

July 18, 2021 + 10:30 A.M.
Eighth Sunday after Pentecost

We Join in Worship

PRELUDE “In the Garden”

C. Austin Miles arr. Martha Mier

I come to the garden alone while the dew is still on the roses, and the voice I hear falling on ear the Son of God discloses. And he walks with me and he talks with me, and he tells me I am his own; and the joy we share as we tarry there, none other has ever known.

***THE PEACE OF CHRIST**

Christ's peace is with us always, no matter where we may be. And so, Christ's peace is with each and every one of us in this moment. Let us take it in. Let us really feel it. If able, please stand where you are, look around, and make signs of Christ's peace to each other. If you are at home, give somebody a call after the service to share Christ's peace!

*** CALL TO WORSHIP** (Adapted from *Psalms* 89)

Leader: We will sing of your steadfast love, O LORD, forever; with our mouths we will proclaim your faithfulness to all generations.

ALL: We declare that your steadfast love is established forever; your faithfulness is as firm as the heavens.

Leader: You said, “I have made a covenant with my chosen one, I have sworn to my servant David: ‘I will establish your descendants forever, and build your throne for all generations.’”

ALL: Let the heavens praise your wonders, O LORD, your faithfulness in the assembly of the holy ones.

Leader: For who in the skies can be compared to the LORD? Who among the heavenly beings is like the LORD, a God feared in the council of the holy ones, great and awesome above all that are around him?

ALL: O LORD God of hosts, who is as mighty as you, O LORD? Your faithfulness surrounds you. You rule the raging of the sea; when its waves rise, you still them. The heavens are yours, the earth also is yours; the world and all that is in it—you have founded them. We worship you, O God!

***OPENING HYMN (Gentle singing):** “A Mighty Fortress” (260)

INVITATION TO CONFESSION:

Leader: The author of *Ephesians* writes, “You who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ.” Let us confess our sins with the knowledge that we are near to our God through the constant intercession of Jesus Christ.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION (unison)

O God, we join our hearts and voices in confession, assured of your grace. We confess that we try to put you in boxes and buildings in order to contain you. We attempt to define you according to who and how we want you to be. We seek to re-create you in our own image and likeness. We do these things because we want to use you for our own agendas. We want to use you to justify our unjust systems. We want to use you to maintain our status quo. We want to use you for our own power. In all of this, we deny the truths that you are everywhere and that you are here for everyone. We deny the expansiveness of your being and the unconditionality of your love. Forgive us for treating you as an idol. Forgive us for exploiting your name for our own purposes. Help us to embrace and embody your commitment to all of creation. In the name of Jesus Christ we pray. Amen.

KYRIE (Gentle singing)

Lord, have mercy upon us.
Christ, have mercy upon us.
Lord, have mercy upon us.

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

Leader: Friends, hear the good news! Through Jesus Christ we have access in one Spirit to the Father. We are members of the household of God. In Jesus Christ we are forgiven!

ALL: Hallelujah! Thanks be to God!

GLORIA PATRI (Gentle Singing)

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

STATEMENT OF FAITH: (adapted from *The Second Helvetic Confession*)

We believe that all things in heaven and on earth, and in all creatures, are preserved and governed by the providence of this wise, eternal and almighty God. For David testifies and says: “The Lord is high above all nations, and his glory above the heavens! Who is like the Lord our God, who is seated on high, who looks far down upon the heavens and the earth?”

<h2>We Hear God’s Word</h2>

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION: (Unison)

O Lord, your Word is a lamp to our feet and a light to our path. Give us grace to receive your truth in faith and love, and strength to follow on the path you set before us; through Jesus Christ, Amen.

HEBREW BIBLE LESSON: *2 Samuel 7:1-14a*

EPISTLE LESSON: *Ephesians 2:11-22*

GOSPEL LESSON: *Mark 6:45-56*

SERMON: Beyond the Walls

MUSICAL MEDITATION “Shine, Jesus, Shine”

Graham Kendrick

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

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.

