



6501 Wydown Blvd • St Louis, MO 63105 • Phone 314.721.5060

Fax 314.721.2716 • www.firstcongregational.org

Funeral & Memorial Service Guidelines

“Let not your hearts be troubled. Peace I leave with you, my peace I give to you. Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid.” John 14:27

We at First Congregational Church extend our sympathy to you for your loss and we pray that God’s love and grace surround you during this time. The death of a loved one breaks our hearts, and we discover that not only do we need to grieve and cry, but also to plan the service and the reception, while dealing with legal issues and other additional details. We know you may feel overwhelmed, particularly in regards to the many decisions that must be made in planning a funeral or memorial service. Whether gathered in the sanctuary, a funeral home, or at the graveside, we seek to support one another, celebrate the love of the deceased, give thanks for their life, and commend them to God.

Worship in such a time offers consolation to the bereaved by acknowledging their pain and sorrow and providing the Christian community and others with an opportunity to support the bereaved with their presence. Its purpose is to affirm once more the powerful, steadfast love of God from which people cannot be separated, even by death.

Our Senior Minister conducts all funeral services held at First Congregational Church. Any requests for another pastor or lay person to officiate or assist in the service must be approved by the Senior Minister.

If you wish to hold a funeral at First Congregational Church, please contact the church office and our Senior Minister to arrange the date. It is also possible to hold a reception after the service, which can be scheduled with the church office.

The Senior Minister will meet with you to plan the service. Our Minister of Music coordinates all music for our services. Additional musicians or vocalists must be discussed with our Minister of Music. Please see the attached document containing a sample worship order and suggested scriptures and hymns. For church members, the church office will provide a simple bulletin for the service.

The **Memorial Garden** on our church grounds is available and affords members, families, and friends:

- The privilege of the interment of remains
- The opportunity to memorialize a loved one
- The perfect setting for quiet meditation and prayer

First Congregational Church members and their immediate family may be interred at no cost and/or a memorial brick purchased for \$150. The cost of interment for non-members is \$500, plus \$150 for the memorial brick. Cremation must be arranged with a funeral home or crematorium. Planning for the interment should be made through the Senior Minister.

Please note, pictures and other mementos can be displayed in the Narthex, Tower Room, or other reception area.

Reception space is available at the church. The church can provide the set-up of tables and chairs. Kitchen space is available for staging purposes for caterers. You may bring in a caterer of your choice. Some nearby options are:

- Pasta Plus (22 South Central Ave. 63105; 314-727-1001; pastaplus.net)
- The Posh Nosh Deli (8115 Maryland Ave. 63105; 314-862-1890; poshnoshdeli.com)
- Protzel's Deli (7608 Wydown Blvd. 63105; 314-721-4445; protzelsdeli.com)
- Herbie's (8100 Maryland Ave. 63105; 314-769-9595; herbies.com)

Building Fees:

	FCC Members	Non-Members
Sanctuary	\$0	\$450.00
Chapel & Parlor	\$0	\$250.00
Fellowship Hall	\$0	Unavailable for reception space, \$100 for use of kitchen for staging purposes
Memorial Garden Interment	\$0	\$500
Memorial Garden Brick	\$150	\$150

Staff Fees:

	FCC Members	Non-Members
Senior Minister	Family's discretion	\$350.00
Minister of Music	\$300.00	\$300.00
Custodian	\$150.00	\$150.00

Fees may be combined into one check to be written to First Congregational Church of St. Louis, except for the Senior Minister and Minister of Music, which are written to them directly. Names and information will be provided.

Sample Service Order

**A Service of Witness
To the Resurrection**

**Celebrating the Life of
(name of person)**

Prelude

Welcome

Call to Worship

Hymn

Old Testament Readings

New Testament Readings

(Family Memories – optional)

Homily

Silent Celebration

Pastoral Prayer and the Lord's Prayer

Hymn

Benediction

Postlude

Suggested Scripture Lessons

These passages are from the New Revised Standard Version

Psalm 23

The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want. He makes me lie down in green pastures; he leads me beside still waters; he restores my soul. He leads me in right paths his name's sake.

Even though I walk through the darkest valley, I fear no evil; for you are with me; your rod and your staff— they comfort me.

You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; you anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord my whole life long.

Psalm 46

God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore we will not fear, though the earth should change, though the mountains shake in the heart of the sea; though its waters roar and foam, though the mountains tremble with its tumult.

There is a river whose streams make glad the city of God, the holy habitation of the Most High.

God is in the midst of the city; it shall not be moved; God will help it when the morning dawns.

The nations are in an uproar, the kingdoms totter; he utters his voice, the earth melts. The Lord of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge.

Come, behold the works of the Lord; see what desolations he has brought on the earth. He makes wars cease to the end of the earth; he breaks the bow, and shatters the spear; he burns the shields with fire. "Be still, and know that I am God! I am exalted among the nations, I am exalted in the earth." The Lord of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge.

Psalm 90

Lord, you have been our dwelling place in all generations. Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever you had formed the earth and the world, from everlasting to everlasting you are God. You turn us back to dust, and say, "Turn back, you mortals." For a thousand years in your sight are like yesterday when it is past, or like a watch in the night.

You sweep them away; they are like a dream, like grass that is renewed in the morning; in the morning it flourishes and is renewed; in the evening it fades and withers.

For we are consumed by your anger; by your wrath we are overwhelmed. You have set our iniquities before you, our secret sins in the light of your countenance.

For all our days pass away under your wrath; our years come to an end like a sigh. The days of our life are seventy years, or perhaps eighty, if we are strong; even then their span is only toil and trouble; they are soon gone, and we fly away.

Who considers the power of your anger? Your wrath is as great as the fear that is due you. So teach us to count our days that we may gain a wise heart.

Turn, O Lord! How long? Have compassion on your servants! Satisfy us in the morning with your steadfast love, so that we may rejoice and be glad all our days. Make us glad as many days as you have afflicted us, and as many years as we have seen evil. Let your work be manifest to your servants, and your glorious power to their children. Let the favor of the Lord our God be upon us, and prosper for us the work of our hands— O prosper the work of our hands!

Psalm 91

You who live in the shelter of the Most High, who abide in the shadow of the Almighty, will say to the Lord, “My refuge and my fortress; my God, in whom I trust.” For he will deliver you from the snare of the fowler and from the deadly pestilence; he will cover you with his pinions, and under his wings you will find refuge; his faithfulness is a shield and buckler. You will not fear the terror of the night, or the arrow that flies by day, or the pestilence that stalks in darkness, or the destruction that wastes at noonday.

A thousand may fall at your side, ten thousand at your right hand, but it will not come near you. You will only look with your eyes and see the punishment of the wicked.

Because you have made the Lord your refuge, the Most High your dwelling place, no evil shall befall you, no scourge come near your tent.

For he will command his angels concerning you to guard you in all your ways. On their hands they will bear you up, so that you will not dash your foot against a stone. You will tread on the lion and the adder, the young lion and the serpent you will trample under foot.

Those who love me, I will deliver; I will protect those who know my name. When they call to me, I will answer them; I will be with them in trouble, I will rescue them and honor them. With long life I will satisfy them, and show them my salvation.

Psalm 100

Make a joyful noise to the Lord, all the earth. Worship the Lord with gladness; come into his presence with singing. Know that the Lord is God. It is he that made us, and we are his; we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture. Enter his gates with thanksgiving, and his courts with praise. Give thanks to him, bless his name. For the Lord is good; his steadfast love endures forever, and his faithfulness to all generations.

Psalm 121

I lift up my eyes to the hills— from where will my help come? My help comes from the Lord, who made heaven and earth.

He will not let your foot be moved; he who keeps you will not slumber. He who keeps Israel will neither slumber nor sleep.

The Lord is your keeper; the Lord is your shade at your right hand. The sun shall not strike you by day, nor the moon by night.

The Lord will keep you from all evil; he will keep your life. The Lord will keep your going out and your coming in from this time on and forevermore.

Psalm 130

Out of the depths I cry to you, O Lord. Lord, hear my voice! Let your ears be attentive to the voice of my supplications!

If you, O Lord, should mark iniquities, Lord, who could stand? But there is forgiveness with you, so that you may be revered.

I wait for the Lord, my soul waits, and in his word I hope; my soul waits for the Lord more than those who watch for the morning, more than those who watch for the morning.

O Israel, hope in the Lord! For with the Lord there is steadfast love, and with him is great power to redeem. It is he who will redeem Israel from all its iniquities.

Ecclesiastes 3:1-8

For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven:
a time to be born, and a time to die;
a time to plant, and a time to pluck up what is planted;
a time to kill, and a time to heal;
a time to break down, and a time to build up;
a time to weep, and a time to laugh;
a time to mourn, and a time to dance;
a time to throw away stones, and a time to gather stones together;
a time to embrace, and a time to refrain from embracing;
a time to seek, and a time to lose;
a time to keep, and a time to throw away;
a time to tear, and a time to sew;
a time to keep silence, and a time to speak;
a time to love, and a time to hate;
a time for war, and a time for peace.

Isaiah 40:28-31

Have you not known? Have you not heard? The Lord is the everlasting God, the Creator of the ends of the earth. He does not faint or grow weary; his understanding is unsearchable. He gives power to the faint, and strengthens the powerless. Even youths will faint and be weary, and the young will fall exhausted; but those who wait for the Lord shall renew their strength, they shall mount up with wings like eagles, they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint.

