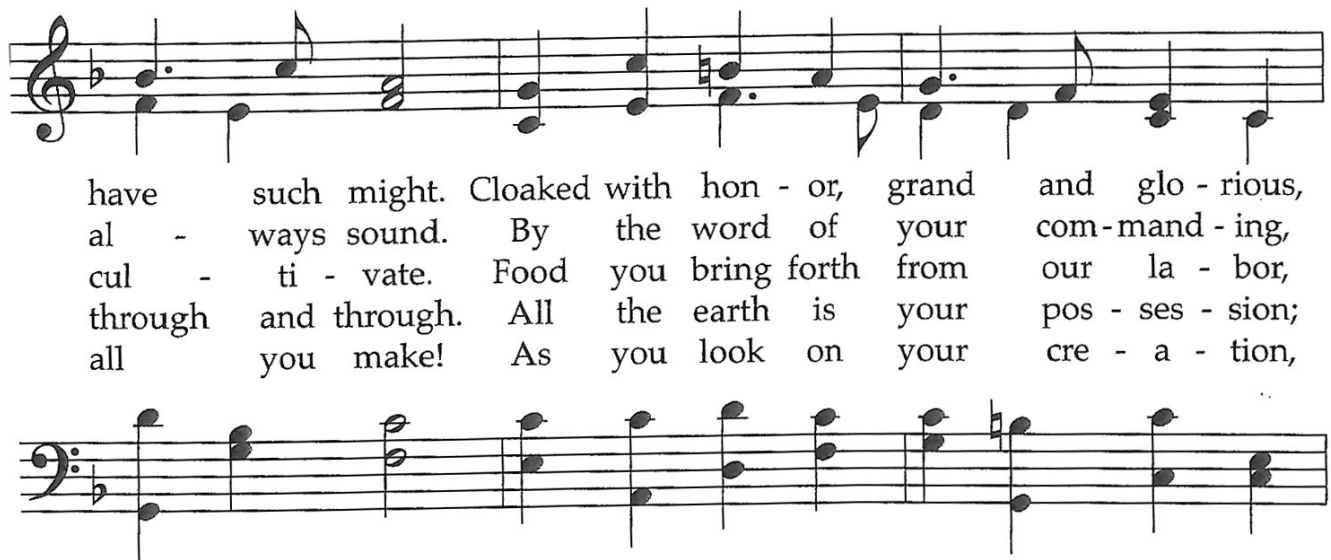
Be - fore us here the bro - ken bread; Be - fore us the up - lif - ted
cup; Sur - round - ing us the awe - some space. Some - thing hap - pens
here! We gath - er from a bu - sy world; Ap -
proach with great ex - pec - tan - cy; God meets us in this sa - cred
place, Some - thing hap - pens here! 1. Who are
2. Pride is
3. Let it
we that God comes here, Shows us each our sa - cred
bro - ken, fear is gone, hate and greed are left be -
hap - pen ev - 'ry - where, where we work, at school, in
worth? At this ta - ble com - mon peo - ple find the
hind. Thus we're chang - ing and we're learn - ing how to
town. May this love and peace be reach - ing through us
power to change the earth. _____
live by God's de - sign, _____
to the world a - round. _____ here.
very quietly, choir only
Some - thing hap - pens here!

Bless the Lord, My Soul and Being!

