FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Benton Harbor



To Each According to Their Ability
Isaiah 43 + Judges 3:15-26 + Matthew 25:14-30
November 15, 2026 • 33rd Sunday in Ordinary Time

We Are Welcomed

Welcome

Opening Prayer

"The Social Model of Disability" by Eddie Rose

Prelude + Setting the Table for Worship

"The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overtake it." John 1:5

We light the Christ Candle each week as a reminder that Christ – the One who shines brightly in the darkness – is ever-present with us, not only here in worship, but in our every day life.

"…we were buried with him by baptism into death, so that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, so we also might walk in newness of life." Romans 6:4

We pour water into the font each week as a reminder of our own baptism – that moment when we connected with God's creative purpose, cleansing power, and redemptive promise.

We Are Gathered

The Call to Worship *based on Isaiah 43*

Who created you? Who formed you?
Who knows you by name?
The Eternal One. The Holy One. Our Savior.
To God we are all precious and honored and loved.
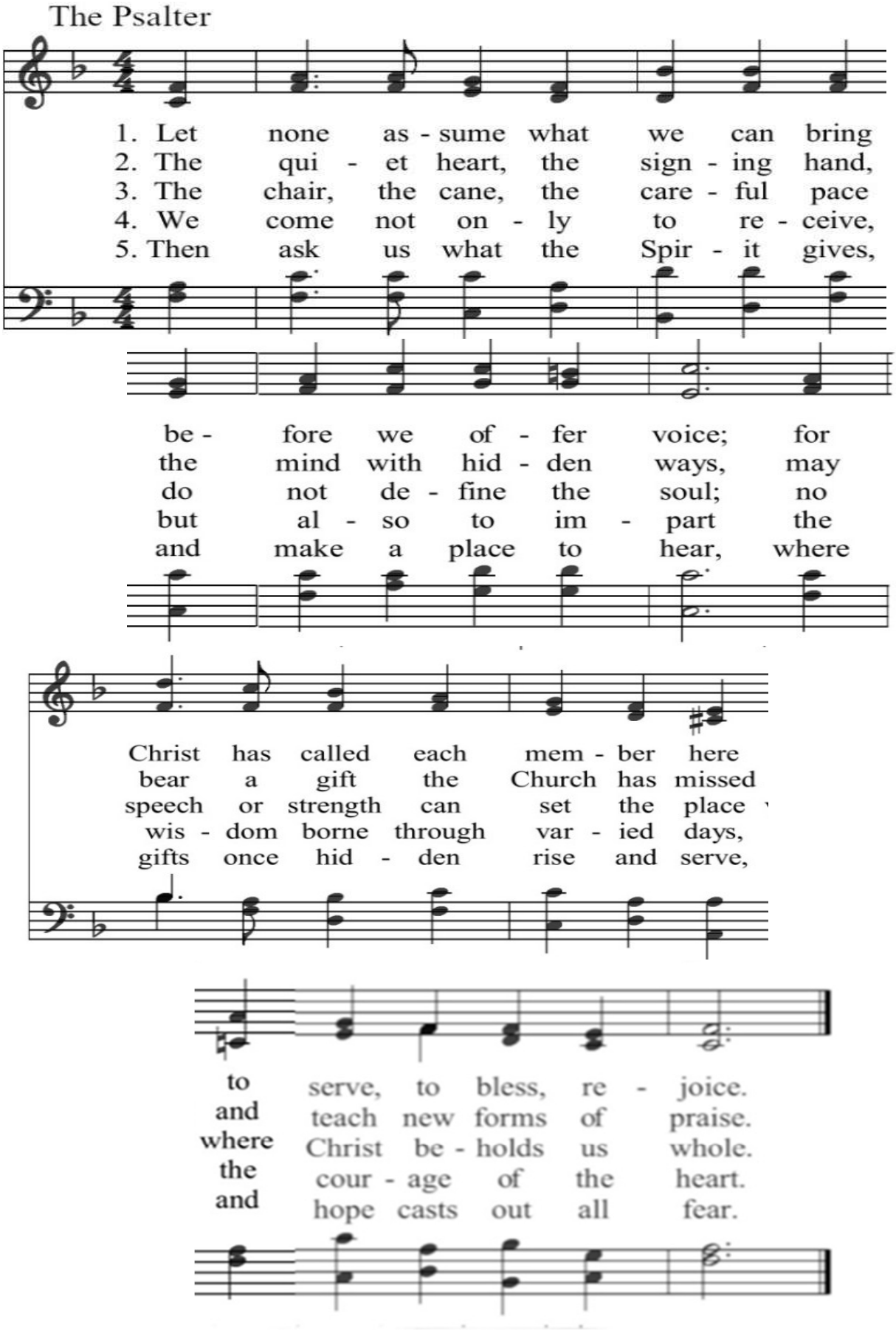
How do you make it through deep waters and not be overwhelmed? How do you walk through fires and not be scorched?
The Eternal One. The Holy One. Our Savior.
To God we are all precious and honored and loved.