OFFERING INVITATION:

Leader: God is constantly seeking to be present throughout Creation, to *connect* with each and every one of us wherever we may be. Let us give our tithes and offerings so that we may help those around us to connect with our God who is Love. If you are here in person today and have not yet done so, please place your offering in the plate as you leave. If you are here virtually today, please mail in your checks or use our online giving option. Now let us take a moment to reflect on stewardship as we hear the offertory.

OFFERTORY “As the Deer”

Martin J. Nystrom (Dedicated to Arletta Schaefer)

***DOXOLOGY (Gentle singing)**

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;

Praise God, all creatures here below;

Praise God, above, ye heavenly host;

Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

PRAYER OF DEDICATION: (Unison)

O God, we dedicate these gifts to you and your expansive love. Help us to use them to connect with others and to help all whom we encounter to connect with you. Give us wisdom in the work of making your presence known outside of our building walls. In the name of Jesus Christ we pray. Amen.

***CLOSING HYMN (Gentle Singing):** “Love Divine, All Loves Excelling” (376)

We Go Into the World

BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE “You Have Come Down to the Lakeshore”

Casareo Gabarain

Life of the Church

Announcements

- **BRING YOUR OWN BIBLE** Our weekly virtual Bible study is Wednesdays from 7:00-8:00 PM on Zoom. Watch your email for a link. All are welcome! We start with a new passage each week, so there is no way to fall behind!
- **SUMMER BOOK CLUB WITH THE PRESBYTERY** It isn't too late to join the presbytery's study of *The Person You Mean to Be* by Dolly Chugh. Get your book and jump into our conversation on implicit bias and the *Matthew 25* call to dismantle structural racism. Here is the link to join the Facebook group: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/301921588142803>. Ask Pastor Tyler if you have any questions!

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

- **BLESSING BOX** Our Blessing Box has gained even more importance in this season of pandemic. Economic impacts are on the rise, and the most vulnerable in our midst are the most harmed. 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 on food items before donating them.
- **GOT SNEAKERS FUNDRAISER** We are collecting pairs of gently worn, used and new sneakers to help earn money for our projects and programs here at FPCH and help the environment at the same time! Can we count on you? Blue bins for the shoes will be located in the sanctuary narthex and inside door D by the office.
- **LETTERS OF ENCOURAGEMENT FOR OUR ZAMBIAN PARTNERS** Please write a letter, select some verses, draw a picture, color, or put something else on the page to encourage our siblings at Chimwemwe Presbyterian Church in Kitwe, Zambia, as they face some of the worst days of the COVID-19 pandemic. There is a box for them in the narthex. We will be mailing them at the end of July. This is a great way to engage in mission and community building within the body of Christ! Talk to Pastor Tyler if you have any questions.

Prayer List

Anthony
Ellen
Avery
Barbara Nelson
Brady Vanes
Sonny Buono
Ina Chappell
Danielle
Dave
George Griner
Guy
Gracie Helmer
Bill Holmes
Daniel Litwicki
Frank
David Markley
Tony Martinez
David Kingen
Garry Sknerski
Carmelo
Diana Mendoza
John Mullen
Steve Frankenberger

Jessica
Mildred
Jill Muller
Jeanne Nestor
U. Chong
Rodney
Calvin Scott
Jay Smith
Bonita Sutton
Steve & Melinda
Gary Studer
Tarsha
Richard Terpstra
Mattie Welch
Laura Buono Domsic
Susan Hanley
Kevin Windstrup
Ruth Dekker
Jimmy Leyva
Rick Parker
Barbara Morton
Cale
The family of Stephanie

2 Samuel 7:1-14

7 Now when the king was settled in his house, and the Lord had given him rest from all his enemies around him, 2 the king said to the prophet Nathan, "See now, I am living in a house of cedar, but the ark of God stays in a tent." 3 Nathan said to the king, "Go, do all that you have in mind; for the Lord is with you."