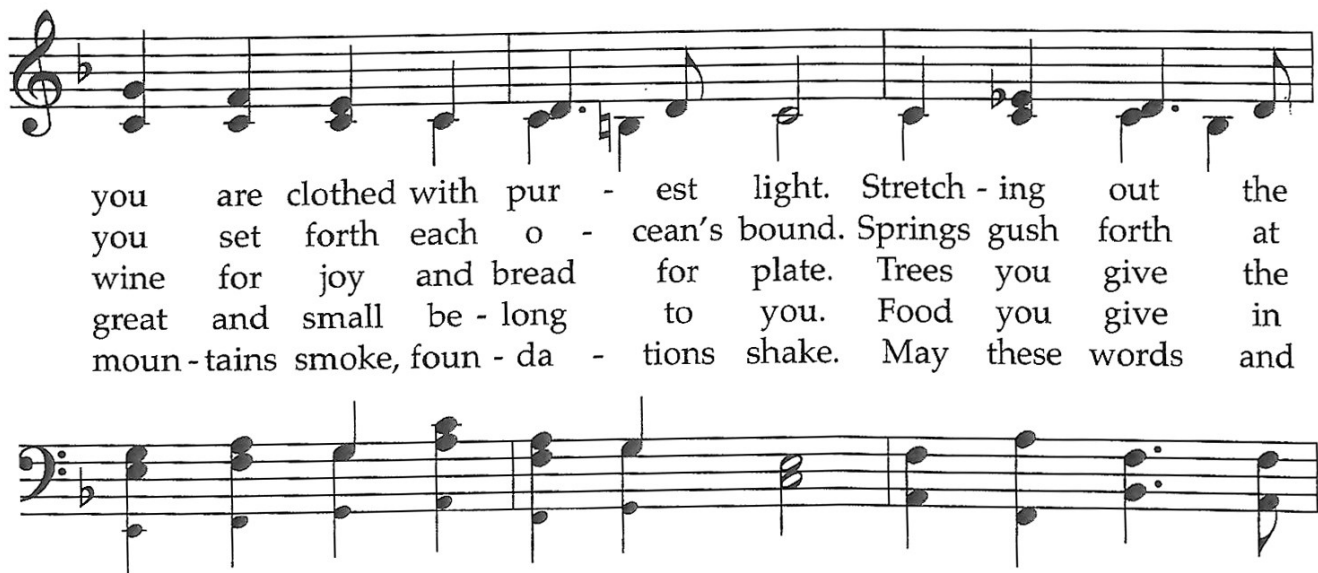
(Psalm 104)



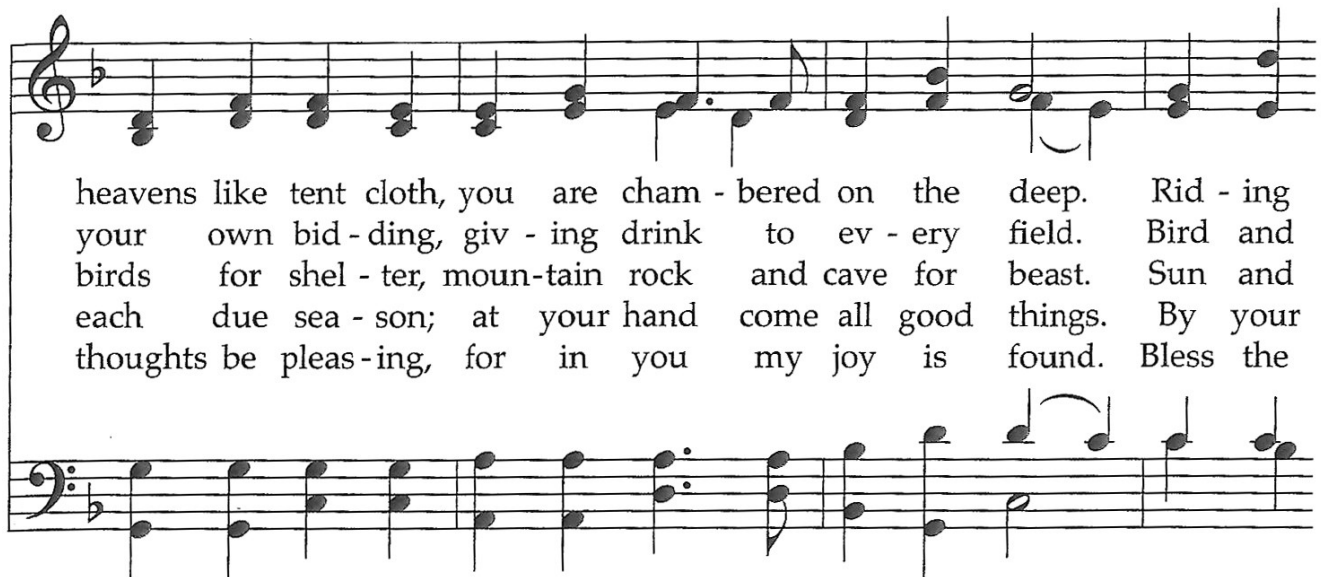
1 Bless the Lord, my soul and be - ing! Lord my God, you
2 Lord, you laid the earth's foun - da - tion that it would be
3 Grass you cause to grow for cat - tle, plants for us to
4 Lord, how great are all your work - ings; wis - dom marks them
5 May your glo - ry reign for - ev - er. Lord, re - joice in