How are you not afraid? How do you know you belong?
How do you know God will be with you?
The Eternal One. The Holy One. Our Savior.
To God we are all precious and honored and loved.

Bring forth the people who are blind yet have eyes,
who are deaf yet have ears!
Let all the nations gather together,
and let the peoples assemble.

Song of Praise *Please stand as you are able, in body or in spirit*

Let None Assume What We Can Bring



Call to Confession

The Inclusion Confession (abridged) *by Rabbi Rebecca Schorr*

For the sin that we have sinned before You under duress, willingly, or thorough the hardness of heart; for failing to include every member of our community; for making it difficult for those who aren't like *us* to find *their* places in our synagogues, schools, and organizations; for thinking that we are doing all that we can…

For all these, O God of mercy,
forgive us, pardon us, grant us atonement.

For the sin that we have sinned before You by building ramps without widening doorframes; for dedicating sanctuary space for those with mobility difficulties without constructing accessible bathrooms; for believing we are being inclusive when we don't truly include all…

For all these, O God of mercy,
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For the sin that we have sinned before You by using words to tear down rather than build up; for not removing outdated, outmoded, and unacceptable words from our vocabulary; for standing idly by while family, friends, neighbors, and co-workers, rock stars, sports figures, and pop icons use those hurtful words to describe a person or situation…

For all these, O God of mercy,
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For the sin that we have sinned before You by staring at the child having the tantrum and assuming he needs better discipline; for judging that child's mother rather than offering her a sympathetic glance; for accommodating those with physical limitations while not making accommodations for those with developmental limitations; for not providing support and respite for the parents and caregivers…

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For the sin that we have sinned before You under duress, willingly, or thorough the hardness of heart; for turning away from those who are different; for putting those who seem different into categories such as "less able" or "undesirable"; for failing to recognize a piece of You in every body and every soul…

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Assurance of Forgiveness

Song of Gratitude

"Glory to God, Whose Goodness Shines on Me" *Glory to God #582*

Glory to God, whose goodness shines on me
and to the Son, whose grace has pardoned me
and to the Spirit, whose love has set me free.
As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be, amen.

World without end, without end. Amen.
World without end, without end. Amen.
World without end, without end. Amen.
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Passing of the Peace

We Hear God's Word

Prayer for Illumination

Scripture Reading Matthew 25:14-30 *New Revised Standard Version Updated Edition*

The kingdom of heaven is as if a man, going on a journey, summoned his slaves and entrusted his property to them; to one he gave five talents, to another two, to another one, to each according to his ability. Then he went away. At once the one who had received the five talents went off and traded with them and made five more talents. In the same way, the one who had the two talents made two more talents. But the one who had received the one talent went off and dug a hole in the ground and hid his master's money. After a long time the master of those slaves came and settled accounts with them.