4 But that same night the word of the Lord came to Nathan: 5 Go and tell my servant David: Thus says the Lord: Are you the one to build me a house to live in? 6 I have not lived in a house since the day I brought up the people of Israel from Egypt to this day, but I have been moving about in a tent and a tabernacle. 7 Wherever I have moved about among all the people of Israel, did I ever speak a word with any of the tribal leaders of Israel, whom I commanded to shepherd my people Israel, saying, "Why have you not built me a house of cedar?" 8 Now therefore thus you shall say to my servant David: Thus says the Lord of hosts: I took you from the pasture, from following the sheep to be prince over my people Israel; 9 and I have been with you wherever you went, and have cut off all your enemies from before you; and I will make for you a great name, like the name of the great ones of the earth. 10 And I will appoint a place for my people Israel and will plant them, so that they may live in their own place, and be disturbed no more; and evildoers shall afflict them no more, as formerly, 11 from the time that I appointed judges over my people Israel; and I will give you rest from all your enemies. Moreover the Lord declares to you that the Lord will make you a house. 12 When your days are fulfilled and you lie down with your ancestors, I will raise up your offspring after you, who shall come forth from your body, and I will establish his kingdom. 13 He shall build a house for my name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever. 14 I will be a father to him, and he shall be a son to me.

Ephesians 2:11-22

¹¹ So then, remember that at one time you Gentiles by birth, called “the uncircumcision” by those who are called “the circumcision”—a physical circumcision made in the flesh by human hands—¹² remember that you were at that time without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world. ¹³ But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ. ¹⁴ For he is our peace; in his flesh he has made both groups into one and has broken down the dividing wall, that is, the hostility between us. ¹⁵ He has abolished the law with its commandments and ordinances, that he might create in himself one new humanity in place of the two, thus making peace, ¹⁶ and might reconcile both groups to God in one body through the cross, thus putting to death that hostility through it. ¹⁷ So he came and proclaimed peace to you who were far off and peace to those who were near; ¹⁸ for through him both of us have access in one Spirit to the Father. ¹⁹ So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are citizens with the saints and also members of the household of God, ²⁰ built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the cornerstone. ²¹ In him the whole structure is joined together and grows into a holy temple in the Lord; ²² in whom you also are built together spiritually into a dwelling place for God.

Mark 6:45-56

⁴⁵ Immediately he made his disciples get into the boat and go on ahead to the other side, to Bethsaida, while he dismissed the crowd. ⁴⁶ After saying farewell to them, he went up on the mountain to pray. ⁴⁷ When evening came, the boat was out on the sea, and he was alone on the land. ⁴⁸ When he saw that they were straining at the oars against an adverse wind, he came towards them early in the morning, walking on the sea. He intended to pass them by. ⁴⁹ But when they saw him walking on the sea, they thought it was a ghost and cried out; ⁵⁰ for they all saw him and were terrified. But immediately he spoke to them and said, “Take heart, it is I; do not be afraid.” ⁵¹ Then he got into the boat with them and the wind ceased. And they were utterly astounded, ⁵² for they did not understand about the loaves, but their hearts were hardened. ⁵³ When they had crossed over, they came to land at Gennesaret and moored the boat. ⁵⁴ When they got out of the boat, people at once recognized him, ⁵⁵ and rushed about that whole region and began to bring the sick on mats to wherever they heard he was. ⁵⁶ And wherever he went, into villages or cities or farms, they laid the sick in the marketplaces, and begged him that they might touch even the fringe of his cloak; and all who touched it were healed.

