

April 26, 2026 + 10:30 A.M.

Fourth Sunday of Easter

We Join in Worship

Liturgist: Bonnie Perryman

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.

PRELUDE Savior, Like A Shepherd Lead Us with He Leadeth Me William Bradbury arr. Cindy Berry

WELCOME

CHORAL INTROIT

ANNOUNCEMENTS

***THE PEACE OF CHRIST**

***CALL TO WORSHIP** (Adapted from *Psalms* 23)

Leader: The LORD is our shepherd, we shall not want.

ALL: The LORD makes us lie down in green pastures; the LORD leads us beside still waters. The LORD restores our souls.

Leader: The LORD leads us in right paths for the LORD's name's sake.

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

Leader: You prepare a table before us in the presence of our enemies;
you anoint our heads with oil; our cups overflow.

**ALL: Surely goodness and mercy shall follow us all the days of our lives,
and we shall dwell in the house of the LORD our whole lives long. Let us worship
the LORD!**

***OPENING HYMN** "Savior, Like a Shepherd Lead Us" (387)

INVITATION TO CONFESSION:

Leader: The author of *1 Peter* writes, "You were going astray like sheep, but now you have returned to the shepherd and guardian of your souls." Let us confess how we have gone astray as we repent and return to our good shepherd.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION (unison)

O God, we lift up our voices in shared confession. We confess that we have gone far astray as your sheep. We have not been listening for your voice as you call out to us. Instead, we have been following the voices of those who would mislead us. We have been led onto paths of fear, hatred, and division. We have built fences around our pastures in order to keep our resources to ourselves and to keep others away. And so we have chosen ignorance, disregarding the wisdom of our good shepherd. Forgive us for not following you. Guide us to do better. It is in the name of the good shepherd, Jesus Christ, that 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. Jesus himself bore our sins in his body on the cross, so that, having died to sins, we might live for righteousness; by his wounds you have been healed.

ALL: Jesus Christ is risen, and we are forgiven! Hallelujah! Thanks be to God!

GLORIA PATRI (577)

Glory be to the Father, and the Son, and the 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 The Confession of 1967)*

God's reconciling act in Jesus Christ is a mystery which the Scriptures describe in various ways. It is called the sacrifice of a lamb, a shepherd's life given for his sheep, atonement by a priest; again it is ransom of an enslaved person, payment of debt, vicarious satisfaction of a legal penalty, and victory over the powers of evil. These are expressions of a truth which remains beyond the reach of all theory in the depths of God's love for humanity. They reveal the gravity, cost, and sure achievement of God's reconciling work. Amen.

We Hear God's Word

EMBODIED WORD FOR DISCIPLES OF ALL AGES

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

Almighty God, through your only Son you overcame death and opened to us the light of eternity.

Enlighten our minds and kindle our hearts with the presence of your Spirit, that we may feel your words of new life in our reading of the scriptures. In the name of Jesus Christ, the Resurrection and the Life, we pray. Amen.

FIRST LESSON: *Acts 2:42-47*

EPISTLE LESSON: *1 Peter 2:19-25*

GOSPEL LESSON: *John 10:1-11*

SERMON Hearing the Resurrection

CHORAL ANTHEM *My Shepherd Will Supply My Need*

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

Leader: The good shepherd is always looking out for us and calling out to us. Let us give our pledges, tithes, and offerings so that we can hear his voice, respond to his call, and look out for our neighbors near and far. 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. Now let us practice stewardship as we hear today's offertory.

OFFERTORY Just As I Am, Without One Plea

William Bradbury Arr. Cindy Berry

*** 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)

O God, like a shepherd you lead us. We have listened to your voice and responded to your call to tend your sheep. Guide us as we seek to serve your flock. In the name of the good shepherd, Jesus Christ, we pray. Amen.