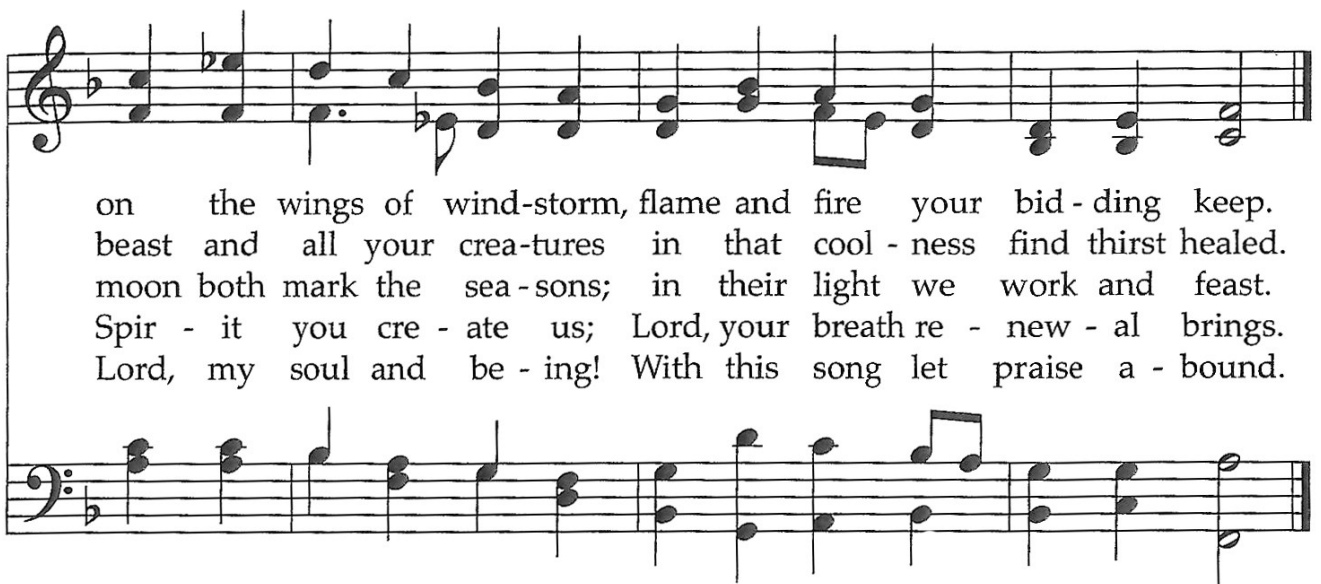
have such might. Cloaked with hon - or, grand and glo - rious,
al - ways sound. By the word of your com - mand - ing,
cul - ti - vate. Food you bring forth from our la - bor,
through and through. All the earth is your pos - ses - sion;
all you make! As you look on your cre - a - tion,



you are clothed with pur - est light. Stretch - ing out the
you set forth each o - cean's bound. Springs gush forth at
wine for joy and bread for plate. Trees you give the
great and small be - long to you. Food you give in
moun - tains smoke, foun - da - tions shake. May these words and



heavens like tent cloth, you are cham - bered on the deep. Rid - ing
 your own bid - ding, giv - ing drink to ev - ery field. Bird and
 birds for shel - ter, moun - tain rock and cave for beast. Sun and
 each due sea - son; at your hand come all good things. By your
 thoughts be pleas - ing, for in you my joy is found. Bless the



on the wings of wind - storm, flame and fire your bid - ding keep.
 beast and all your crea - tures in that cool - ness find thirst healed.
 moon both mark the sea - sons; in their light we work and feast.
 Spir - it you cre - ate us; Lord, your breath re - new - al brings.
 Lord, my soul and be - ing! With this song let praise a - bound.

This 20th-century paraphrase of Psalm 104 is careful to include the details of creation that give this psalm its character. This comprehensive text is well served by its expansive Victorian tune, named for the town in Sussex where the composer lived in his later years.