Beyond the Walls

2 Samuel 7:1-14a; Ephesians 2:11-22; Mark 6:45-56

I know that we’ve talked about the song “The Days of Elijah” before. It is a wonderfully catchy song about God’s saving power throughout the trials and travails of the Hebrew Bible. “Behold he comes, riding on the clouds, shining like the sun, at the trumpet’s call! Lift your voice, it’s the year of Jubilee, and out of Zion’s hill salvation comes!” Really, I love this tune that is belted out at camps and youth groups across the world. I have one major problem, though. In the second verse, it says, “And these are the days of your servant David, rebuilding the temple of praise.” DAVID DOES NOT REBUILD THE TEMPLE OF PRAISE. Yes, it seems to be an obsession of his. Very soon after dancing before the LORD as the ark of the Covenant is paraded in, he realizes that he has a beautiful home of cedar while the presence of the LORD is still in the ark, essentially homeless. So he makes plans with the prophet Nathan to build a temple, but the LORD stops him in his tracks. David comes back to it over and over, but each time he is rebuffed. It simply will not happen while David still lives. God will not allow David, his beloved, to do that which David desires most. So, contrary to popular belief, and contrary to “The Days of Elijah,” DAVID DOES NOT REBUILD THE TEMPLE OF PRAISE.

As our reading today tells it, YHWH the LORD comes to Nathan the prophet and says: “Go and tell my servant David: ‘Are you the one to build me a house to live in? I have not lived in a house since the day I brought up the people of Israel from Egypt to this day, but I have been moving about in a tent and a tabernacle.’”

David is ready to build a house for the LORD, to put a place of worship at the center of the new kingdom. But God refuses this honor. Why, when the Israelites are at their brightest—after being united and raising a good king and dancing in the presence of the LORD—why in this most auspicious of times does the LORD say, “No”?

You may recall last week that we discussed how the ark of the covenant went with the Israelites wherever they went while they wandered in the wilderness, longing and searching for the promised land. They were displaced peoples, migrants fleeing violence and poverty and slavery, transgressing boundaries and borders, seeking safety. They were homeless—without a land to call their own and without structures to provide shelter. They were hungry. They were thirsty. They were tired. Then, the ark of the covenant was with the Israelites when they moved throughout the land of Canaan and faced constant war under the leadership of the judges. They were scared. They were unstable. They were traumatized. As they wandered, as they warred, they were so weary. They were so vulnerable! So God was *with* them at their most vulnerable.

And then, once they find safety, security, and stability, the LORD says, “I have not lived in a house since the day I brought up the people of Israel from Egypt to this day, but I have been moving about in a tent and a tabernacle. Did I ever speak a word saying, ‘Why have you not built me a house of cedar?’” God CHOOSES to live amongst the people at their most vulnerable. And I can guarantee you: even when the kingdoms of Israel and Judah were finally united, even when David had become a king in all his glory, even when the people were sitting at the height of regional power, and especially when the borders were secured with walls and weapons, or fences (sound familiar?)—there were still vulnerable, displaced, violated, exploited, hungry, thirsty, poor, and homeless people among the Israelites. As long as they were there, the LORD would remain outside, beyond the walls. The LORD basically says, “**While any of my people are homeless, I too shall be homeless.**”

So, is God content with the structures of cedar, or brick, that we build in the town centers to house God? Or, is God out camping and tabernacling in the streets and in the desert crossings, amongst those displaced, those without a home, those who are kept out and excluded beyond the walls? I am sure that most of us, like David, think that God deserves to have the best dwelling place of all, but for God having a house was not the same as having a home. For, God’s home was with the people most desperately in need of God’s presence. And that, my friends, is the first reason that God says NO to David’s offer of a Cedar House. Even given David’s triumph, there were still plenty of people still lost in the wilderness, stuck beyond the walls. And there are still many millions of displaced, homeless, excluded people today. People have been wandering in that wilderness for thousands of years, not just those original forty!