We Go Into the World

***CLOSING HYMN** “God Is Calling through the Whisper” (Glory to God 410)

BENEDICTION

CHORAL BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE

Be Still, My Soul

Jean Sibelius Arr. Cindy Berry

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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.

PEEK AT THE WEEK:

SUNDAY 4/26: Adult Study – 9:00 AM
Worship in Person & Online – 10:30 AM
Fellowship Hosts: Faith Development
Resurrection Walk following Worship
Rummage Sale Collection 10 AM- 12 PM
(Church Members Only)

MONDAY 4/27: GA – 6:30 PM
AI-Anon – 7:00 PM

TUESDAY 4/28: Private Flute Lessons 2-8 PM (Sanctuary)
Prayer Shawl – 1:00 PM
AA – 7:30 PM

WEDNESDAY 4/29: Private Flute Lessons 2-8 PM (Sanctuary)
“Bring Your Own Bible” Bible Study 7-8 PM (Zoom)
GA – 7:00 PM

THURSDAY 4/30: Choir – 7:00 PM

SATURDAY 5/2: AA – 6:30 PM

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- **RUMMAGE SALE NEWS—SPREAD THE WORD!** Our rummage sale is happening on Friday May 1 from 8am-4pm and Saturday May 2 from 8am-2pm. We could also use extra help on either day. Consider volunteering for an hour or two. See Donna Nelson or Lexa Miller if interested.
- **WATCH THE GAP! All aboard!** The session of the First Presbyterian Church of Highland is excited to announce an opportunity for the church to address our deficit budget! The train is in the station (well, the narthex), and ready for some generous passengers to hop on! Be sure to have your fares ready! Oh, and **watch the gap** as you step on! We have taken a look at our projected income (including allowable income from the Endowment Fund) and estimated that the **gap** between our income and projected expenses is approximately **\$5,000**. We think we can raise this amount in a month! Are you on board?
- **MINISTRY OF MISSION'S 2026 FLOWER VOUCHER SALE** The Ministry of Mission's Annual Zandstra Flower Voucher Fundraiser is here! The vouchers are \$17.00 each, and as you know they are worth \$17.00 at Zandstra's Greenhouse. Vouchers will be available to purchase in Fellowship Hall each Sunday after church, and you can also reach out to Tracy Oprea @ (219) 616-7181 to purchase the same. Tracy will deliver them to you at no extra charge. Mission greatly appreciates your support. Spring Blessings to All.
- **WALK OF FAITH POSTPONED TO MAY 17TH** Join us after church on May 17th for a "Walk of Faith" outside after fellowship time. Following worship, grab some "hiking food" in Fellowship Hall and then we'll head outside for a leisurely, reflective walk together in and around Main Square Park. Along the way there will be opportunities to reflect and meditate on the meaning of the Resurrection for each of us. Bring comfortable walking shoes and dress for the weather All are invited, so please invite your family and friends to join us! If you can't join us there will be a resource sheet to do your own Walk of Faith at a time and location that works for you. If you have any questions, contact Heather Casiano.
- **"THE BIBLE IN TODAY'S WORLD"** Bible study group meets on Sunday mornings in the middle classroom (across from Pastor Tyler's office), from 9-10 am. Our new study looks at "Do Not Fear" in Scripture and in our lives. If you have any questions, contact Heather Casiano.
- **"BYOB"** (Bring Your Own Bible) Scripture discussions are weekly on Wednesdays from 7-8 pm on Zoom. The Zoom link is emailed out weekly on Wednesday mornings. If you are not receiving this email and would like to, contact Heather Casiano, or Kristen in the church office.
- **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.