Isaiah 55:1-13

Ho, everyone who thirsts, come to the waters; and you that have no money, come, buy and eat! Come, buy wine and milk without money and without price. Why do you spend your money for that which is not bread, and your labor for that which does not satisfy? Listen carefully to me, and eat what is good, and delight yourselves in rich food. Incline your ear, and come to me; listen, so that you may live. I will make with you an everlasting covenant, my steadfast, sure love for David. See, I made him a witness to the peoples, a leader and commander for the peoples. See, you shall call nations that you do not know, and nations that do not know you shall run to you, because of the Lord your God, the Holy One of Israel, for he has glorified you. Seek the Lord while he may be found, call upon him while he is near; let the wicked forsake their way, and the unrighteous their thoughts; let them return to the Lord, that he may have mercy on them, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon. For my thoughts are not your thoughts, nor are your ways my ways, says the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts. For as the rain and the snow come down from heaven, and do not return there until they have watered the earth, making it bring forth and sprout, giving seed to the sower and bread to the eater, so shall my word be that goes out from my mouth; it shall not return to me empty, but it shall accomplish that which I purpose, and succeed in the thing for which I sent it. For you shall go out in joy, and be led back in peace; the mountains and the hills before you shall burst into song, and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands. Instead of the thorn shall come up the cypress; instead of the brier shall come up the myrtle; and it shall be to the Lord for a memorial, for an everlasting sign that shall not be cut off.

New Testament:

Matthew 11:28-30

“Come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me; for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.”

Mark 10:13-16

People were bringing little children to him in order that he might touch them; and the disciples spoke sternly to them. But when Jesus saw this, he was indignant and said to them, “Let the little children come to me; do not stop them; for it is to such as these that the kingdom of God belongs. Truly I tell you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God as a little child will never enter it.” And he took them up in his arms, laid his hands on them, and blessed them.

John 14:1-6, 27

“Do not let your hearts be troubled. Believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father’s house there are many dwelling places. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, so that where I am, there you may be also. And you know the way to the place where I am going.” Thomas said to him, “Lord, we do not know where you are going. How can we know the way?” Jesus said to him, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.”

2 Corinthians 4:16-18

So we do not lose heart. Even though our outer nature is wasting away, our inner nature is being renewed day by day. For this slight momentary affliction is preparing us for an eternal weight of glory beyond all measure, because we look not at what can be seen but at what cannot be seen; for what can be seen is temporary, but what cannot be seen is eternal.

2 Corinthians 5:1-10

For we know that if the earthly tent we live in is destroyed, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. For in this tent we groan, longing to be clothed with our heavenly dwelling— if indeed, when we have taken it off we will not be found naked. For while we are still in this tent, we groan under our burden, because we wish not to be unclothed but to be further clothed, so that what is mortal may be swallowed up by life. He who has prepared us for this very thing is God, who has given us the Spirit as a guarantee.

So we are always confident; even though we know that while we are at home in the body we are away from the Lord— for we walk by faith, not by sight. Yes, we do have confidence, and we would rather be away from the body and at home with the Lord. So whether we are at home or away, we make it our aim to please him. For all of us must appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each may receive recompense for what has been done in the body, whether good or evil.

1 Thessalonians 4:13-18

But we do not want you to be uninformed, brothers and sisters, about those who have died, so that you may not grieve as others do who have no hope. For since we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so, through Jesus, God will bring with him those who have died. For this we declare to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive, who are left until the coming of the Lord, will by no means precede those who have died. For the Lord himself, with a cry of command, with the archangel's call and with the sound of God's trumpet, will descend from heaven, and the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive, who are left, will be caught up in the clouds together with them to meet the Lord in the air; and so we will be with the Lord forever. Therefore encourage one another with these words.

1 Peter 1:3-9

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! By his great mercy he has given us a new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, and into an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you, who are being protected by the power of God through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. In this you rejoice, even if now for a little while you have had to suffer various trials, so that the genuineness of your faith—being more precious than gold that, though perishable, is tested by fire—may be found to result in praise and glory and honor when Jesus Christ is revealed. Although you have not seen him, you love him; and even though you do not see him now, you believe in him and rejoice with an indescribable and glorious joy, for you are receiving the outcome of your faith, the salvation of your souls.

Revelation 21:1-4; 22-25

Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. And I saw the holy city, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "See, the home of God is among mortals. He will dwell with them; they will be his peoples, and God himself will be with them; he will wipe every tear from their eyes. Death will be no more; mourning and crying and pain will be no more, for the first things have passed away." I saw no temple in the city, for its temple is the Lord God the Almighty and the Lamb. And the city has no need of sun or moon to shine on it, for the glory of God is its light, and its lamp is the Lamb. The nations will walk by its light, and the kings of the earth will bring their glory into it. Its gates will never be shut by day—and there will be no night there.

Revelation 22:3-5

Nothing accursed will be found there any more. But the throne of God and of the Lamb will be in it, and his servants will worship him; they will see his face, and his name will be on their foreheads. And there will be no more night; they need no light of lamp or sun, for the Lord God will be their light, and they will reign forever and ever.

Suggested Hymns

This list is not exhaustive. It is meant to provide a suggested group of hymns that are appropriate for a funeral/memorial service.

8

Praise to the Living God

Ps. 84:1-2

Curtis Beach, 1966; alt.

1 Praise to the liv - ing God, the God of love and light, Whose
 2 Praise to the liv - ing God, from whom all things de - rive, Whose
 3 Praise to the liv - ing God, who knows our joy and pain, Who
 4 Praise to the liv - ing God, a - round, with - in, a - bove, Be -

word brought forth the myr - iad suns and set the worlds in flight;
 Spir - it formed up - on this sphere the first faint seeds of life;
 shares with us our com - mon life, the sa - cred and pro - fane.
 yond the grasp of hu - man mind, but whom we know as love.

Whose in - fi - nite de - sign, which we but dim - ly see, Per -
 Who caused them to e - volve, un - wit - ting, toward God's goal, Till
 God toils wher-e'er we toil, in home and mart and mill; And
 In these tu - mul-tuous days, so full of hope and strife, May

vades all na - ture, mak - ing all a cos - mic u - ni - ty.
 hu - man-kind stood on the earth, as liv - ing, think - ing souls.
 deep with - in the hu - man heart God leads us for - ward still.
 we bear wit - ness to the Way, O Source and Goal of life.

Curtis Beach, born into a family of several generations of ministers, was educated at Harvard University, the Boston University School of Theology, and the University of Southern California. A minister in the United Church of Christ, Beach authored *The Gospel of Mark: Its Making and Meaning*.

Tune: DIADEMATA S.M.D.
 George J. Elvey, 1868

We Live by Faith and Not by Sight

256

Henry Alford, 1844; alt.

John 20:24-29

Unison

1 We live by faith and not by sight;
 2 We may not touch Christ's hands and side,
 3 Help then, O Christ, our un-belief;
 4 That, when our life of faith is done,

no gra-cious words we hear From Christ who spoke as
 nor fol-low where Christ trod; But in con-fess-ing
 and may our faith a-bound To call on you when
 in realms of clear-er light We may be-hold you

none e'er spoke, who still we know is near.
 we re-joice: our Sav-ior and our God!
 you are near and seek where you are found:
 as you are, with full and end-less sight.

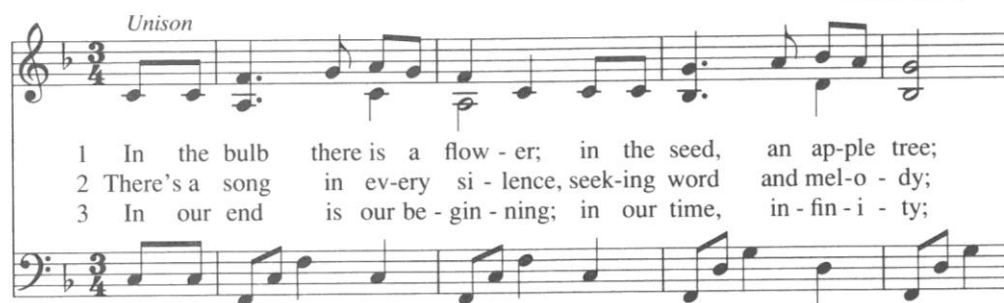
As dean of Canterbury, Henry Alford exemplified ecumenism by working closely with non-Anglican groups. He promoted New Testament scholarship with his famous commentary on the Greek New Testament, one of fifty books he published during his lifetime.

