

October 26, 2025 + 10:30 A.M.
Twenty-First Sunday of Pentecost

We Join in Worship

*If you need extra space for a wheelchair or walker, or if you have young children with you, please feel free to make use of our
Prayground, the extra space across the aisle from the sound booth.*

Liturgist: Bonnie Perryman

PRELUDE *10,000 Reasons* Matt Redman/Jonas Myrin, arr. Jan Sanborn

WELCOME

CHORAL INTROIT

ANNOUNCEMENTS

***THE PEACE OF CHRIST**

*** CALL TO WORSHIP** (Adapted from *Psalm 84*)

Leader: How lovely is your dwelling place, O LORD of hosts! Our souls long, indeed they faint
for your the courts.

ALL: Our hearts and our flesh sing for joy to the living God!

Leader: Even the sparrow finds a home, and the swallow a nest for herself, where she may lay her
young, at your altars, O LORD of hosts, our King and our God.

ALL: Our hearts and our flesh sing for joy to the living God!

Leader: Happy are those who live in your house, ever singing your praise. Happy are those whose
strength is in you, in whose hearts are the highways to your courts.

ALL: Our hearts and our flesh sing for joy to the living God!

Leader: For a day in your courts is better than a thousand elsewhere. Let us fill this sanctuary with
praise!

ALL: Our hearts and our flesh sing for joy to the living God!

***OPENING HYMN:** "Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee" (464)

INVITATION TO CONFESSION

In his letter to the Philippians, Paul writes, "Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice!" Together let us confess our need to rejoice.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Joyful God, we join our hearts and voices in confessing unto you. We confess that we have forgotten what it means to truly rejoice in you. We move about with weariness in our souls dreariness in our spirits. We allow the woes of the world to overpower our awareness of you and all that you are doing. We go about daily life without accessing the joy that you have gifted us as our greatest resource for resistance. Inspire us to rejoice once more, for you are always with us, especially in the struggle. In the beautiful name of Jesus Christ our liberator we pray. Amen.

KYRIE: Glory to God, No. 579 (unison)
Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy.
Christ, have mercy. Christ, have mercy. Christ, have mercy.
Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy.

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

Leader: Friends, hear the good news! We need not be anxious about anything, for the Lord is near!
ALL: Through Jesus Christ we are forgiven! Hallelujah! Thanks be to God!

GLORIA PATRI (unison, 577)

Glory be to the Father, and the Son, and Holy Ghost;
As it was in the beginning, is now, ever shall be, world without end. Amen.
As it was in the beginning, is now, ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

STATEMENT OF FAITH: (from *A Brief Statement of Faith*)

We trust in God the Holy Spirit, everywhere the giver and renewer of life. The Spirit justifies us by grace through faith, sets us free to accept ourselves and to love God and neighbor, and binds us together with all believers in the one body of Christ, the Church. The same Spirit who inspired the prophets and apostles rules our faith and life in Christ through Scripture, engages us through the Word proclaimed, claims us in the waters of baptism, feeds us with the bread of life and the cup of salvation, and calls women and men to all ministries of the church.

We Hear God's Word

EMBODIED WORD FOR DISCIPLES OF ALL AGES

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

God of power and grace, fill us with the wisdom of your word and the understanding of your Spirit so that we may be your church: a people with dreams and visions at work in all the world; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

HEBREW BIBLE LESSON: *Psalms 65:5-13*

EPISTLE LESSON: *Philippians 4:1-9*

LESSON FROM ACTS: *Acts 26:9-20*

SERMON: Preparers of the Beautiful Way

MUSICAL MEDITATION: *Shine, Jesus, Shine* Graham Kendrick

We Respond in Faith

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE AND 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.

CHORAL RESPONSE

OFFERING INVITATION

The Church mothers gave their time, talents, and treasure to ensure that the movement of the Way of Jesus Christ would flourish. Let us be inspired by their example! Please place your offering in the plate as it is passed. If you are worshiping from home, please mail in your checks or use our online giving option on the website. Let us reflect on stewardship as we listen to today's offertory.

OFFERTORY *I Love You, Lord*

Laurie Klein, arr. Jan Sanborn

* DOXOLOGY:

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;

Praise God, all creatures high and low;

Alleluia! Alleluia!

Praise God, in Jesus fully known;

Creator, Word, and Spirit one;

Alleluia! Alleluia!

Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

*PRAYER OF DEDICATION: (Unison)

Joyful God, we dedicate these gifts to you and to your work in the world today. Please inspire to use them wisely and creatively as did your daughters of long ago. In the beautiful name of Jesus Christ our liberator we pray. Amen.

*CLOSING HYMN "Spirit" (319)

We Go Into the World

BENEDICTION

CHORAL BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE *You Are My All in All*

Dennis L. Jernigan, arr. Jan Sanborn

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* So that we can properly greet people who come to the building during Sunday morning worship, Door A will be the only unlocked external door during the worship service.

Life of the Church

PEEK AT THE WEEK:

SUNDAY 10/26:	Adult Study – 9:00 AM Worship In Person & Online – 10:30 AM Fellowship Hosts: Women's Retreat Women's Retreat 12:00 – 3:00 PM
MONDAY 10/27:	Women's Bible Study – 9:15-11:30 AM GA – 6:30 PM Al-Anon – 7:00 PM
TUESDAY 10/28:	Prayer Shawl – 1:00 PM Private Flute Lessons 2-8 PM (FH) Faith Development – 6:30 PM AA – 7:30 PM
WEDNESDAY 10/29:	Private Flute Lessons 2-8 PM (FH) "Bring Your Own Bible" Bible Study 7-8 PM (Zoom)
THURSDAY 10/30:	Choir – 7:00 PM
SATURDAY 11/1:	AA – 6:30 PM
SUNDAY 11/2:	Daylight Saving Time Ends

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- **Recharge! Refresh! Restore! Renew! Restart! Fall Women's Retreat** Gather in sisterhood for a time of spiritual connection and renewal after worship today from 12:00 - 3:30 PM in the Fellowship Hall. You are welcome to join even if you have not yet registered! Thank you to the more than 50 women who have registered!
- **Christmas Open House Preparations To Begin – Help Wanted** Preparations for the Holiday Open House at Habitat for Humanity ReStore in Griffith begin on October 28th at 9:00 a.m. and continue October 29th and October 30th. The Holiday Open House is on Saturday, November 1, 2025. If you are interested and available to help set-up and decorate Christmas Trees, which will be sold at the Holiday Open House, please contact Cheryl Steen at (219) 743-3440.
- **ALL SAINTS' WORSHIP SERVICE ON NOVEMBER 2ND** We will remember and honor loved ones who have joined the Resurrection over the past year. Please join for this meaningful time together!
- **CRAFT SHOW NOV 8th** Come and support our church and the FPCH crafters at our annual craft sale on Saturday, November 8th from 9am-3 pm at St. James the Lesser Catholic Church, 9640 Kennedy Avenue. Come see what the creative crafters have made and get some early holiday gifts. Proceeds from the sale support our general fund.
- **PEACE AND GLOBAL WITNESS OFFERING** This offering enables the church to promote the Peace of Christ by addressing systems of conflict and injustice across the world. Through the Peace & Global Witness Offering, congregations are encouraged and equipped to find and address the anxiety and discord that is prevalent throughout this broken and sinful world. Envelopes can be found in the narthex.
- **CHOIR PRACTICE THURSDAYS AT 7:00 PM!** Our choir is a great group, and we would love to keep growing! All voice levels and skill levels are welcome!
- **"BYOB"** (Bring Your Own Bible) discussion group meets on Wednesday evenings from 7-8 pm online using Zoom. Each week this group takes a look at the scriptures from our Sunday worship services, asking questions, bringing up different perspectives, and hopefully encountering the Holy Spirit in a fresh way. The link for the Zoom meetings is emailed out weekly. You can connect to Zoom with a

smart phone, tablet or computer. If you're not familiar with how to use Zoom, or to get on our e-mail list, please contact Pastor Tyler or Heather Casiano.