Prayer List

Anthony	Charlie
Brady Vanes	Jerry & Rena Martinez
George Griner	Nicole
Guy Hendricks	Greg
Bill and Anettia Holmes	Mary Ellen Edeus
David Markley	Jane and David
David Kingen	Flora R.
Diana and Ray Mendoza	Tyler Gall
Janet Orem	Phil
Cindy Waltz and Sister	Luana Sulkowski
Yvonne Suroviak	Sonny Buono
Georgette and Garry Sknerski	Robin
Jakob Holden	Eunice
Denise Matthys	Betsy
Jan Oprea	David
Florance Cody	Trina & Scott
Kathy & Chuck Pumnea	Joe & Kathy
Laura Buono Domsic	Breanne Polan
The Windstrups	Tammy
Rick Parker	Alex
Gary Everhart	Ben
Darlene O'Brien	Mike Kelly
Doug & Sue Matthews	Sue Heth
Janet Terpstra	Ron Toren
Glen Nahler	Tony
Tom	Mildred
David Hamblin	Neal
Jana Tolley	Rita
Larry & Bonnie Perryman	Carolyn
Delta Rose	Oscar Ochoa
Winnie Owen	Tony and Sharon Nevers
Breeanne	Caroline
Mom Bechtler	Jean and Clara
Victor	Suzanne
Marian Clayton	Dave Shelborne
Ella P	Kali Rosalia
Rita Stronczek	Nick B.
Keren, Zuriel, and Gedeon	Carlito
Edna Cruz	Loved ones of Jennifer Noonan

Acts 2:42-47

⁴² They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers.

⁴³ Awe came upon everyone because many wonders and signs were being done through the apostles. ⁴⁴ All who believed were together and had all things in common; ⁴⁵ they would sell their possessions and goods and distribute the proceeds to all, as any had need. ⁴⁶ Day by day, as they spent much time together in the temple, they broke bread at home and ate their food with glad and generous hearts, ⁴⁷ praising God and having the goodwill of all the people. And day by day the Lord added to their number those who were being saved.

1 Peter 2:19-25

¹⁹ For it is a commendable thing if, being aware of God, a person endures pain while suffering unjustly. ²⁰ If you endure when you are beaten for doing wrong, what credit is that? But if you endure when you do good and suffer for it, this is a commendable thing before God. ²¹ For to this you have been called, because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, so that you should follow in his steps.

²² "He committed no sin, and no deceit was found in his mouth."

²³ When he was abused, he did not return abuse; when he suffered, he did not threaten, but he entrusted himself to the one who judges justly. ²⁴ He himself bore our sins in his body on the cross, so that, having died to sins, we might live for righteousness; by his wounds you have been healed. ²⁵ For you were going astray like sheep, but now you have returned to the shepherd and guardian of your souls.

John 10:1-11

"Very truly, I tell you, anyone who does not enter the sheepfold by the gate but climbs in by another way is a thief and a bandit. ² The one who enters by the gate is the shepherd of the sheep. ³ The gatekeeper opens the gate for him, and the sheep hear his voice. He calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. ⁴ When he has brought out all his own, he goes ahead of them, and the sheep follow him because they know his voice. ⁵ They will not follow a stranger, but they will run from him because they do not know the voice of strangers." ⁶ Jesus used this figure of speech with them, but they did not understand what he was saying to them.

⁷ So again Jesus said to them, "Very truly, I tell you, I am the gate for the sheep. ⁸ All who came before me are thieves and bandits, but the sheep did not listen to them. ⁹ I am the gate. Whoever enters by me will be saved and will come in and go out and find pasture. ¹⁰ The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life and have it abundantly. ¹¹ I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep."

Hearing the Resurrection

Acts 2:42-47; 1 Peter 2:19-25; John 10:1-11

Jesus Christ is risen! **He is risen indeed!**
Hallelujah! **Hallelujah!**

After he arose, he kept showing up to his beloved community—or more fittingly for today’s theme, to his flock. In the garden, in the Upper Room, in the streets, he let them learn the truth of the Resurrection through embodied experiences—giving them the opportunity to encounter him with the fullness of their senses. It makes sense! To truly comprehend the Resurrection of the body, we must use our bodies! Next week we are going to read about this wonderful, multi-sensory experience that occurred on the beach beside the Sea of Galilee with another of Jesus’ Resurrection appearances. We will not stay there long today, but I want to jump there momentarily to hear a very particular conversation that Jesus had with Simon Peter. Let us use our ears to listen in.