Tune: DUNLAP'S CREEK C.M.
 Samuel McFarland, c. 1816
 Harm. Richard Proulx, 1986

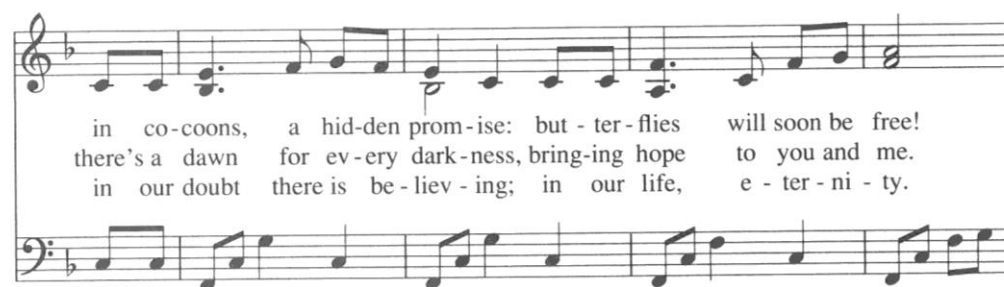
In the Bulb There Is a Flower

Natalie Sleeth, 1985

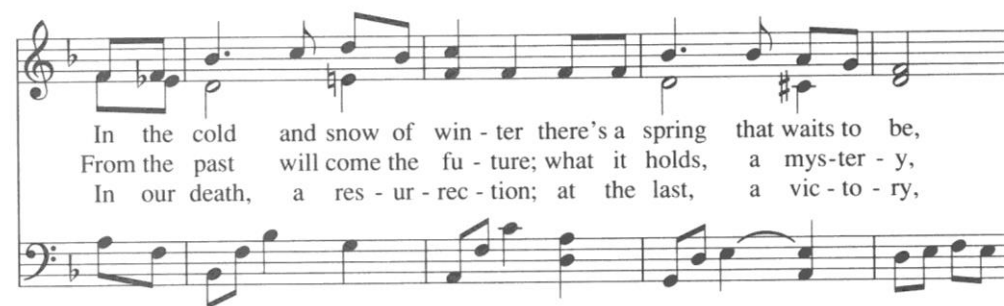
Unison



1 In the bulb there is a flow - er; in the seed, an ap - ple tree;
 2 There's a song in ev - ery si - lence, seek - ing word and mel - o - dy;
 3 In our end is our be - gin - ning; in our time, in - fin - i - ty;



in co - coons, a hid - den prom - ise: but - ter - flies will soon be free!
 there's a dawn for ev - ery dark - ness, bring - ing hope to you and me.
 in our doubt there is be - liev - ing; in our life, e - ter - ni - ty.



In the cold and snow of win - ter there's a spring that waits to be,
 From the past will come the fu - ture; what it holds, a mys - ter - y,
 In our death, a res - ur - rec - tion; at the last, a vic - to - ry,



un - re - vealed un - til its sea - son, some - thing God a - lone can see.
 un - re - vealed un - til its sea - son, some - thing God a - lone can see.
 un - re - vealed un - til its sea - son, some - thing God a - lone can see.

Natalie Sleeth composed her "Hymn of Promise" first as a choral anthem and then adapted it to this version for congregational singing. It was dedicated to her husband, Ronald Sleeth, who died shortly after she completed it.

Tune: PROMISE 8.7.8.7.D.
 Natalie Sleeth, 1985

1 Cor. 15:53-57

Latin, c. 1695

Transl. Francis Pott, 1861; alt.

Refrain (before st. 1 and after st. 4)

Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia!

1 The strife is o'er, the bat - tle done, the vic - to -
 2 The powers of death have done their worst, but Christ their
 3 The three sad days are quick - ly sped, Christ ris - es
 4 Christ, by your wounds on Cal - va - ry from death's dread

ry of life is won; The song of tri - umph
 le - gions has dis - persed: Let shouts of ho - ly
 glo - rious from the dead: All glo - ry to our
 sting your ser - vants free, That we may live e -

has be - gun. Al - le - lu - ia!
 joy out - burst. Al - le - lu - ia!
 ris - en Head! Al - le - lu - ia!
 ter - nal - ly. Al - le - lu - ia! to Refrain

A seventeenth-century Jesuit collection published in Cologne, Germany, is the earliest known source of this Latin hymn. The hymn is firmly associated with this musical setting from a Magnificat by the Italian composer Palestrina.

Tune: VICTORY 8.8.8. with alleluias
 Giovanni Perluigi da Palestrina, 1591
 Arr. William H. Monk, 1861

Alleluia! Alleluia! Hearts to Heaven

243

Christopher Wordsworth, 1872; alt.

Matt. 28:5-8; Rom. 5:21; 6:4-11; 1 Cor. 15:20-22

1 Al - le - lu - ia! Al - le - lu - ia! Hearts to heaven and voic - es raise;
 2 Now the i - ron bars are bro - ken, Christ from death to life is born;
 3 Christ is ris - en, we are ris - en; shed up - on us heav - en - ly grace,
 4 Al - le - lu - ia! Al - le - lu - ia! Glo - ry to the God of joy;

Sing to God a hymn of glad - ness, sing to God a hymn of praise.
 Glo - rious life, and life im - mor - tal on this ho - ly Eas - ter morn;
 Rain and dew, and gleams of glo - ry from the bright - ness of your face;
 Al - le - lu - ia to the Sav - ior who came death's bonds to de - stroy;

Je - sus on the cross as Sav - ior for the world's sal - va - tion bled;
 Christ has tri - umphed, and we con - quer by God's lib - er - at - ing deed;
 That we, with our hearts in heav - en, here on earth may fruit - ful be,
 Al - le - lu - ia to the Spir - it, Fount of love and sanc - ti - ty;

But the cru - ci - fied Re - deem - er now is ris - en from the dead!
 Now the Christ with us a - bid - ing to e - ter - nal life shall lead.
 And by an - gel hands be gath - ered, and be yours e - ter - nal - ly.
 Al - le - lu - ia! Al - le - lu - ia! To the Tri - une Maj - es - ty.

Christopher Wordsworth, gifted nephew of poet William Wordsworth, served the Church of England successively as canon at Westminster, parish priest in Berkshire, and, finally, bishop of Lincoln. This Easter hymn is one of his most enduring.

Tune: WEISSE FLAGGEN 8.7.8.7.D.
 Tochter Sion, Cologne, 1741
 Alternate tune: HYFRYDOL

My Shepherd Is the Living God

Ps. 23; John 10:11, 27-30

Composite from Thomas Sternhold, 1549, and Isaac Watts, 1719; alt.

1 My shep-herd is the liv - ing God, I there-fore noth-ing need;
 2 When I walk through the shades of death, your pres-ence is my stay;
 3 The sure pro - vi - sions of my God at - tend me all my days;

In pas - tures fair, near pleas - ant streams you set - tle me to feed.
 A word of your sup - port - ing breath drives all my fears a - way.
 O may your house be my a - bode, and all my work be praise.

You bring my wan-dering spir - it back when I for-sake your ways,
 Your hand, in sight of all my foes, does still my ta - ble spread;
 There would I find a set - tled rest, while oth - ers come and go—

And lead me for your mer - cy's sake in paths of truth and grace.
 My cup with bless-ings o - ver-flows, your oil a - noints my head.
 No more a strang-er or a guest, but like a child at home.

Isaac Watts, London's leading Congregational minister, wrote more than 600 hymns. His paraphrase of Psalm 23 has been altered here by combining a few phrases from Thomas Sternhold, a sixteenth-century English hymnwriter who also wrote metrical psalm texts.

Tune: CONSOLATION C.M.D.
 Southern Harmony, 1835
 Harm. Erik Routley, 1976
 Alternate tune: CRIMOND (Each stanza
 above becomes two stanzas.)

We Live by Faith and Not by Sight

256

Henry Alford, 1844; alt.

John 20:24-29

Unison

1 We live by faith and not by sight;
 2 We may not touch Christ's hands and side,
 3 Help then, O Christ, our un - be - lief;
 4 That, when our life of faith is done,

no gra-cious words we hear From Christ who spoke as
 nor fol-low where Christ trod; But in con-fess-ing
 and may our faith a-bound To call on you when
 in realms of clear-er light We may be-hold you

none e'er spoke, who still we know is near.
 we re-joice: our Sav-ior and our God!
 you are near and seek where you are found:
 as you are, with full and end-less sight.

As dean of Canterbury, Henry Alford exemplified ecumenism by working closely with non-Anglican groups. He promoted New Testament scholarship with his famous commentary on the Greek New Testament, one of fifty books he published during his lifetime.

Tune: DUNLAP'S CREEK C.M.
 Samuel McFarland, c. 1816
 Harm. Richard Proulx, 1986

Guide Me, O My Great Redeemer

Exod. 13:21; 16:4; 17:6; Ps. 105:39-44; Rev. 22:1-2

William Williams, 1745

St. 1, transl. Peter Williams, 1771; alt.

St. 2-3, transl. William Williams, 1772; alt.

1 Guide me, O my great Re - deem - er, pil - grim through this
 2 O - pen now the crys - tal foun - tain, where the heal - ing
 3 When I reach the Riv - er Jor - dan, bid my anx - ious

bar - ren land; I am weak, but you are might - y;
 wa - ters flow. Let the fire and cloud - y pil - lar
 fears sub - side. Death of death, and hell's de - struc - tion,

hold me with your power - ful hand. Bread of heav - en, bread of heav - en,
 lead me all my jour - ney through. Strong de - liv - erer, strong de - liv - erer,
 land me safe on heav - en's side. Songs of prais - es, songs of prais - es

feed me till I want no more, feed me till I want no more.
 ev - er be my strength and shield, ev - er be my strength and shield.
 I will ev - er sing to you, I will ev - er sing to you.

John Hughes, a railroad official by trade, composed this tune for the 1907 anniversary of Capel Rhondda, Pontypridd, Wales. Cwm Rhondda refers to the "low valley" area surrounding the urban district of Rhondda in southern Wales.