- **“THE BIBLE IN TODAY’S WORLD”** class meets on Sunday mornings from 9-10 am in the middle classroom (across from Pastor Tyler’s office). This group is reading through the book, “A is for Alabaster” by Anna Carter Florence. Each week is independent of the other weeks, so come as you are able. If you need a book, or for any other questions, contact Heather Casiano.
- **ENDOWMENT FUND DONATIONS** Please consider making donations to our church Endowment Fund. Contributions can be made in memory of a loved one or in honor of someone. Donations to this fund can also be made to commemorate special events, such as weddings, birthdays, births and anniversaries. The Endowment Fund is a great way to support grants to ministries in our congregation and our general fund. The money is invested in Vanguard, and each year the fund has been growing. Envelopes are located in the pews and narthex or you can send a check to the office.
- **BUILDING USE FORMS** Just a quick reminder that for the safety and security of everyone using our building, we need to have building use request forms filled out by both members and non-members whenever they use any area of the building outside of regular church activity functions.
- **FOLLOW US ON SOCIAL MEDIA!** If you don’t already follow us on Facebook and Instagram, please start doing so @firstpchighland on both Facebook and Instagram.
- **INTERESTED IN BECOMING A MEMBER OF FPCH?** You are always welcome here, whether a member or not! If you are interested in joining as a member, though, we would love to have you! Please talk to Pastor Tyler if you would like to learn more.

Opportunities to serve as the HEART, HANDS, and FEET of Jesus Christ:

- **BLESSING BOX** Please continue to place items in the Blessing Box and take items if you are a person in need! Items most commonly donated: Canned goods with pull tabs, socks, toilet paper, non-perishable foods, small snacks, toiletries, baby wipes and diapers. Please check expiration dates!
- **HELP STOCK OUR PANTRY!** Please pick up a beautifully decorated grocery bag in the narthex and fill it to help the church's food pantry.
- **GOT SNEAKERS?** We are still participating in the Got Sneakers Fundraiser where there is nothing to buy or sell; all we need is your support and your gently worn, used, or new sneakers! Blue bins are located in the narthex, and inside and outside DOOR D by the office. Every pair counts!

Prayer List

Anthony
Brady Vanes
George Griner
Guy Hendricks
Bill and Anettia Holmes
David Markley
Pat and David Kingen
Diana and Ray Mendoza
Janet Orem
Cindy Waltz and Sister
Yvonne Suroviak
Georgette Sknerski
Jakob Holden
Denise Matthys
Jan Oprea
Florance Cody
Kathy & Chuck Pumnea
Laura Buono Domsic
The Windstrups
Rick Parker
Gary Everhart
Caroline Studer
Darlene O'Brien
Doug & Sue Matthews
Janet Terpstra
Glen Nahler
Tom
David Hamblin
Jana Tolley
Larry & Bonnie Perryman
Delta Rose
Winnie Owen
Breeanne
Mom Bechtler

Victor
Marian Clayton
Ella P
Melissa J.
Rita Stronczek
Keren, Zuriel, and Gedeon
OGB
Edna Cruz
Charlie
Jerry & Rena Martinez
Nicole
Greg
Pastor Jane
Mary Ellen Edeus
Jane and David
Flora R.
Tyler Gall
Phil
Luana Sulkowski
Sonny Buono
Shannon Sutton
Robin
Mary Hurtt
Eunice
Betsy
David
Trina & Scott
Joe & Kathy
Breanne Polan
Tammy
Alex
Ben

Psalm 65:5-13

⁵ By awesome deeds you answer us with deliverance,
O God of our salvation;
you are the hope of all the ends of the earth
and of the farthest seas.
⁶ By your strength you established the mountains;
you are girded with might.
⁷ You silence the roaring of the seas,
the roaring of their waves,
the tumult of the peoples.
⁸ Those who live at earth's farthest bounds are awed by your signs;
you make the gateways of the morning and the evening shout for joy.
⁹ You visit the earth and water it;
you greatly enrich it;
the river of God is full of water;
you provide the people with grain,
for so you have prepared it.
¹⁰ You water its furrows abundantly,
settling its ridges,
softening it with showers,
and blessing its growth.
¹¹ You crown the year with your bounty;
your wagon tracks overflow with richness.
¹² The pastures of the wilderness overflow;
the hills gird themselves with joy;
¹³ the meadows clothe themselves with flocks;
the valleys deck themselves with grain;
they shout and sing together for joy.

Philippians 4:1-9

4 ¹ Therefore, my brothers and sisters, whom I love and long for, my joy and crown, stand firm in the Lord in this way, my beloved.
² I urge Euodia and I urge Syntyche to be of the same mind in the Lord. ³ Yes, and I ask you also, my loyal companion, help these women, for they have struggled beside me in the work of the gospel, together with Clement and the rest of my coworkers, whose names are in the book of life.
⁴ Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice. ⁵ Let your gentleness be known to everyone. The Lord is near. ⁶ Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. ⁷ And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.
⁸ Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is pleasing, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence and if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things. ⁹ As for the things that you have learned and received and heard and noticed in me, do them, and the God of peace will be with you.