Jesus says, “Simon son of John, do you love me more than these?” He replies, “Yes, Lord; you know that I love you.” Jesus says to him, “Feed my lambs.” A second time he says to him, “Simon son of John, do you love me?” He replies, “Yes, Lord; you know that I love you.” Jesus says to him, “Tend my sheep.” Then he says to him a third time, “Simon son of John, do you love me?” Peter feels hurt because Jesus feels the need to ask him a full three times, “Do you love me?” But this is his moment of redemption! Three times he had denied him, and now three times Jesus allows him to make up for it with proclamations of love. And so Simon Peter says, “Lord, you know everything; you know that I love you.” Jesus says to him, “Feed my sheep.” In this triple act of redemption, Jesus passes a very specific mantle on to Simon Peter, the rock of his Church, just as Elijah passed his mantle on to Elisha on the bank of the Jordan river so long ago. Peter, who had lost his way as a sheep of the flock, is now hearing the good shepherd commanding him to take on the responsibility of the shepherd. “Feed my lambs,” “Tend my sheep,” “Feed my sheep.” Peter hears this voice speaking new life, new purpose upon him.

And that brings us to today’s gospel reading: “The one who enters by the gate is the shepherd of the sheep. The gatekeeper opens the gate for him, and the sheep hear his voice. He calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. When he has brought out all his own, he goes ahead of them, and the sheep follow him because they know his voice.” And then, “I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep.”

Of all the images we have for our Lord, this is perhaps the most ancient and powerful. It stretches back before the time of the common people gathered in the fields of Bethlehem and yet includes them singing with the angels. It stretches back before the time of the kings and yet includes David, who was beloved of God. It stretches back before the time of the prophets and yet includes Ezekiel, Jeremiah, and Amos who spoke truth to power. It stretches back before the time of the Israelites’ exodus from slavery and yet includes Moses who spent forty years with sheep in Midian. It stretches back before the time of the patriarchs and matriarchs and yet includes Abraham, Sarah, Isaac, Rebekah, Ishmael, Jacob, Rachel, Leah, Joseph, and his siblings who forged a people while following their sheep. It stretches back before the flood and yet includes Noah who could shepherd animals onto a boat. It stretches back before Adam and Eve, who were given the charge to be stewards of God’s creatures. Of course it stretches all the way back to the time before time, when the Word was spoken and the vibrations of sound caused Creation, when the Creator made the sheep and loved them.

The image of the shepherd is the image of all-embracing tenderness, the provider carrying a newborn lamb in her arms or over his shoulders to keep up with the rest of the flock. The image of the shepherd is the image of all-consuming fierceness, the mama bear facing down the wolves to protect her cubs. And so, the image of the shepherd is the image of all-powerful love—feet calloused from wandering the rugged terrain, hands smoothed from the oils of skin meeting wool, arms hardened from carrying lamb and rod alike, heart softened from looking upon the embodiment of innocence. It is compassionate care. It is constant struggle. It is hard labor. It is love.

“I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep.” When Jesus said those words, the Pharisees had come to question Jesus, to entrap him. Jesus had just healed a blind man on the Sabbath, and in petty retribution they had cut down the man who had been healed. They had expelled him, declaring, “You were born completely in sin! How is it that you dare to teach us?” And Jesus’s response? He

spoke up so that this lamb from his flock would hear his voice and know him. He went to the man who had been blind his whole life and now, after the joy of regaining sight, had been expelled from the community that should have been rejoicing with him. He walked up to him and comforted him. He comforted him with tenderness, holding him and offering him salvation. And he comforted him with fierceness, promising justice for what had been done by the wolves who surrounded them. And so he comforted him with the love of a shepherd. For, Jesus understood that to know Peace, there must be Justice. Know Justice. Know Peace. No Justice. No Peace.