Tune: CWM RHONDDA 8.7.8.7.8.7.7.

John Hughes, 1907

Alternate setting: ZION

Holy, Holy, Holy

Rev. 4:8-11; Isa. 6:1-8

Reginald Heber, 1826; alt.

Descant

4 Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly!

1 Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly, God the Al - might - y!
 2 Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly! Saints a - dore you tru - ly,
 3 Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly! Though we know but dim - ly,
 4 Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly, God the Al - might - y!

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly!

Ear - ly in the morn - ing we praise your maj - es - ty.
 Cast - ing down their gold - en crowns a - round the glass - y sea;
 Though the eyes of hum - an - kind your glo - ry may not see,
 All your works shall praise your name in earth and sky and sea.

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly!

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly! Mer - ci - ful and might - y!
 Cher - u - bim and ser - a - phim bow be - fore you on - ly,
 You a - lone are ho - ly, you a - lone are wor - thy,
 Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly! Mer - ci - ful and might - y!

God in three per - sons, bless - ed Trin - i - ty.

God in three per - sons, bless - ed Trin - i - ty!
 From the be - gin - ning, God e - ter - nal - ly,
 Per - fect in power, in love and pur - i - ty,
 God in three per - sons, bless - ed Trin - i - ty!

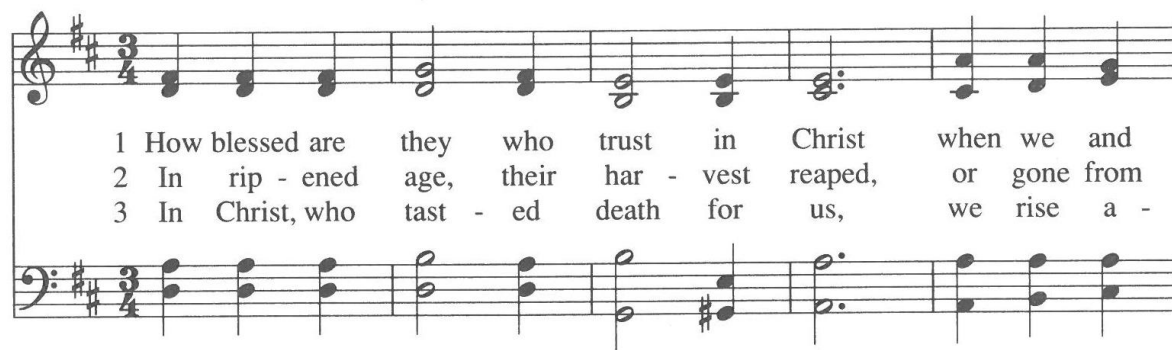
This hymn by Reginald Heber was published in a book of hymns for Banbury Parish Church in England. Nicæa, one of nearly 300 tunes by John B. Dykes, was named for the famous council that defined the doctrine of the Trinity.

Tune: NICAEA 11.12.12.10.
 John B. Dykes, 1861
 Descant David McK. Williams, 1948

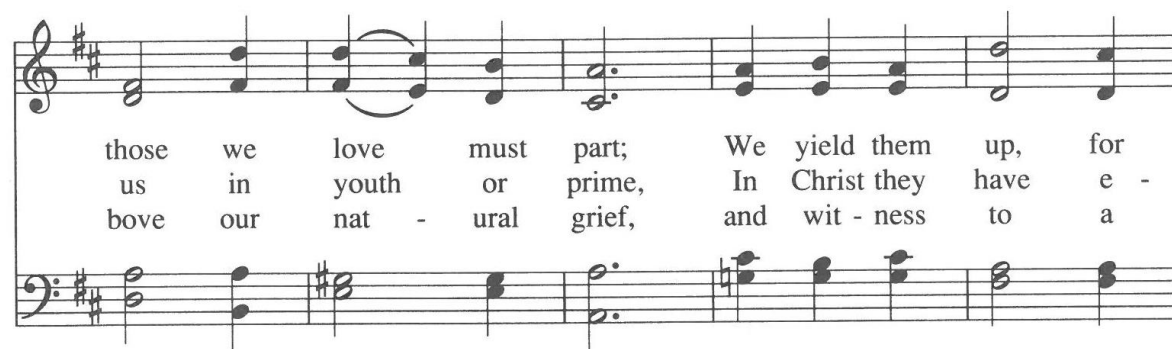
365 How Blessed Are They Who Trust in Christ

John 3:13-16; Jude 1:20-21

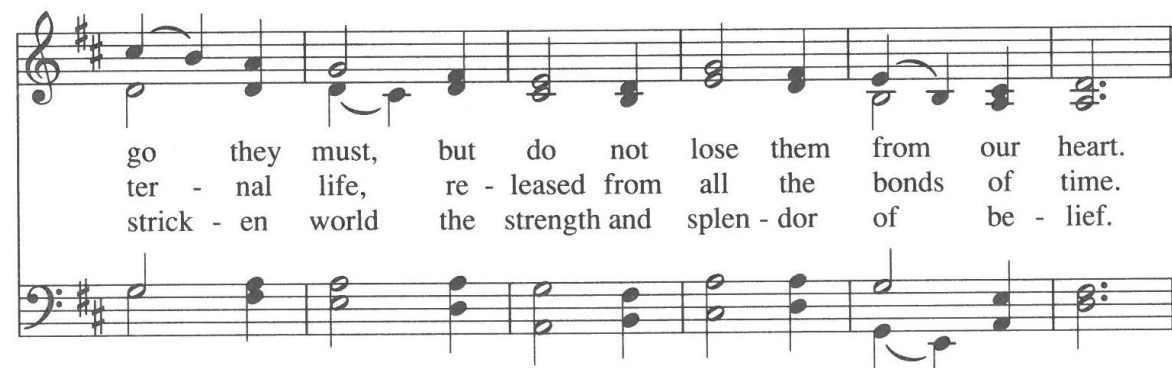
Fred Pratt Green, 1972



1 How blessed are they who trust in Christ when we and
 2 In rip - ened age, their har - vest reaped, or gone from
 3 In Christ, who tast - ed death for us, we rise a -



those we love must part; We yield them up, for
 us in youth or prime, In Christ they have e -
 bove our nat - ural grief, and wit - ness to a



go they must, but do not lose them from our heart.
 ter - nal life, re - leased from all the bonds of time.
 strick - en world the strength and splen - dor of be - lief.

This text was one of four chosen from 457 entries for publication by The Hymn Society of America in 1980. Works of this eminent British writer have been published in The New Yorker and in anthologies.

Tune: MARYTON L.M.
 H. Percy Smith, 1874

I Was There to Hear Your Boring Cry

John Ylvisaker, 1985; alt

Unison

D7 *G* *D* *G* *D* *G* *D*

1 I was there to hear your born - ing cry, I'll be
 2 When you found the won - der of the Word, I was
 3 In the mid - dle a - ges of your life, not too
 4 I was there to hear your born - ing cry, I'll be

there when you are old. I re - joiced the day you
 there to cheer you on; You were raised to praise the
 old, no long - er young, I'll be there to guide you
 there when you are old. I re - joiced the day you

G *D* *G* *C* *D7* *G*

were bap - tized, to see your life un - fold.
 liv - ing God, to whom you now be - long.
 through the night, com - plete what I've be - gun.
 were bap - tized, to see your life un - fold. *St. 4, end*

G/B *C* *G*

I was there when you were but a child, with a
 Should you find some-one to share your time and you
 When the eve - ning gent - ly clos - es in and you

Am *D* *G* *G/B* *C*

faith to suit you well; I'll be there in case you
 join your hearts as one, I'll be there to make your
 shut your wea - ry eyes, I'll be there as I have

G *A7* *D* *to beginning*

wan - der off and find where de - mons dwell,
 vers - es rhyme from dusk till ris - ing sun.
 al - ways been with just one more sur - prise.

Nearer, My God, to You

Gen. 28:10–22; Matt. 16:24

Sarah Flower Adams, 1841
Adapt. Thomas H. Troeger

1 Near - er, my God, to you, near - er to you. I'll bear the
 2 When I am wan - der - ing as Ja - cob did, and in the
 3 Let Ja - cob's lad - der fill the sky a - bove, and an - gels
 4 Then, wak - ing from the night to morn - ing air by Beth - el's


cross as Christ calls me to do and pray each day a - new:
 deep - est night the path is hid, my dreams will bring me, too,
 car - ry down the faith and love to keep this goal in view:
 stone, I'll know you heard my prayer, and how my yearn - ing grew:

1-4 Near - er my God, to you, near - er my God, to you, near - er to you.

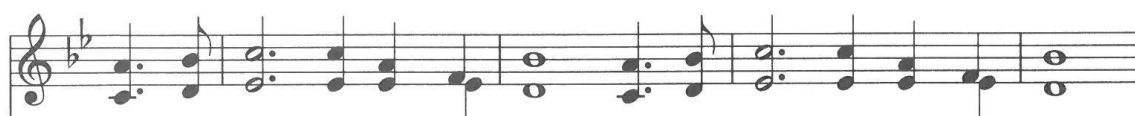
Sarah Flower Adams, daughter of a well-known English editor, was a successful actress in London. During her short life she wrote prose and poetry for religious publications, a five-act drama, and a children's catechism.