Then the one who had received the five talents came forward, bringing five more talents, saying, 'Master, you handed over to me five talents; see, I have made five more talents.' His master said to him, 'Well done, good and trustworthy slave; you have been trustworthy in a few things; I will put you in charge of many things; enter into the joy of your master.' And the one with the two talents also came forward, saying, 'Master, you handed over to me two talents; see, I have made two more talents.' His master said to him, 'Well done, good and trustworthy slave; you have been trustworthy in a few things; I will put you in charge of many things; enter into the joy of your master.'

Then the one who had received the one talent also came forward, saying, 'Master, I knew that you were a harsh man, reaping where you did not sow and gathering where you did not scatter, so I was afraid, and I went and hid your talent in the ground. Here you have what is yours.' But his master replied, 'You wicked and lazy slave! You knew, did you, that I reap where I did not sow and gather where I did not scatter? Then you ought to have invested my money with the bankers, and on my return I would have received what was my own with interest. So take the talent from him, and give it to the one with the ten talents. For to all those who have, more will be given, and they will have an abundance, but from those who have nothing, even what they have will be taken away. As for this worthless slave, throw him into the outer darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.'
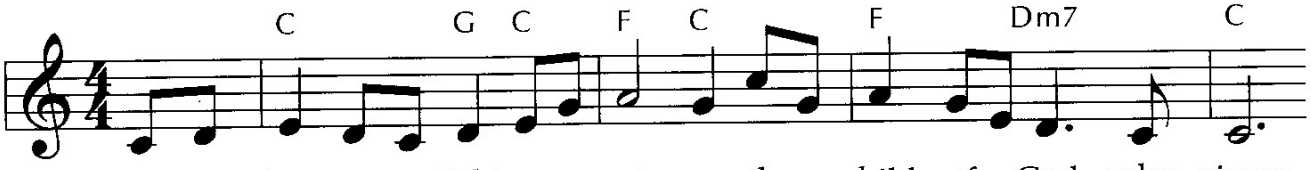
The Word of God for the People of God.
Thanks be to God!

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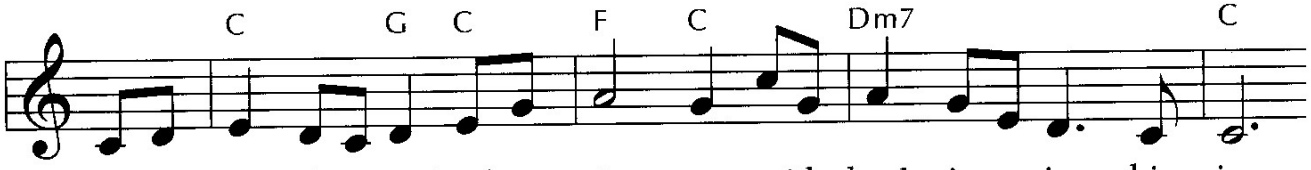
Song of Preparation

Sometimes A Light Surprises *Glory to God #800*
[see next page]
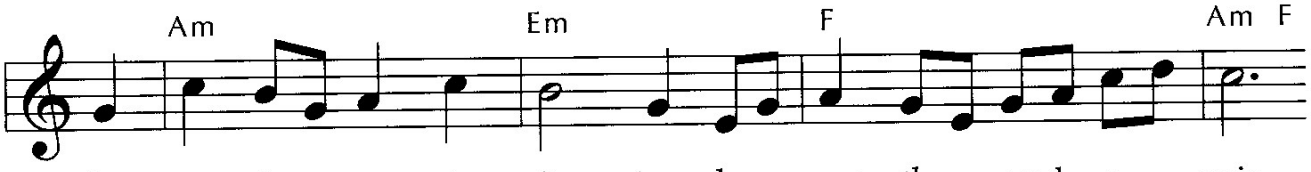
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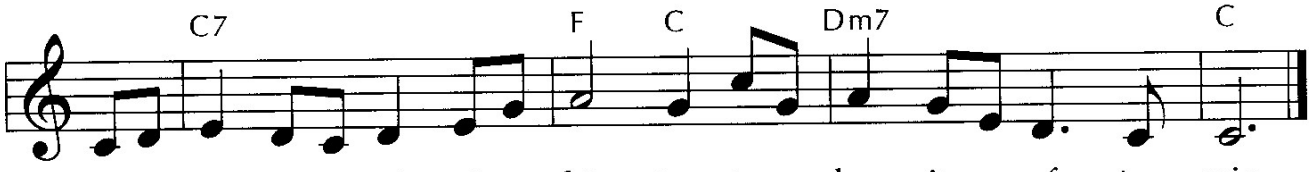