So Jesus stood there with the man who had been formerly blind, facing down the Pharisees who were wolves hiding in shepherds' clothing. He used his voice to bring justice, speaking out against the thieves and bandits who would try to mislead his sheep. He used his voice to bring peace, speaking new life into the healed man, the newest sheep in his flock. "I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep." With the wolves circling, he declared that they would have to get through him before they could get to his flock. They would have to kill him before they could sink one tooth into even one of his lambs. This all-consuming fierceness in the face of injustice, this all-encompassing tenderness for those in harm's way, this all-powerful love that could face down death without blinking—this good shepherd—was an existential threat to the imperial system that would entice sheep into compliance and put them in religious leadership, that would throw the most vulnerable to the wolves, that would build cages to hold the lambs in, that would slaughter the lambs in the name of the law.

Oh, but the Good Shepherd! The good shepherd has absolute power and authority but gives it all up to save the lives of all. The good shepherd lays down his life so that others do not have to do so. The good shepherd goes after the one who is lost even though he has 99 others to look after. The good shepherd amplifies his voice so that the lost can hear and know that they are found. The good shepherd raises his voice to shake and shatter structures and systems that lock up his lambs because they have different colors or different accents or different documentation. The good shepherd uses his voice to stop the wolves in their tracks, to stop the weapons in their paths. The good shepherd loses his voice in crying and decrying and defying the deaths of his lambs—in Minab, in Darfur, in Khan Yunis, in Beirut, in Shreveport, in Chicago. For, the good shepherd knows firsthand what it is to suffer and die due to the violence of insecure men desperate for power and control.

And the good shepherd lifts up his voice so that his sheep can hear and know that they need not fear, for death will not have the final say. For, the good shepherd has the POWER to lay his own life down and the POWER to pick it up again. And the good shepherd has indeed picked it up again. Oh death, where is your sting? Where is your victory? Jesus of Nazareth rose again from the dead! And he spoke, and his flock knew his voice. "Do not be afraid." "Peace be with you." "I am the good shepherd."

Friends, the wolves are many, and they are circling. They are egging us on to use weapons instead of plowshares. They are trying to convince us that strangers are dangers instead of siblings in our God. They are constructing cages and walls instead of tables and bridges. They are howling because their alpha masculinity is fragile. They are howling because their race is not truly supreme. They are howling because transformation is hard.

But hear the good news! The true Alpha and Omega chose servanthood, chose tenderness, chose mother-like fierceness, chose all-encompassing love, chose to be the good shepherd who is always with the flock, following us wherever we may wander in order to graze. The good shepherd is calling out to us in the songs of nature, in the strains of music, in the protests of prophets, in the cries of newborns, in the voices of those who care, of those who love. And the good shepherd is even calling out to those howling wolves, offering a hand instead of the rod and saying, "I love you, too, and I need you to change! Come, follow me, and I will give you rest!" And the prophet prophesied: "The wolf will live with the lamb, and the leopard will lie down with the young goat; the calf and the young lion will feed together, and a little child will lead them."

A psalm from one good shepherd about the best shepherd:

“The LORD is my shepherd.

I lack nothing.

² He lets me rest in grassy meadows;

he leads me to restful waters;

³ he keeps me alive.

He guides me in proper paths

for the sake of his good name.

⁴ Even when I walk through the darkest valley,

I fear no danger because you are with me.

Your rod and your staff—

they protect me.

⁵ You set a table for me

right in front of my enemies.

You bathe my head in oil;

my cup is so full it spills over!

⁶ Yes, goodness and faithful love

will pursue me all the days of my life,

and I will live in the LORD’s house

as long as I live.”