Tune: BETHANY 6.4.6.4.6.6.6.4.
 Lowell Mason, 1856


Rock of Ages, Cleft for Me

*Isa. 26:4; John 19:34**Augustus M. Toplady, 1776; alt.*


1 Rock of a - ges, cleft for me, let me hide; my shel-ter be!
 2 Not the la - bors of my hands can ful - fill your law's de - mands;
 3 Noth-ing in my hand I bring, sim - ply to your cross I cling;
 4 While I draw this fleet-ing breath, when my eyes shall close in death,



Let the wat - er and the blood, from your wound - ed side which flowed,
 Could my zeal no re - spite know, could my tears for - ev - er flow,
 Na - ked, come to you for dress; help-less, look to you for grace;
 When I soar to worlds un - known, meet you at your judg-ment throne,



Be of sin the dou - ble cure, cleanse me from its guilt and power.
 All for sin could not a - tone; you must save, and you a - lone.
 Stained, I to the foun-tain fly; wash me, Sav - ior, or I die!
 Rock of a - ges, cleft for me, let me hide; my shel-ter be!

Augustus Toplady first published this poem as part of an extensive article in which he likened the English national debt to the burden of sin. The present form is a hybrid of the original and revisions in 1815 by Thomas Cotterill.

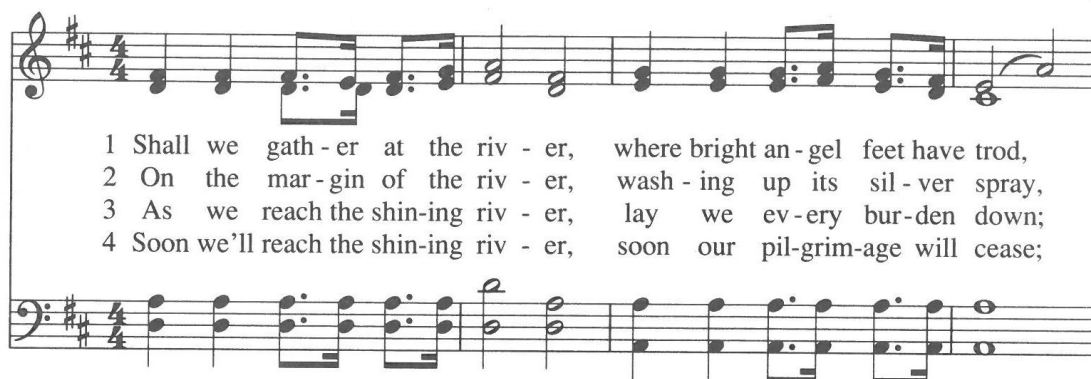
Tune: TOPLADY 7.7.7.7.7.7.
 Thomas Hastings, 1830
 Alternate tune: REDHEAD NO. 76

Shall We Gather at the River

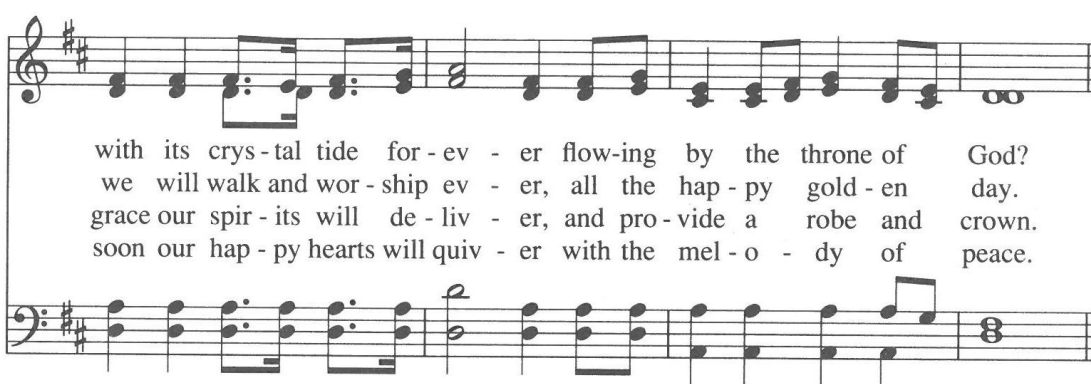
597

Robert Lowry, 1864; alt.

Rev. 22:1-5

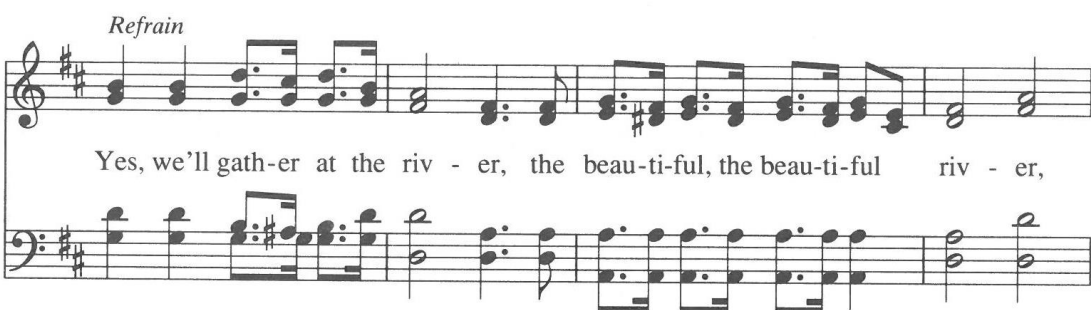


1 Shall we gath-er at the riv-er, where bright an-gel feet have trod,
2 On the mar-gin of the riv-er, wash-ing up its sil-ver spray,
3 As we reach the shin-ing riv-er, lay we ev-ery bur-den down;
4 Soon we'll reach the shin-ing riv-er, soon our pil-grim-age will cease;

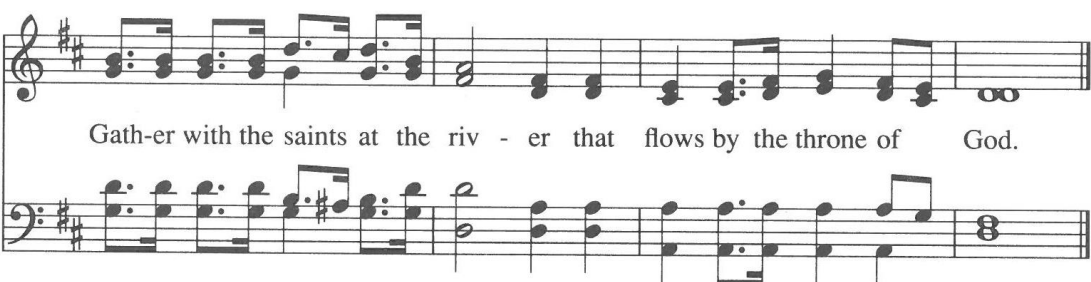


with its crys-tal tide for-ev-er flow-ing by the throne of God?
we will walk and wor-ship ev-er, all the hap-py gold-en day.
grace our spir-its will de-liv-er, and pro-vide a robe and crown.
soon our hap-py hearts will quiv-er with the mel-o-dy of peace.

Refrain



Yes, we'll gath-er at the riv-er, the beau-ti-ful, the beau-ti-ful riv-er,



Gath-er with the saints at the riv-er that flows by the throne of God.

Written during a time when an epidemic was claiming many lives in New York, Robert Lowry's hymn raised the question "Shall we meet again?" Lowry was pastor at Hanson Place Baptist Church in Brooklyn from 1861 to 1869, and collaborated on numerous hymn collections with William H. Doane.

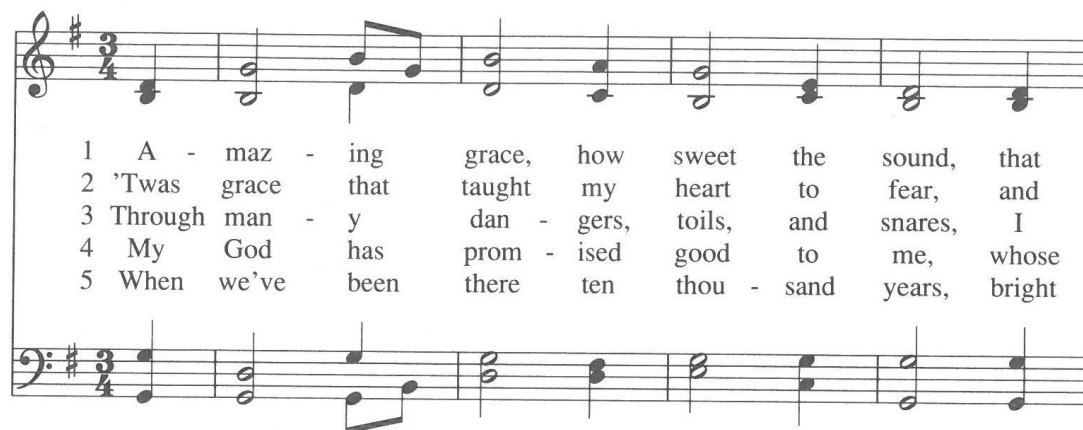
Tune: HANSON PLACE 8.7.8.7. with refrain
Robert Lowry, 1864

Amazing Grace, How Sweet the Sound

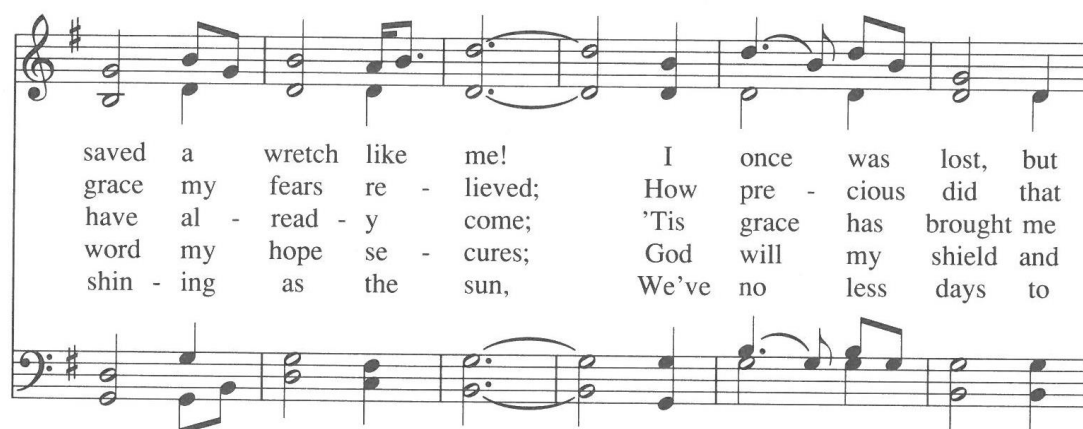
547

St. 1-4, John Newton, 1779; alt.