Acts 26:9-20

⁹ “Indeed, I myself was convinced that I ought to do many things against the name of Jesus of Nazareth. ¹⁰ And that is what I did in Jerusalem; with authority received from the chief priests, I not only locked up many of the saints in prison, but I also cast my vote against them when they were being condemned to death. ¹¹ By punishing them often in all the synagogues I tried to force them to blaspheme, and since I was so furiously enraged at them, I pursued them even to foreign cities.

¹² “With this in mind, I was traveling to Damascus with the authority and commission of the chief priests, ¹³ when at midday along the road, Your Excellency, I saw a light from heaven, brighter than the sun, shining around me and my companions. ¹⁴ When we had all fallen to the ground, I heard a voice saying to me in the Hebrew language, ‘Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me? It hurts you to kick against the goads.’ ¹⁵ I asked, ‘Who are you, Lord?’ The Lord answered, ‘I am Jesus whom you are persecuting. ¹⁶ But get up and stand on your feet, for I have appeared to you for this purpose, to appoint you to serve and testify to the things in which you have seen me and to those in which I will appear to you. ¹⁷ I will rescue you from your people and from the gentiles—to whom I am sending you ¹⁸ to open their eyes so that they may turn from darkness to light and from the power of Satan to God, so that they may receive forgiveness of sins and a place among those who are sanctified by faith in me.’

¹⁹ “After that, King Agrippa, I was not disobedient to the heavenly vision ²⁰ but declared first to those in Damascus, then in Jerusalem and throughout the countryside of Judea, and also to the gentiles, that they should repent and turn to God and do deeds consistent with repentance.”

Preparers of the Beautiful Way

Psalm 65:5-13; Philippians 4:1-9; Acts 26:9-20

Last week I mentioned that we might get to a THIRD telling of Paul’s conversion on the road to Damascus in the book of *Acts*, and so we just heard it. For a single event to have been written out three different times in the same book, it must have been a BIG deal! And of course it was a big deal. It was one of those events that changed the course of history a huge way. An individual’s heart was transformed, and as a result the world would be transformed. This time around, we hear him telling the story to Bernice and Agrippa, the sibling rulers of the Herod dynasty at the time. Paul is presenting his case to them after having been attacked and accused yet again by persecutors who had followed him from Ephesus to Jerusalem. These were religious leaders who sought a case against Paul on religious grounds, but then the case went to the Roman imperial court system. In so many ways the plight of Paul paralleled the Passion of the Lord who had encountered him on that road to Damascus. The high priest and Pharisees and Sadducees initiated the case. It went before the Roman governor of the province, and then before the Herods, and finally ended up back in the hands of the empire.

So there he was in front of the Herods speaking of his experience on the road to Damascus once more. It was a physical road that indeed took Paul to Damascus, but that road was so much more. That road was the symbolic representation of Paul’s journey to the Way of Jesus Christ of Nazareth and then his journey all along that Way, where so many others would join him in preparing the Way. John the Baptist once prepared the royal highway in the desert for the coming of the Lord. The resurrected Lord came back and traveled the highway in the desert to meet Paul. And from then on it would be a matter of preparing the way for what was called THE WAY long before it became a religion. And oh, the Way was so beautiful! It was the Way of love embodied through the creation a beautiful community in which all could truly belong across the vast diversity of their identities. It was the Way of the resurrected body of Christ, brought back to life with the inbreathing of the Holy Spirit. And as they journeyed upon that Way, they kept building as they went, reaching out to more and more people with that promise of belonging.

We know so much about Paul’s journey upon the Way because his is the story written down (three times!) and because he then went on to write down so much of what we read in our scriptures to this day. But Paul was by no means the only journeyer preparing the beautiful Way as he went. Indeed, Paul would not have made it very far at all if it had not been for one particular group of fellow Way-journeyers—the Women! It

should come as no surprise that it was the women who provided the resources that allowed for communities of the Way to spring up in Waystations like Philippi, Thessalonica, Ephesus, Athens, Colossae, Corinth, and Rome. They had material wealth to share from such professions as dealing extraordinarily expensive purple cloth and making tents. It should come as no surprise that it was the women who brought entire families into the Way, ensuring intergenerationality as an integral aspect of the Body of Christ. It should come as no surprise that it was the women who did the hard work of the early Church—so much so that Paul describes them as co-strugglers in the work of the gospel, as we heard in today's reading from *Philippians*.