1 Some - times a light sur - pris - es the child of God who sings;
2 In ho - ly con - tem - pla - tion we sweet - ly then pur - sue
3 It can bring with it noth - ing but he will bear us through;
4 Though vine nor fig tree nei - ther their longed - for fruit should bear,



it is the Lord who ris - es with heal - ing in his wings;
the theme of God's sal - va - tion and find it ev - er new;
who gives the lil - ies cloth - ing will clothe his peo - ple, too;
though all the fields should with - er, nor flocks nor herds be there,



when com - forts are de - clin - ing, he grants the soul a - gain
set free from pres - ent sor - row, we cheer - ful - ly can say,
be - neath the spread - ing heav - ens no crea - ture but is fed;
yet God the same a - bid - ing, his praise shall tune my voice;



a sea - son of clear shin - ing to cheer it af - ter rain.
"Let the un - known to - mor - row bring with it what it may."
and he who feeds the ra - vens will give his chil - dren bread.
for while in him con - fid - ing, I can - not but re - joice.

Scripture Reading Judges 3:15-26 *New Revised Standard Version Updated Edition*

But when the Israelites cried out to the Lord, the Lord raised up for them a deliverer, Ehud son of Gera, a Benjaminite, a left-handed man. [His right arm was immobile] The Israelites sent tribute by him to King Eglon of Moab. Ehud made for himself a sword with two edges, a cubit in length, and he fastened it on his right thigh under his clothes.

Then he presented the tribute to King Eglon of Moab. Now Eglon was a very fat man. When Ehud had finished presenting the tribute, he sent the people who carried the tribute on their way. But he himself turned back at the sculptured stones near Gilgal and said, "I have a secret message for you, O king." So the king said, "Silence!" and all his attendants went out from his presence. Ehud came to him, while he was sitting alone in his cool roof chamber, and said, "I have a message from God for you." So he rose from his seat. Then Ehud reached with his left hand, took the sword from his right thigh, and thrust it into Eglon's belly; the hilt also went in after the blade, and the fat closed over the blade, for he did not draw the sword out of his belly, and the dirt came out. Then Ehud went out into the vestibule and closed the doors of the roof chamber on him and locked them.

After he had gone, the servants came. When they saw that the doors of the roof chamber were locked, they thought, "He must be relieving himself in the cool chamber." So they waited until they were embarrassed. When he still did not open the doors of the roof chamber, they took the key and opened them. There was their lord lying dead on the floor.

Ehud escaped while they delayed and passed beyond the sculptured stones and escaped to Seirah.

For the Holy Word written and read, proclaimed and lived:
Thanks be to God!

Proclamation of the Word

To Each According to Their Ability Rev. Sheth LaRue

Moment of Meditation

We Respond to God's Word

The Offertory

Quarter Donations Recipient: Rising Kites Coffee

Doxology *Please stand as you are able, in body or in spirit*

Praise God from whom all blessings flow
Praise Christ all creatures here below
Praise Holy Spirit evermore
Praise Triune God, whom we adore. Amen.

The Prayer of Dedication

Joys + Concerns

Prayers of the People

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 sins as we forgive those who sin against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

Song of Trust

Amen *Glory to God #600*

Announcements

November Book Club *The Light Between Oceans* by M.L. Stedman. Join us for a lively discussion on November 17 at 1130 am.