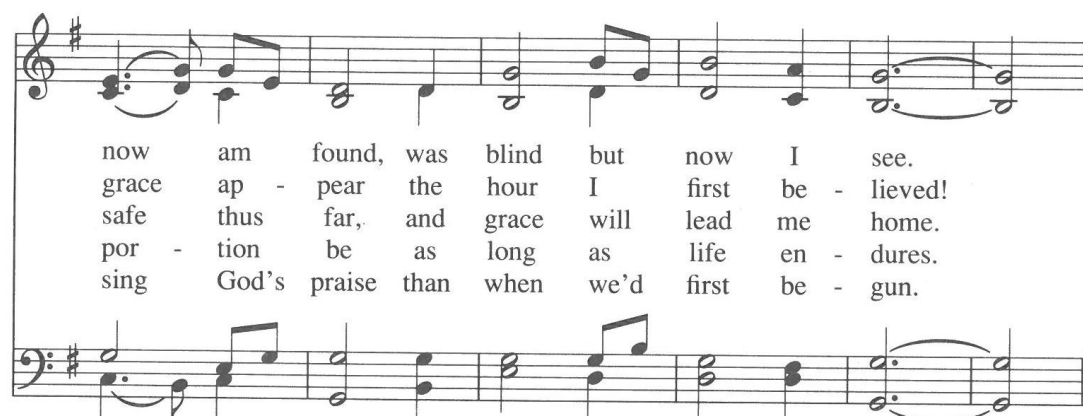
St. 5, A Collection of Sacred Ballads, 1790



1 A - maz - ing grace, how sweet the sound, that
 2 'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear, and
 3 Through man - y dan - gers, toils, and snares, I
 4 My God has prom - ised good to me, whose
 5 When we've been there ten thou - sand years, bright



saved a wretch like me! I once was lost, but
 grace my fears re - lieved; How pre - cious did that
 have al - read - y come; 'Tis grace has brought me
 word my hope se - cures; God will my shield and
 shin - ing as the sun, We've no less days to



now am found, was blind but now I see.
 grace ap - pear the hour I first be - lieved!
 safe thus far, and grace will lead me home.
 por - tion be as long as life en - dures.
 sing God's praise than when we'd first be - gun.


John Newton's autobiographical hymn reflects his conversion from his earlier existence as a slave trader. While serving as curate in the English village of Olney, Newton met William Cowper, and together they published Olney Hymns, which included this hymn.

Tune: AMAZING GRACE C.M.
 (NEW BRITAIN)
 Columbia Harmony, Cincinnati, 1829
 Arr. Edwin O. Excell, 1900

Be Now My Vision

Ancient Irish text, c. 8th century; transl. Mary E. Byrne, 1905
Versified by Eleanor H. Hull, 1912; adapt.

Unison



1 Be now my vi - sion, O God of my heart;
2 Be now my wis - dom, and be my true word;
3 Rich - es I need not, nor life's emp - ty praise,
4 Sov - ereign of heav - en, my vic - to - ry won,

noth - ing sur - pass - es the love you im - part—
ev - er with - in me, my soul is as - sured;
you, my in - her - i - tance, now and al - ways;
may I reach heaven's joys, O bright heav - en's Sun!

You my best thought, by day or by night,
Moth - er and Fa - ther, you are both to me,
You and you on - ly are first in my heart,
Heart of my own heart, what - ev - er be - fall,

wak - ing or sleep - ing, your pres - ence my light.
now and for - ev - er your child I will be.
great God, my trea - sure, may we nev - er part.
still be my vi - sion, O Rul - er of all.

Dating from the eighth century or earlier, this Irish hymn was translated into prose by Mary Byrne. It was then versified by Eleanor Hull, author of several books on Irish literature and history. David Evans arranged the Irish melody for this text in 1927.

Tune: SLANE 10.10.9.10.
Traditional Irish melody
Harm. David Evans, 1927

Heb. 12:1

William W. How, 1864; alt.

1 For all the saints who from their labors rest, who to the
 2 You were their rock, their refuge, and their might: you, Christ, the
 3 Still may your people, faithful, true, and bold, live as the
 4 Ringed by this cloud of witnesses divine, we fee-bly
 5 And when the strife is fierce, the warfare long, steals on the

world their steadfast faith confessed, your name, O Je-sus,
 hope that put their fears to flight; 'mid gloom and doubt, you
 saints who nobly fought of old, and share with them a
 struggle, they in glory shine; yet in your love our
 ear the distant triumph song, then hearts are brave a-

be for-ever blessed.
 were their one true light.
 glorious crown of gold. Al-le-lu-ia! Al-le-lu-ia!
 faithful lives entwined.
 gain, and faith grows strong.

This traditional All Saints Day hymn originally consisted of eleven stanzas written for the Sarum Hymnal (1869) and set to a tune by that name, Sarum. It has grown in popularity since it was later paired with the enduring Sine Nomine in The English Hymnal (1906).

Tune: SINE NOMINE 10.10.10.4.
 Ralph Vaughan Williams, 1906

For the Beauty of the Earth

*St. 1-3, Folliott S. Pierpoint, 1864; alt.
St. 4, Miriam Therese Winter, 1993*

1 For the beau - ty of the earth, for the splen - dor of the skies,
2 For the won - der of each hour of the day and of the night,
3 For the joy of hu - man love, broth - er, sis - ter, par - ent, child,
4 For the good that love in - spires, for a world where none ex - clude,

For the love which from our birth o - ver and a - round us lies,
Hill and vale, and tree and flower, sun and moon, and stars of light,
Friends on earth, and friends a - bove, for all gen - tle thoughts and mild,
For a faith that nev - er tires, and for ev - ery heart re - newed,

Refrain

God of all, to you we raise this our hymn of grate - ful praise.

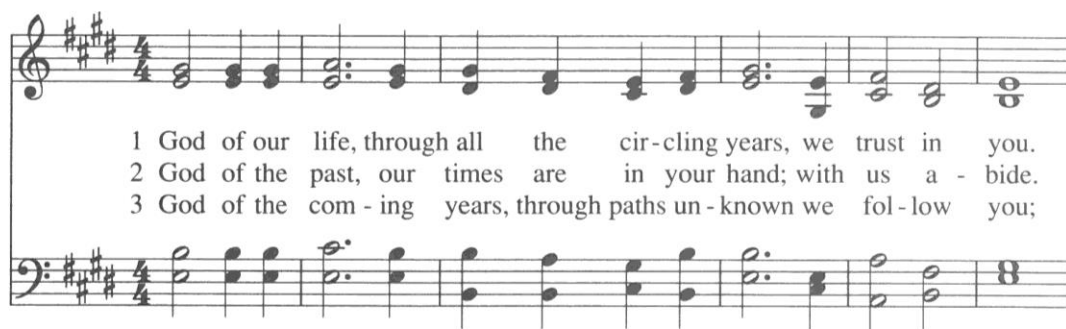
Folliott S. Pierpoint, author of numerous hymns, penned these verses near his native city of Bath, England, on a late spring day when flowers were in full bloom and all the earth seemed to rejoice.