The second reason is quite simply that our God is a restless God. We learn early in *1 Samuel* that the LORD is very weary of the idea of Israel settling down and forming a kingdom. In addition to not wanting the people to create an idol out of a man and so to turn to a king rather than to God, I think that the LORD did not like the idea of settling down. The Hebrew Bible is full of movement. The LORD commands Abraham to journey to find the Promised Land. The LORD leads the people out of Egypt and moves with them as a mighty column of fire and smoke and as a presence in an ark. The LORD rushes to Job in a whirlwind. The LORD journeys with Ruth as she travels to a strange land. The LORD’s people move, and the LORD moves with them. And then, of course, in the Gospels, the Word becomes flesh and *tabernacles* among us. The story of our Lord and Saviour is that of Jesus moving from place to place and spreading a message of love and hope. And the disciples follow him all over the countryside; they DO NOT stay put.

Across the world today, people are on the *move* because they recognize that they cannot truly feel at home while injustice and violence rage on. These people on the move create what are called movements. They take to the streets beyond the walls where so many fellow humans have been relegated as we have discussed. And let me tell you, *home* is of greatest importance to those people whose livelihoods are being taken away. And *home* is very connected to the land, the specific place where we all live. I fully understand the longing of

the Israelites to be in one place that would be their refuge, their nourishment, their traditions, their *home*. And I do not think God is in any way opposed to the idea of a home. God is, however, against the complacency that home often brings. Especially for those of us who have monopolized power in the world and have the luxury of comfortability. We get settled into our ways, become insular, and start to worry only about me and my own. Instead of home serving as the ROOT from which we grow and flourish, it becomes a RUT into which we fall. A rut of daily routine, which becomes yearly routine, which becomes life routine. One of my favorite hymns cries out, "Spirit, Spirit of restlessness, stir me from placidness—Wind, Wind on the sea!" The Spirit of God urges us not to settle into routine and inactivity, not to ignore what is going on in our world, not to live only *for* the place we call home. We are called to be a restless people with a restless God. We are to be active in the continual creation of our world.

Growing up, we always had a little plaque on our wall that said, "*Home* is where you hang your *heart*." I ask today, where is it that we hang our hearts? Do we hang them in the halls of power? Do we hang them on giant fences to keep people out? Do we hang them in for-profit prisons? Do we hang them on policies and programs that limit access to housing and healthcare? Do we hang them in storehouses of grain that create scarcity for everybody else? In the houses of Cedar? OR Do we hang our hearts in the streets of our towns and cities, across the deserts of Arizona and Texas, amidst the refugee camps of the West Bank and Lebanon and Jordan and Kenya and Mexico, and amongst the people who are moving in Hong Kong, in Cuba, in South Africa, in Haiti? Do we make our homes as God chose to do so, by camping out with the most vulnerable so that they might feel the presence of God even in the mess of the worst that humanity has to offer? We must seek out the places that need our love and our hope. We must be active in the struggle for justice for those in the wilderness of our society, stuck beyond the walls. We must make sure that all people have a *home*.

Now, back to our song. One line in "The Days of Elijah" says, "But we are the voice in the desert crying, 'Prepare ye the way of the Lord!'" Where and how can we prepare the way of the Lord, if the Lord would not even let David, the LORD's beloved, prepare a temple of praise? How can we give God the glory and honor that belongs to God alone? In other words, what type of home would be satisfying to our God? I will give you a hint: it is not a house of cedar. Our text from Ephesians today says, "So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are citizens with the saints and also members of the household of God, built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the cornerstone. In him the whole structure is joined together and grows into a holy temple in the Lord; in whom you also are built together spiritually into a dwelling place for God."

Hear the good news! When we no longer have a society that considers others strangers and aliens, when all people are welcomed to the Kin-dom of love, when we live in and for community, then we ourselves will be the dwelling place for God, a holy temple in the Lord. Hey! Look at that! We are worshiping beyond the walls today! I certainly feel God out here. Don't you? Amen.