Community Dinner Thanksgiving and Worship Service - November 19 | Join us for our Thursday Night Community Thanksgiving Dinner at 6 pm (not on Thanksgiving day!) followed by a brief worship service at 715 pm in the sanctuary. All are invited!

Congregational Meeting and Luncheon November 22 in Goff Hall. The purpose of this meeting is to elect ruling Elders, approve the pastor's terms of call for 2027, and approve a change to the By-Laws.

Advent Decorating: Saturday, November 28 – 10 am

We Are Sent by God

Song of Sending *Please stand as you are able, in body or in spirit*

We Are One in the Spirit *Glory to God #300*

[see next page]

Charge + Benediction

Postlude

Words for Reflection

from: Revelations of Divine Love by Julian of Norwich (1343-1416)
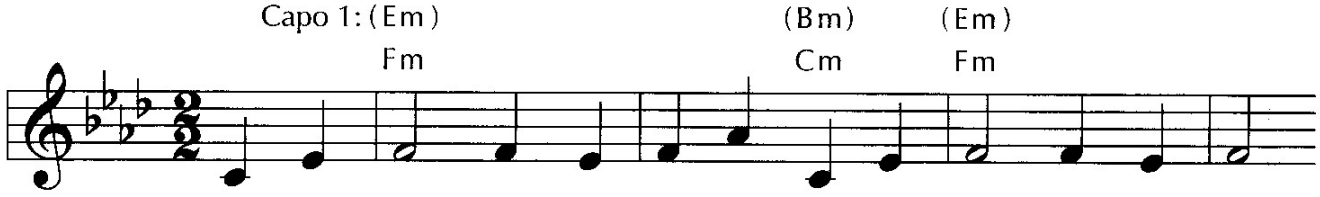
I saw that He is to us everything that is good and comfortable for us: He is our clothing that for love wrappeth us, claspeth us, and all encloseth us for tender love, that He may never leave us; being to us all-thing that is good, as to mine understanding.

Also in this He shewed me a little thing, the quantity of an hazel-nut, in the palm of my hand; and it was as round as a ball. I looked thereupon with eye of my understanding, and thought: *What may this be?* And it was answered generally thus: *it is all that is made*. I marvelled how it might last, for methought it might suddenly have fallen to naught for little[ness]. And I was answered in my understanding: *It lasteth, and ever shall [last] for that God loveth it.* And so All-thing hath the Being by the love of God.
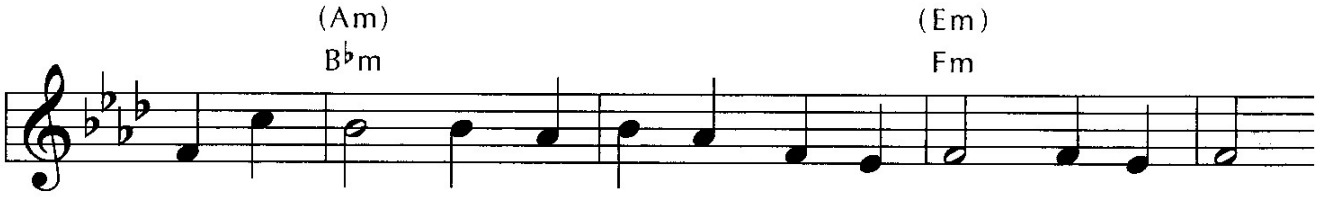
In this Little Thing I saw three properties. The first is that God made it, the second is that God loveth it, the third, that God keepeth it.