*Tune: DIX 7.7.7.7. with refrain
Conrad Kocher, 1838
Adapt. William H. Monk, 1861*

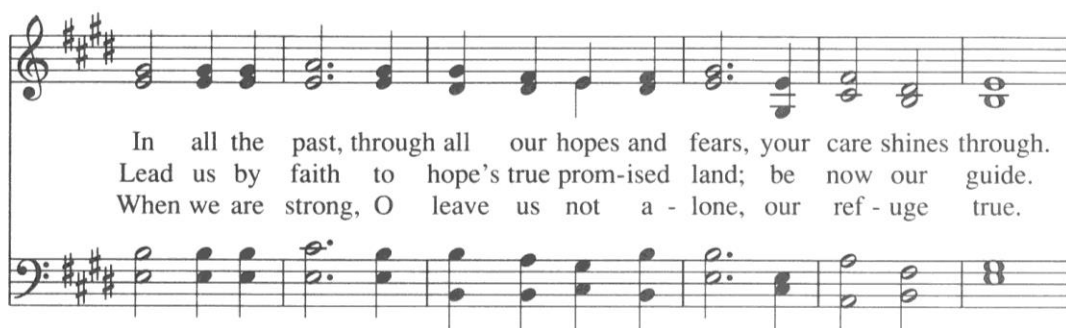
God of Our Life

366

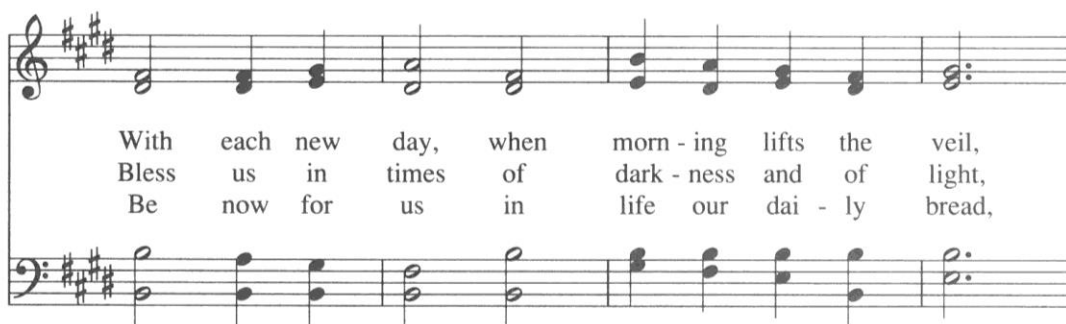
Hugh T. Kerr, 1916; alt.



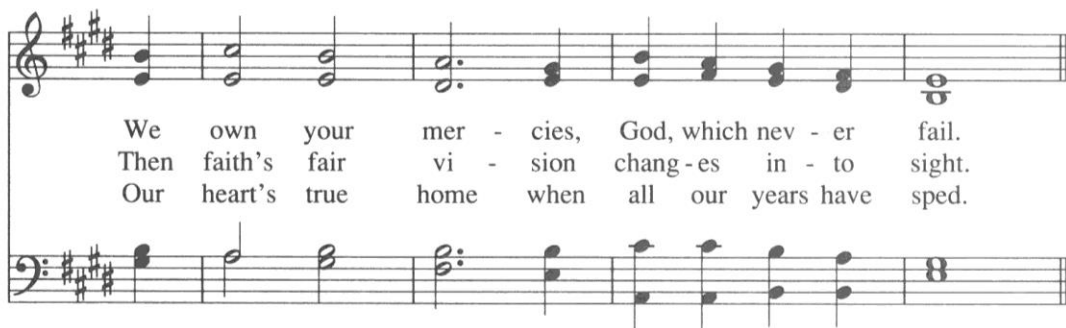
1 God of our life, through all the cir-cling years, we trust in you.
 2 God of the past, our times are in your hand; with us a - bide.
 3 God of the com - ing years, through paths un - known we fol - low you;



In all the past, through all our hopes and fears, your care shines through.
 Lead us by faith to hope's true prom-ised land; be now our guide.
 When we are strong, O leave us not a - lone, our ref - uge true.



With each new day, when morn - ing lifts the veil,
 Bless us in times of dark - ness and of light,
 Be now for us in life our dai - ly bread,



We own your mer - cies, God, which nev - er fail.
 Then faith's fair vi - sion chang - es in - to sight.
 Our heart's true home when all our years have sped.

Hugh Kerr was educated in Canada and the United States and was a pioneer in religious broadcasting. He wrote this hymn for the fiftieth anniversary of Shadyside Presbyterian Church in Pittsburgh, where he had a long tenure as pastor.

Tune: SANDON 10.4.10.4.10.10.
 Charles Henry Purday, 1860
 For another harmonization, see 466

How Firm a Foundation

Isa. 43:2-5; 2 Tim. 2:19; Heb. 13:5

"K" in John Rippon's Selection of Hymns, 1787; alt.

1 How firm a foun - da - tion for you has been laid,
 2 "Fear not, I am with you, oh, be not dis - mayed,
 3 "When through the deep wa - ters I call you to go,
 4 "When through fi - ery tri - als your path - way shall lie,
 5 "The soul that on Je - sus has leaned for re - pose,

by God in the Word, in the sac - ri - fice paid!
 for I am your God, I will still give you aid;
 the riv - ers of woe shall not o - ver you flow;
 my grace all - suf - fi - cient shall be your sup - ply;
 I will not, I will not de - sert to its foes;

What more can God say than to you has been said,
 I'll strength - en you, help you, and cause you to stand
 For I will be with you, your trou - bles to bless,
 the flame shall not hurt you; for I have de - signed
 That soul, though all hell should en - deav - or to shake,

to you, who for ref - uge to Je - sus have fled?
 up - held by my gra - cious, om - ni - po - tent hand."
 de - liv - er - ing you from your deep - est dis - tress."
 your soul to make pure just as gold is re - fined."
 I'll nev - er, no nev - er, no nev - er for - sake!"

In 1787, John Rippon, English Baptist clergyman, identified the author of this hymn as "K"; no one has yet verified a complete name. The pentatonic melody has been known by several names since it first appeared in Funk's Genuine Church Music (1832).

Tune: FOUNDATION 11.11.11.11.
 Early United States melody
 from Funk's Genuine Church Music, 1832
 Alternate tune: ADESTE FIDELES

I Greet You, Sure Redeemer

John 11:25-27

Anon., from Strasbourg Psalter, 1545

Transl. Elizabeth L. Smith, 1868; alt.

1 I greet you, sure Re - deem - er, with my heart,
 2 You are the source of mer - cy and of grace,
 3 You are the life, by which a - lone we live,
 4 You have the true and per - fect gen - tle - ness,
 5 Our hope is all in you and you a - lone;

glad for the sav - ing love that you im - part,
 reign - ing om - ni - po - tent in ev - ery place;
 and all our sub - stance and our strength re - ceive.
 no harsh - ness have you and no bit - ter - ness;
 we trust the prom - ise that your word makes known.

Who pain did un - der - go for my poor sake;
 So rule in us and our whole be - ing sway.
 Sus - tain us by your faith and by your power,
 Grant us the grace that flows in you so free,
 O dear Re - deem - er, make us calm and sure,

I pray you from our hearts all cares to take.
 Shine on us with the light of your pure day.
 and give us strength in ev - ery try - ing hour.
 that we may dwell in per - fect u - ni - ty.
 that in your strength we ev - er - more en - dure.

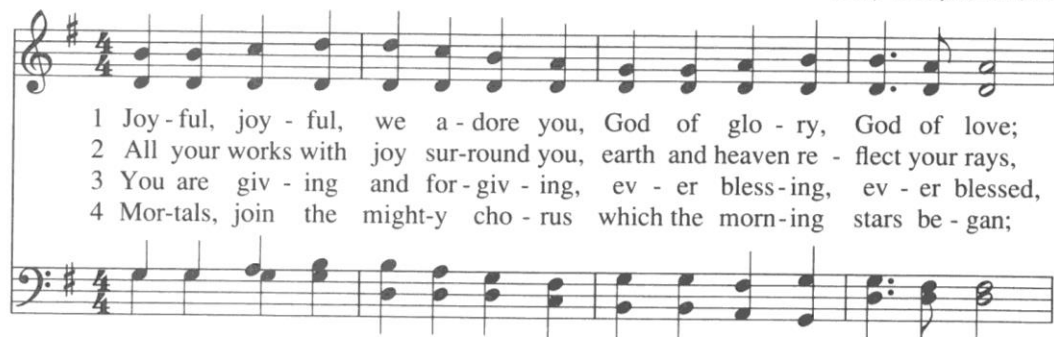
This hymn first appeared in a sixteenth-century Strasbourg Psalter edited by John Calvin. The original tune Old 124th and text were both shortened to the present meter—the tune for an early English psalter and the text for the 1920 Hymnal of the Reformed Church in the United States.