Amen

Thrupp's *Hymns for the Young*, 1836

William Batchelder Bradbury, 1859

1. Sav - ior, like a shep-herd lead us, Much we need Thy ten - der care;
 2. Thou hast prom-ised to re - ceive us, Poor and sin - ful though we be;
 3. Ear - ly let us seek Thy fa - vor; Ear - ly let us do Thy will;

In Thy pleas-ant pas-tures feed us, For our use Thy folds pre-pare:
 Thou hast mer - cy to re - lieve us, Grace to cleanse, and power to free:
 Bless-ed Lord and on - ly Sav - ior, With Thy love our bo - soms fill:

Bless-ed Je - sus, bless-ed Je - sus, Thou hast bought us, Thine we are;
 Bless-ed Je - sus, bless-ed Je - sus, Ear - ly let us turn to Thee;
 Bless-ed Je - sus, bless-ed Je - sus, Thou hast loved us, love us still;

Bless-ed Je - sus, bless-ed Je - sus, Thou hast bought us, Thine we are.
 Bless-ed Je - sus, bless-ed Je - sus, Ear - ly let us turn to Thee.
 Bless-ed Je - sus, bless-ed Je - sus, Thou hast loved us, love us still.

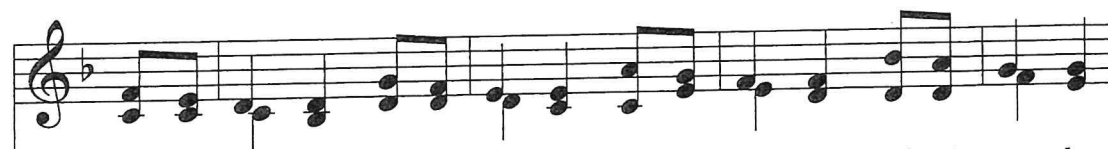
410 God Is Calling through the Whisper



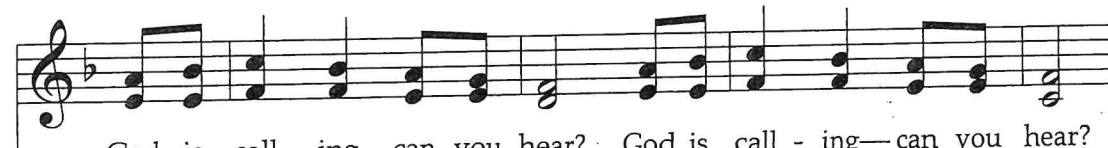
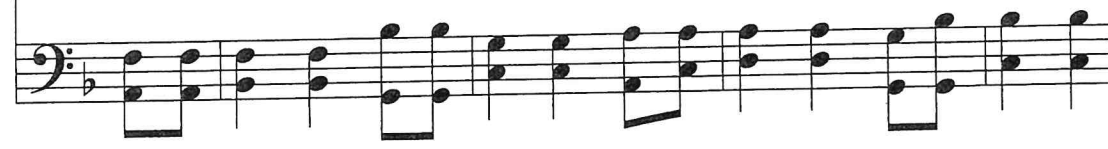
1 God is call-ing through the whis-per of the Spir - it's deep-est sighs,
2 God is call-ing through the voic-es of our neigh-bors' ur-gent prayers,
3 God is call-ing through the mu-sic of sub-lime and hu-man arts,



through the thrill of sud-den beau-ties that can catch us by sur-prise.
through their long-ing for re-demp-tion and for res-cue from de-spair.
through the hymns of earth and an-gels, and the car-ols of our hearts.



Flash of light-ning, crash of thun-der; hush of still-ness, rush of won-der:
Place of hurt or face of need-ing; stri-dent cry or si-lent plead-ing:
Lift of joy and gift of sing-ing; days and nights our prais-es bring-ing:



God is call - ing—can you hear? God is call - ing—can you hear?
God is call - ing—can you hear? God is call - ing—can you hear?
God is call - ing—and we hear! God is call - ing—and we hear!