We Are One in the Spirit 300
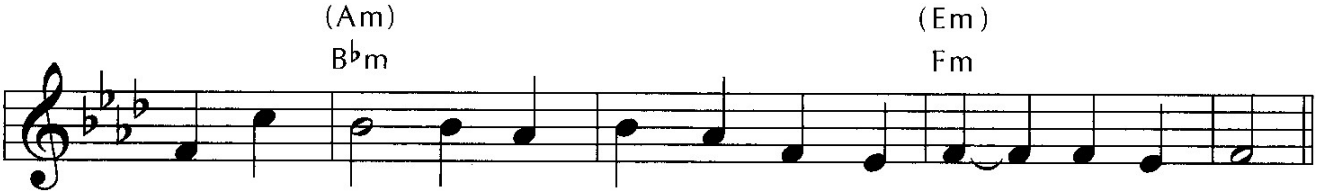
They'll Know We Are Christians by Our Love
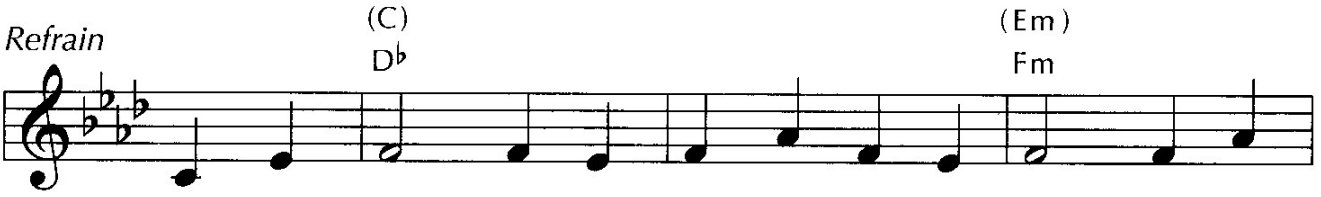


1 We are one in the Spir - it; we are one in the Lord;
2 We will walk with each oth - er; we will walk hand in hand;
3 We will work with each oth - er; we will work side by side;
4 All praise to the Fa - ther, from whom all things come,



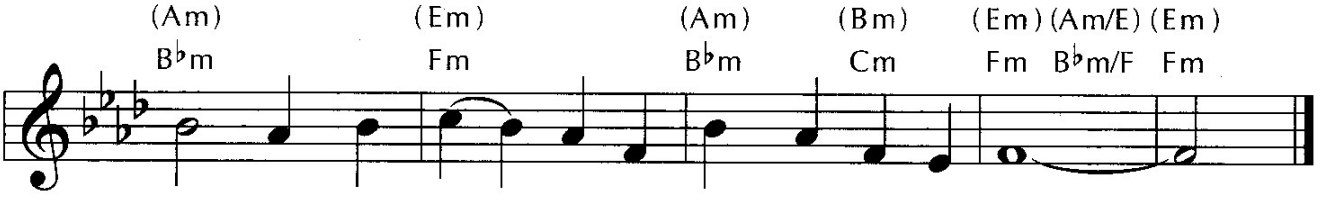
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we will walk with each oth - er; we will walk hand in hand,
we will work with each oth - er; we will work side by side,
and all praise to Christ Je - sus, God's on - ly Son,



and we pray that all u - ni - ty may one day be re - stored:
and to - geth - er we'll spread the news that God is in our land:
and we'll guard hu - man dig - ni - ty and save hu-man pride:
and all praise to the Spir - it, who makes us one:



And they'll know we are Chris-tians by our love, by our



love; yes, they'll know we are Chris-tians by our love.