Tune: TOULON 10.10.10.10.
 Adapt. from OLD 124th
 Trente quatre Pseaumes, Geneva, 1551

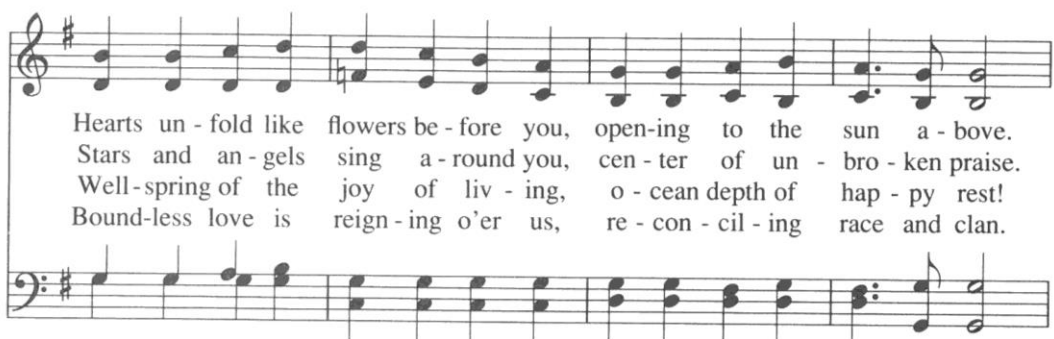
Joyful, Joyful, We Adore You

Ps. 145:10; Isa. 49:13

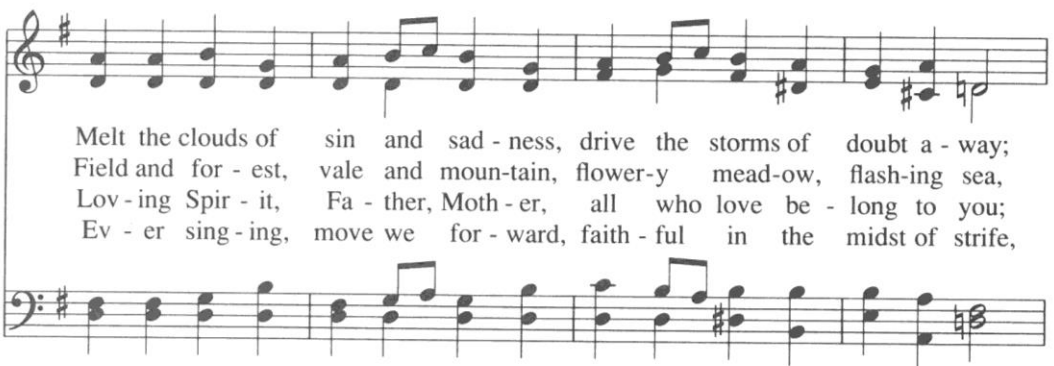
Henry van Dyke, 1907; alt.



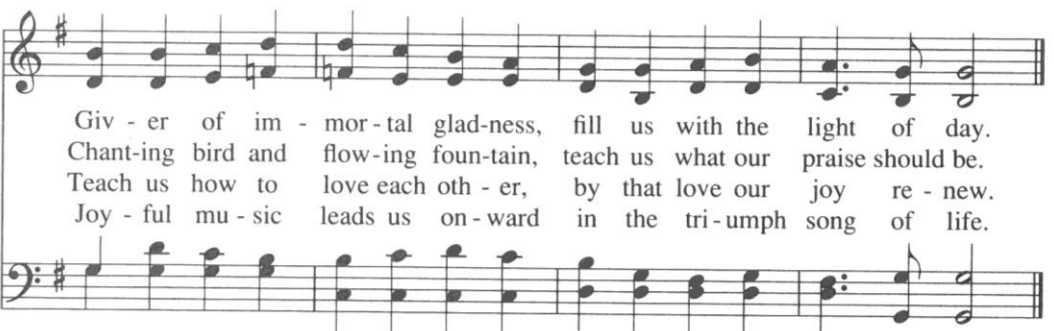
1 Joy - ful, joy - ful, we a - dore you, God of glo - ry, God of love;
 2 All your works with joy sur-round you, earth and heaven re - flect your rays,
 3 You are giv - ing and for-giv - ing, ev - er bless-ing, ev - er blessed,
 4 Mor-tals, join the might-y cho - rus which the morn-ing stars be - gan;



Hearts un - fold like flowers be - fore you, open-ing to the sun a - bove.
 Stars and an - gels sing a - round you, cen - ter of un - bro - ken praise.
 Well-spring of the joy of liv - ing, o - cean depth of hap - py rest!
 Bound-less love is reign-ing o'er us, re - con - cil - ing race and clan.



Melt the clouds of sin and sad - ness, drive the storms of doubt a - way;
 Field and for - est, vale and moun-tain, flower-y mead-ow, flash-ing sea,
 Lov-ing Spir - it, Fa - ther, Moth - er, all who love be - long to you;
 Ev - er sing-ing, move we for - ward, faith - ful in the midst of strife,



Giv - er of im - mor-tal glad-ness, fill us with the light of day.
 Chant-ing bird and flow-ing foun-tain, teach us what our praise should be.
 Teach us how to love each oth - er, by that love our joy re - new.
 Joy - ful mu - sic leads us on - ward in the tri-umph song of life.

Henry van Dyke was a noted church leader, U.S. ambassador, Navy chaplain, and prolific writer. Many people associate this hymn with Beethoven's ninth symphony, but few are aware of the original poem by the German classicist F. Schiller (1759–1805) that inspired Beethoven.

Tune: HYMN TO JOY 8.7.8.7.D.
 Ludwig van Beethoven, 1824
 Adapt. and harm. Edward Hodges, 1846

My Hope Is Built on Nothing Less

Matt. 7:24-27; 1 Cor. 3:11; Heb. 6:19; Rev. 11:15

Edward Mote, c. 1834; alt.

1 My hope is built on noth-ing less than Je - sus' love and
 2 When shad - ows veil my Sav-ior's face, I rest up - on un -
 3 Christ's oath and cov - e - nant and blood sup - port me in the
 4 When Christ shall come with trum-pet sound, oh, may I then in

righ - teous-ness; I dare not trust this earth - ly frame, but
 chang-ing grace; In ev - ery high and storm - y gale, my
 ris - ing flood; When all a - round my soul gives way, Christ
 Love be found, Dressed in God's righ - teous - ness a - lone, fault -

Refrain
 whol-ly lean on Je - sus' name.
 an-chor holds with - in the veil. On Christ, the sol - id Rock, I stand;
 then is all my hope and stay.
 less to stand be - fore the throne.

all oth - er ground is sink-ing sand, all oth - er ground is sink-ing sand.

William Bradbury met great success by composing hymn tunes and religious songs in a lively, popular style. He also helped establish music programs in New York public schools, served a church, and co-founded a piano company.

Tune: SOLID ROCK L.M. with refrain
 William B. Bradbury, 1863

Nun danket alle Gott

(Now Thank We All Our God)

*Sir. 50:20–24; 39:35; Ps. 67**Martin Rinkart, 1647; transl. Catherine Winkworth, 1858; alt.*

1 Nun dank - et al - le Gott, mit Herz - en, Mund und Händ - en,
 1 Now thank we all our God with heart and hands and voic - es,
 2 O may this boun-teous God through all our life be near us,
 3 All praise and thanks to God our Mak - er now be giv - en,

der gro - sse Ding - e tut an uns und al - len End - en;
 Who won - drous things has done, in whom this world re - joic - es,
 With ev - er joy - ful hearts and bless - ed peace to cheer us,
 To Christ, and Spir - it, too, our help in high - est heav - en,

der uns von Mut - ter - leib und Kind - es - bein - en an
 Who, from our par - ents' arms, has blessed us on our way
 And keep us still in grace, and guide us when per - plexed,
 The one e - ter - nal God, whom earth and heaven a - dore,

un - zäh - lig viel zu gut bis hier-her hat ge - tan.
 With count-less gifts of love, and still is ours to - day.
 And free us from all ills in this world and the next.
 For thus it was, is now, and shall be ev - er - more.

For much of his life, German Lutheran pastor and musician Martin Rinkart ministered to the walled city of Eisleben amidst the horrors of the Thirty Years' War. This hymn has become one of the most widely used hymns of the church.

Tune: NUN DANKET 6.7.6.7.6.6.6.6.

Johann Crüger, 1647

Harm. Felix Mendelssohn, 1840

O God, Our Help in Ages Past

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Isaac Watts, 1719; alt.

Ps. 90:1-2, 4-5

1 O God, our help in a - ges past, our hope for years to come,
 2 Un - der the shad-ow of your throne your saints have dwelt se - cure;
 3 Be - fore the hills in or - der stood or earth re - ceived its frame,
 4 A thou - sand a - ges in your sight are like an eve - ning gone,

Our shel - ter from the storm - y blast, and our e - ter - nal home:
 Suf - fi - cient is your arm a - lone, and our de - fense is sure.
 From ev - er - last - ing you are God, to end - less years the same.
 Short as the watch that ends the night be - fore the ris - ing sun.

5 Time, like an ev-er-roll-ing stream,
 soon bears us all away;
 We fly for-got-ten, as a dream
 fades at the o-pen-ing day.

6 O God, our help in a-ges past,
 our hope for years to come,
 Still be our God while trou-bles last,
 and our e-ter-nal home!

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We Gather Together

Netherlands folk hymn, 16th century

Transl. Theodore Baker, 1894

Adapt. Lavon Bayler, 1992

1 We gath-er to-gether
 to ask for God's bless-ing,
 to live in com-mu-ni-ty,
 seek-ing God's will.
 We come now, as sis-ters
 and broth-ers, con-fess-ing
 the sins that di-vide
 and the wrong in us still.

2 Be-side us, for-giv-ing,
 en-a-bling, sus-tain-ing,
 you call us, O Sav-ior,
 to life that is new.
 You draw us a-way
 from self-cen-tered com-plain-ing.
 You lead us and guide us
 in ways that are true.

3 All praise to the Spir-it,
 pro-vid-er, de-fend-er.
 You of-fer us free-dom,
 to fol-low or stray,
 Em-pow-er-ing all by
 the hope you en-gen-der.
 Grant wis-dom and cour-age
 to fol-low your way.

The original text of this hymn was one of thanksgiving for The Netherlands' independence from Spanish domination in the sixteenth century. It has been reinterpreted for contemporary congregations by United Church of Christ minister and writer Lavon Bayler.

Tune: KREMSER 12.11.12.11.
 16th-century Dutch melody
 Arr. Edward Kremser, 1877