After all, it was the women who had been there with the Waymaker every step of his way to the cross and, and it was the women who had first borne witness to his Resurrection. It should come as no surprise, then, that it was the women who ensured that the beautiful Way would keep on going. They were preachers, prophetesses, prayer warriors, deacons, elders, evangelists, and apostles. So prominent and powerful were they that the men sometimes felt their egos threatened and lashed out by saying absurd things like, "Women should stay silent in Church!" And because of that legacy of patriarchal lashing out, it is all the more important that we remember these women and honor their legacies. Dorcas, Lydia, Priscilla, and Damaris were the mothers of the Church in Joppa, Philippi, Corinth, Ephesus, and Athens. We have read about all of them in *Acts*. But there were oh so many more! Paul was certainly guilty of some of that patriarchal lashing out, but then there were times when he allowed his heart to continue that journey of transformation which began back on that road, times when he, too, honored the women. Listen to this remarkable passage from *Romans* 16! Listen for the names of the women, listed in the same list as the men without second thought or question. Listen to the work that they did.

I commend to you our sister Phoebe, a deacon of the church at Cenchreae, so that you may welcome her in the Lord, as is fitting for the saints, and help her in whatever she may require from you, for she has been a benefactor of many and of myself as well. Greet Prisca and Aquila, my coworkers in Christ Jesus, who risked their necks for my life, to whom not only I give thanks but also all the churches of the gentiles. Greet also the church in their house. Greet my beloved Epaphroditus, who was the first convert in Asia for Christ. Greet Mary, who has worked very hard for you. Greet Andronicus and Junia, my fellow Israelites who were in prison with me; they are prominent among the apostles, and they were in Christ before I was. Greet Ampliatus, my beloved in the Lord. Greet Urbanus, our coworker in Christ, and my beloved Stachys. Greet Apelles, who is approved in Christ. Greet those who belong to the family of Aristobulus. Greet my fellow Israelite Herodion. Greet those in the Lord who belong to the family of Narcissus. Greet those workers in the Lord, Tryphaena and Tryphosa. Greet the beloved Persis, who has worked hard in the Lord. Greet Rufus, chosen in the Lord, and greet his mother—a mother to me also. Greet Asyncritus, Phlegon, Hermes, Patrobas, Hermas, and the brothers and sisters who are with them. Greet Philologus, Julia, Nereus and his sister, and Olympas, and all the saints who are with them. Greet one another with a holy kiss. All the churches of Christ greet you.

Wow! And then listen again to Paul's words in his letter to the *Philippians*: *Therefore, my brothers and sisters, whom I love and long for, my joy and crown, stand firm in the Lord in this way, my beloved. I urge Euodia and I urge Syntyche to be of the same mind in the Lord. Yes, and I ask you also, my loyal companion, help these women, for they have struggled beside me in the work of the gospel, together with Clement and the rest of my coworkers, whose names are in the book of life. Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice!*

Loved ones, today we rejoice because of the legacy of so many women who have prepared the beautiful Way of the resurrected Body of Christ! We rejoice because we are grateful for the work that you women continue to do, for, let's be clear, it is you who continue to be the preparers of the beautiful Way today! It is you preachers, prophetesses, prayer warriors, deacons, elders, evangelists, and apostles. It is you singers, musicians, artists, and writers. It is you worship designers, ushers, liturgists, committee members, treasurers, teachers, and technology gurus. It is you gardeners, chefs, crafters, seamstresses, and servants to the most vulnerable. It is you visionaries, healers, agitators, and activists. It is you mothers, grandmothers, aunties, sisters, and daughters. We rejoice in the Lord always as we give thanks for you and the beautiful Way that you have prepared! Amen!

Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee

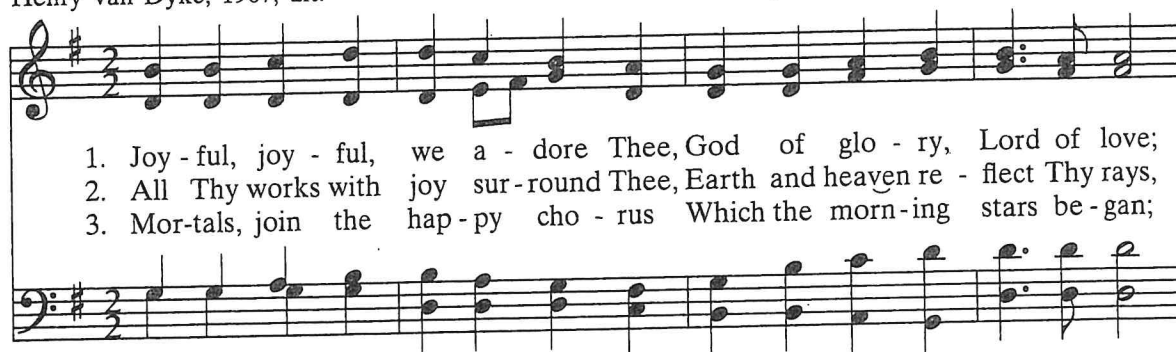
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HYMN TO JOY 8.7.8.7 D

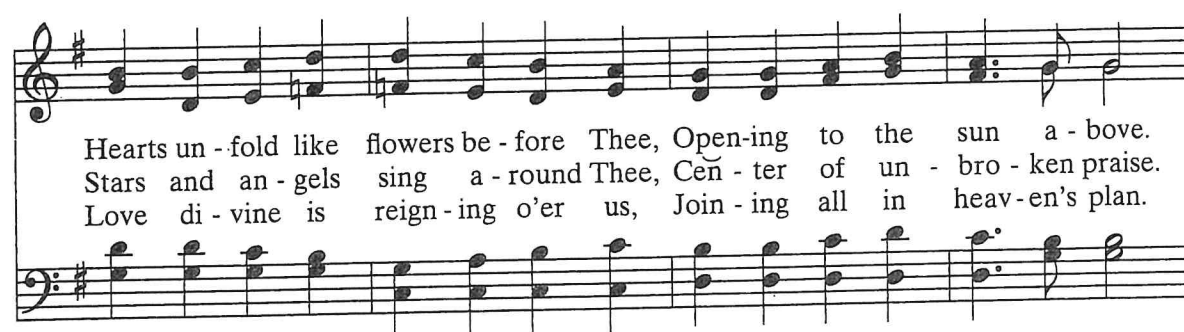
Ludwig van Beethoven, 1824

Adapt. Edward Hodges (1796-1867); alt.

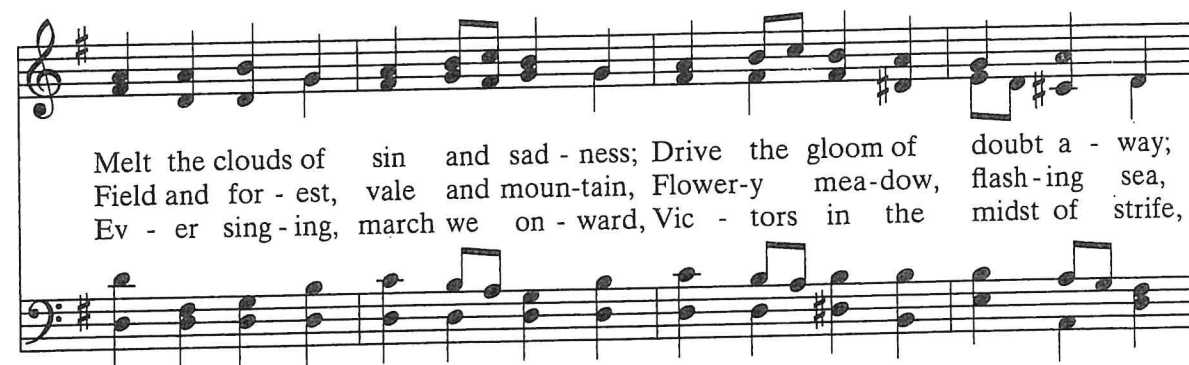
Henry van Dyke, 1907; alt.