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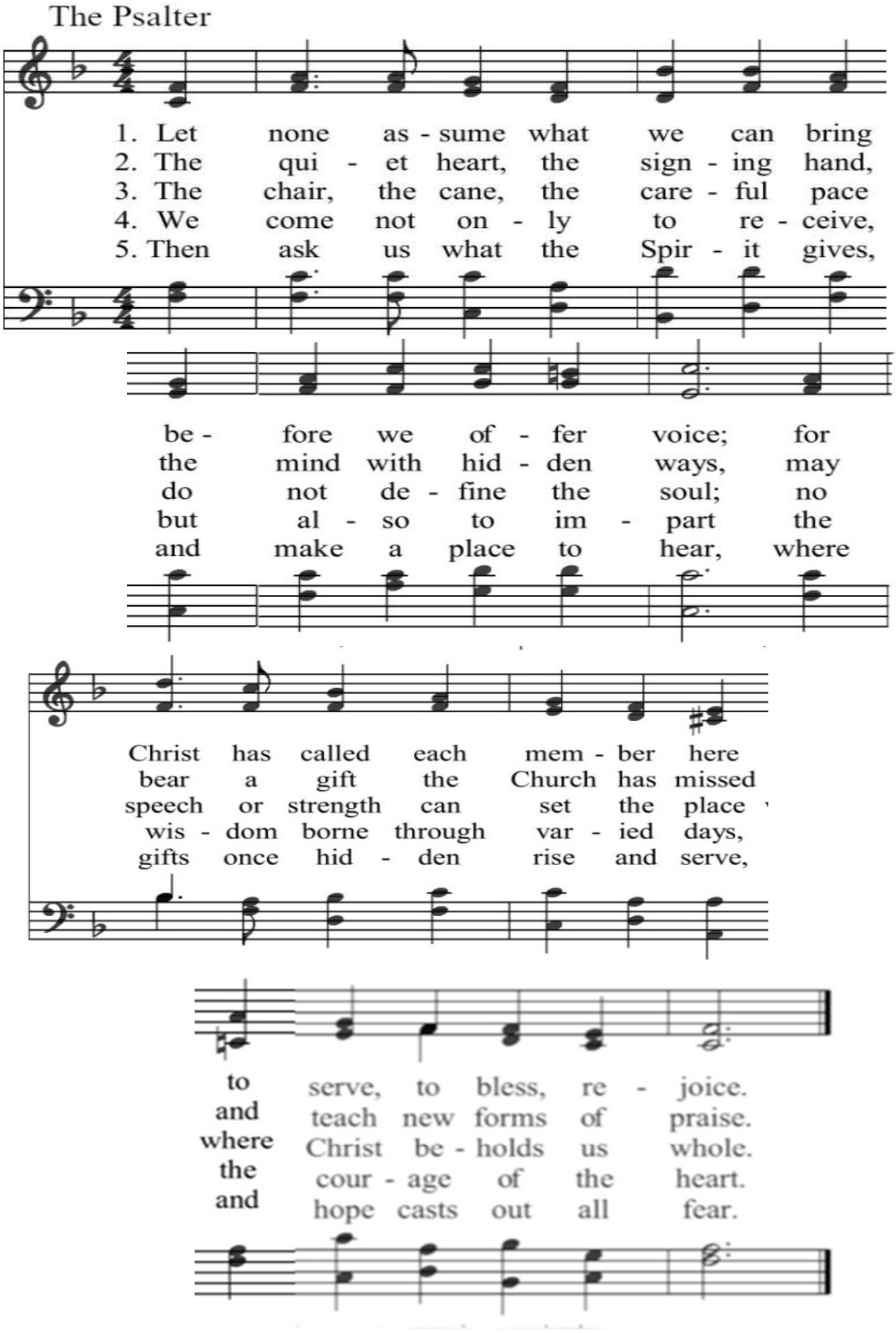
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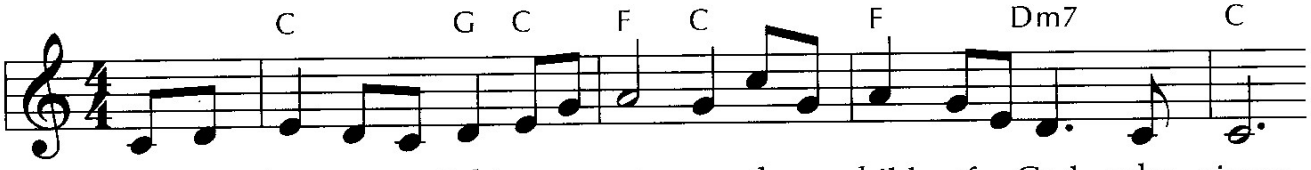
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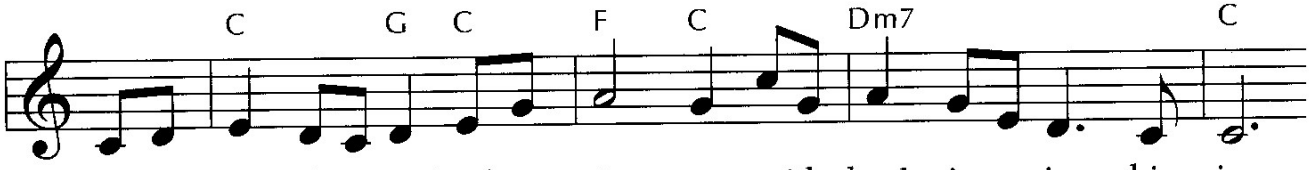
Song of Preparation