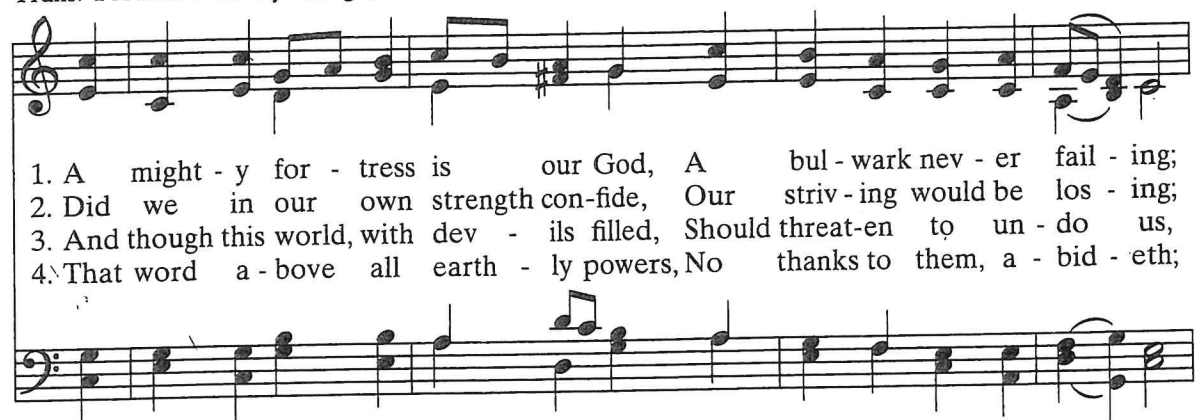
A Mighty Fortress Is Our God

EIN' FESTE BURG (isometric) 8.7.8.7.6.6.6.6.7

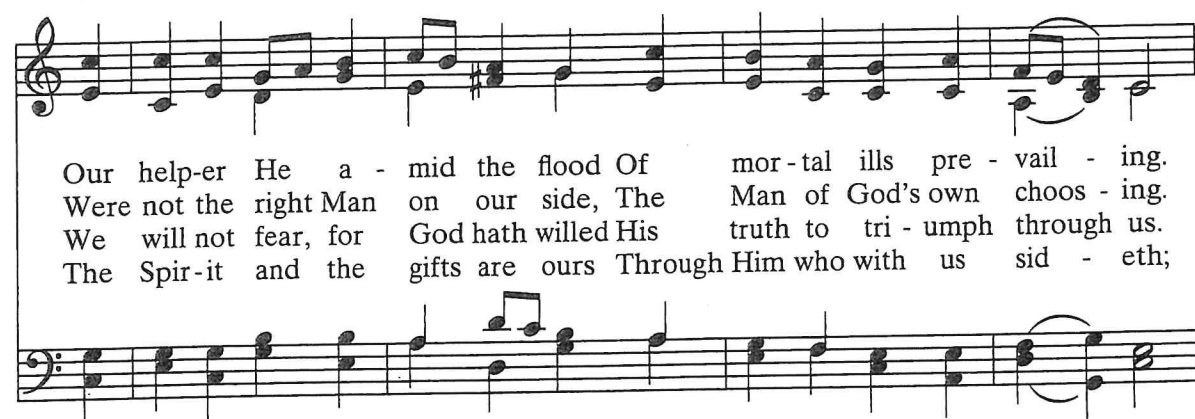
Martin Luther, 1529

Trans. Frederick Henry Hedge, 1852

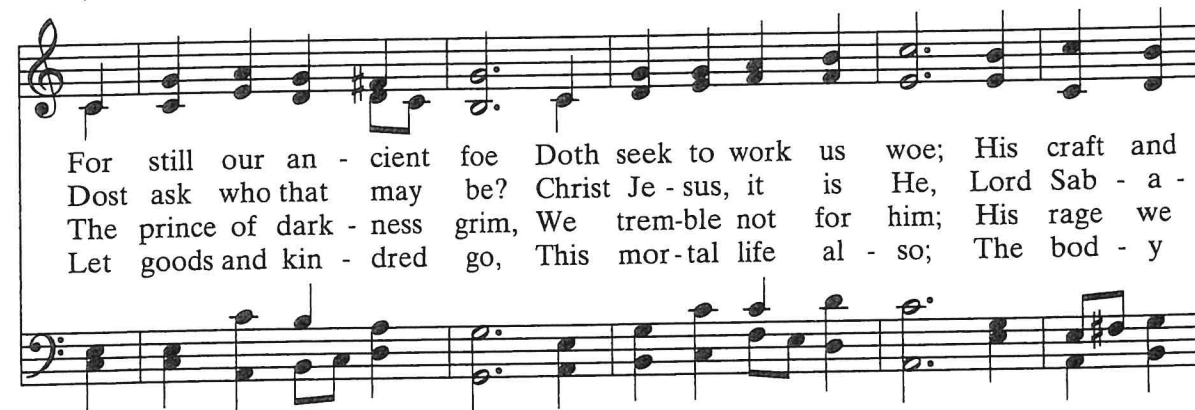
Martin Luther, 1529



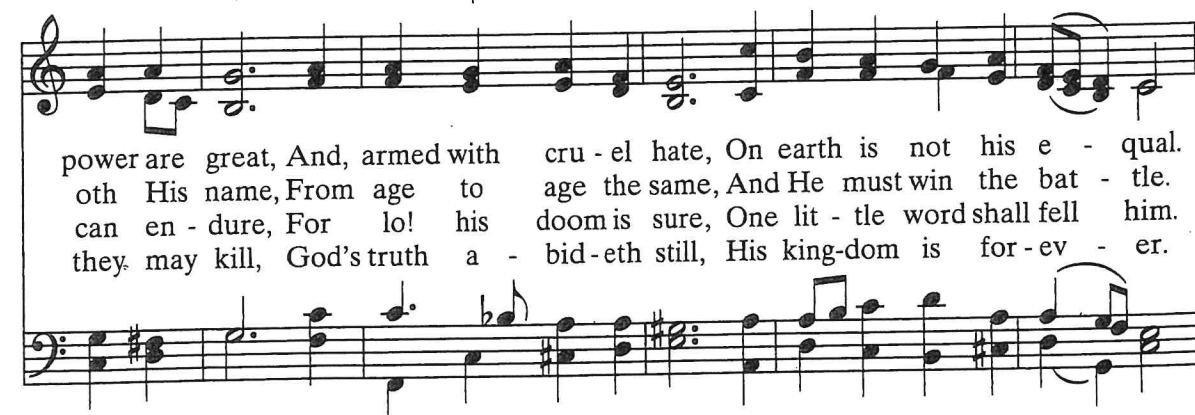
1. A might - y for - tress is our God, A bul - wark nev - er fail - ing;
 2. Did we in our own strength con-fide, Our striv - ing would be los - ing;
 3. And though this world, with dev - ils filled, Should threat-en to un - do us,
 4. That word a - bove all earth - ly powers, No thanks to them, a - bid - eth;



Our help-er He a - mid the flood Of mor - tal ills pre - vail - ing.
 Were not the right Man on our side, The Man of God's own choos - ing.
 We will not fear, for God hath willed His truth to tri - umph through us.
 The Spir-it and the gifts are ours Through Him who with us sid - eth;



For still our an - cient foe Doth seek to work us woe; His craft and
 Dost ask who that may be? Christ Je - sus, it is He, Lord Sab - a -
 The prince of dark - ness grim, We trem-ble not for him; His rage we
 Let goods and kin - dred go, This mor-tal life al - so; The bod - y



power are great, And, armed with cru - el hate, On earth is not his e - qual.
 oth His name, From age to age the same, And He must win the bat - tle.
 can en - dure, For lo! his doom is sure, One lit - tle word shall fell him.
 they may kill, God's truth a - bid-eth still, His king-dom is for-ev - er.