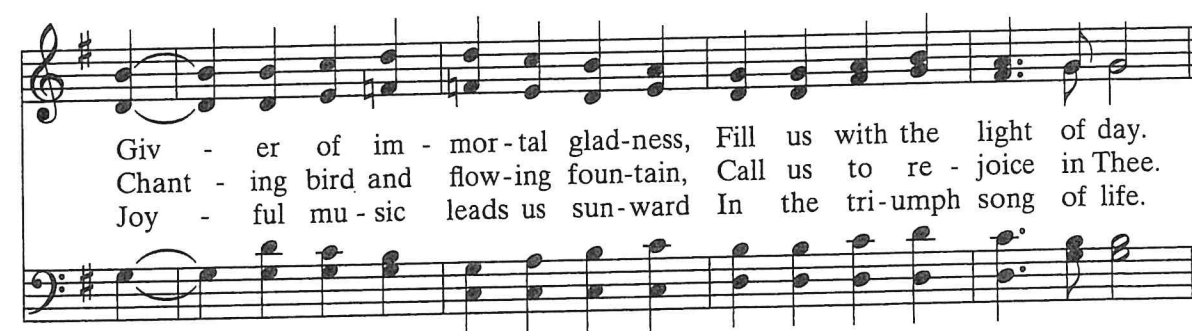
1. Joy - ful, joy - ful, we a - dore Thee, God of glo - ry, Lord of love;
2. All Thy works with joy sur - round Thee, Earth and heaven re - flect Thy rays,
3. Mor - tals, join the hap - py cho - rus Which the morn - ing stars be - gan;



Hearts un - fold like flowers be - fore Thee, Open - ing to the sun a - bove.
Stars and an - gels sing a - round Thee, Cen - ter of un - bro - ken praise.
Love di - vine is reign - ing o'er us, Join - ing all in heav - en's plan.



Melt the clouds of sin and sad - ness; Drive the gloom of doubt a - way;
Field and for - est, vale and moun - tain, Flower - y mea - dow, flash - ing sea,
Ev - er sing - ing, march we on - ward, Vic - tors 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, Call us to re - joice in Thee.
Joy - ful mu - sic leads us sun - ward In the tri - umph song of life.

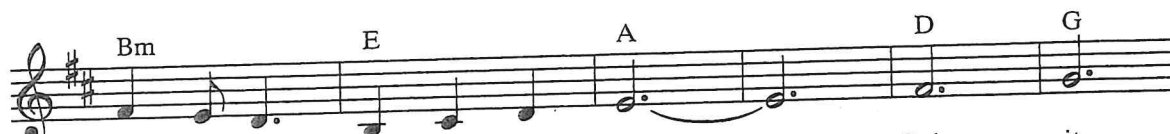
Spirit

James K. Manley, 1975

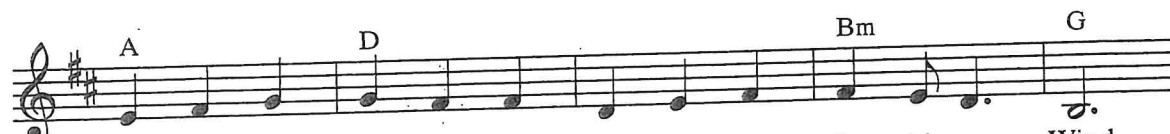
James K. Manley, 1975



Spir - it, spir - it of gen - tle-ness, Blow through the



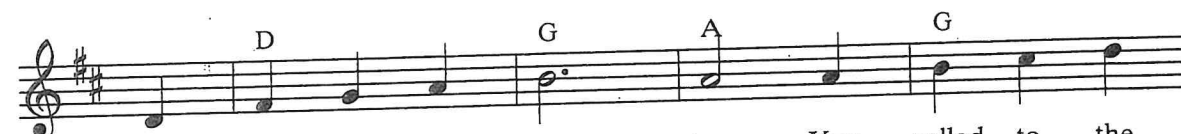
wil - der-ness, call - ing and free, Spir - it,



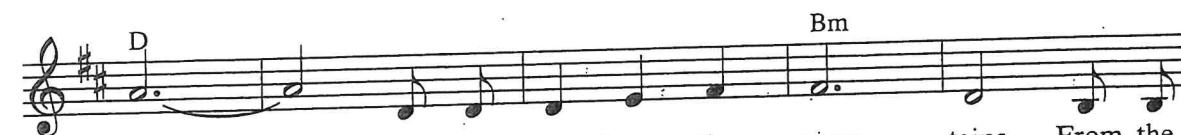
spir - it of rest - less - ness, Stir me from plac - id-ness, Wind,



wind on the sea.



1. You moved on the wa - ters, You called to the
2. You swept through the des - ert, You stung with the
3. You sang in a sta - ble, You cried from a
4. You call from to - mor - row, You break an - cient



deep, Then You coaxed up the moun - tains From the
 sand, And You gift - ed your peo - ple With a
 hill, Then You whis - pered in si - lence When the
 schemes, From the bond - age of sor - row The