Charles Wesley, 1747

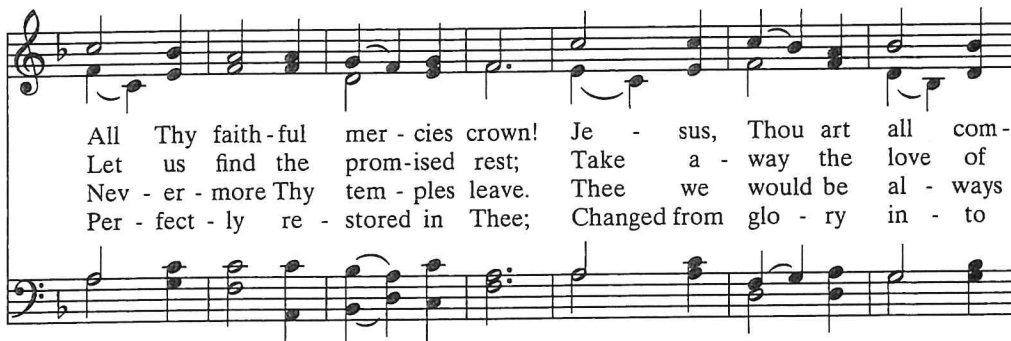
Rowland Hugh Prichard, 1831



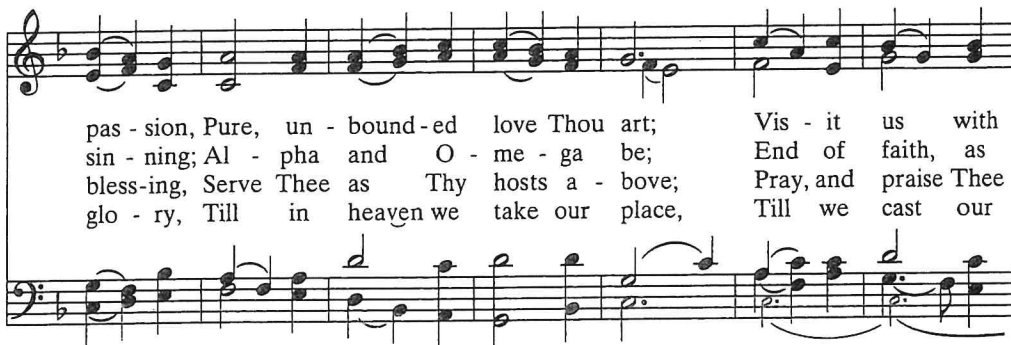
1. Love di - vine, all loves ex - cel - ling, Joy of heaven, to
 2. Breathe, O breathe Thy lov - ing Spir - it In - to ev - ery
 3. Come, Al - might - y to de - liv - er, Let us all Thy
 4. Fin - ish, then, Thy new cre - a - tion; Pure and spot - less



earth come down, Fix in us Thy hum - ble dwell - ing,
 trou - bled breast! Let us all in Thee in - her - it,
 life re - ceive; Sud - den - ly re - turn, and nev - er,
 let us be; Let us see Thy great sal - va - tion



All Thy faith - ful mer - cies crown! Je - sus, Thou art all com -
 Let us find the prom - ised rest; Take a - way the love of
 Nev - er - more Thy tem - ples leave. Thee we would be al - ways
 Per - fect - ly re - stored in Thee; Changed from glo - ry in - to



pas - sion, Pure, un - bound - ed love Thou art; Vis - it us with
 sin - ning; Al - pha and O - me - ga be; End of faith, as
 bless - ing, Serve Thee as Thy hosts a - bove; Pray, and praise Thee
 glo - ry, Till in heaven we take our place, Till we cast our



Thy sal - va - tion, En - ter ev - ery trem - bling heart.
 its be - gin - ning, Set our hearts at lib - er - ty.
 with - out ceas - ing, Glo - ry in Thy per - fect love.
 crowns be - fore Thee, Lost in won - der, love, and praise.