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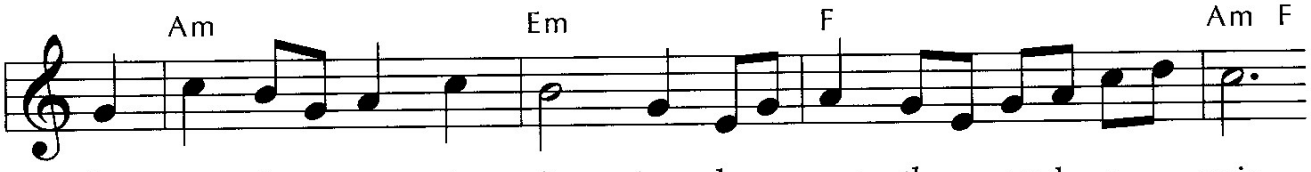
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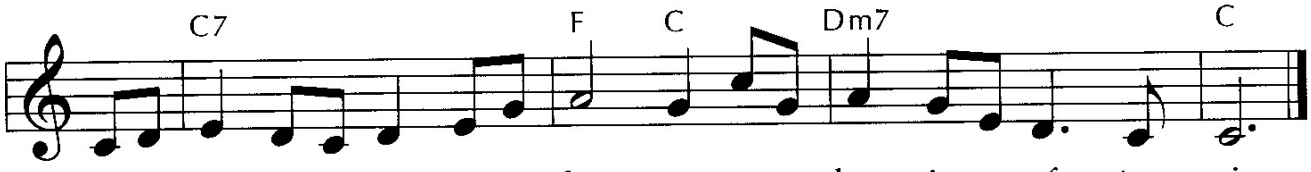


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Praise Holy Spirit evermore
Praise Triune God, whom we adore. Amen.

The Prayer of Dedication

Joys + Concerns

Prayers of the People

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 sins as we forgive those who sin against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

Song of Trust

Amen *Glory to God #600*

Announcements

November Book Club *The Light Between Oceans* by M.L. Stedman. Join us for a lively discussion on November 17 at 1130 am.

Community Dinner Thanksgiving and Worship Service - November 19 | Join us for our Thursday Night Community Thanksgiving Dinner at 6 pm (not on Thanksgiving day!) followed by a brief worship service at 715 pm in the sanctuary. All are invited!

Congregational Meeting and Luncheon November 22 in Goff Hall. The purpose of this meeting is to elect ruling Elders, approve the pastor's terms of call for 2027, and approve a change to the By-Laws.

Advent Decorating: Saturday, November 28 – 10 am

We Are Sent by God

Song of Sending *Please stand as you are able, in body or in spirit*

We Are One in the Spirit *Glory to God #300*

[see next page]

Charge + Benediction

Postlude

Words for Reflection

from: Revelations of Divine Love by Julian of Norwich (1343-1416)
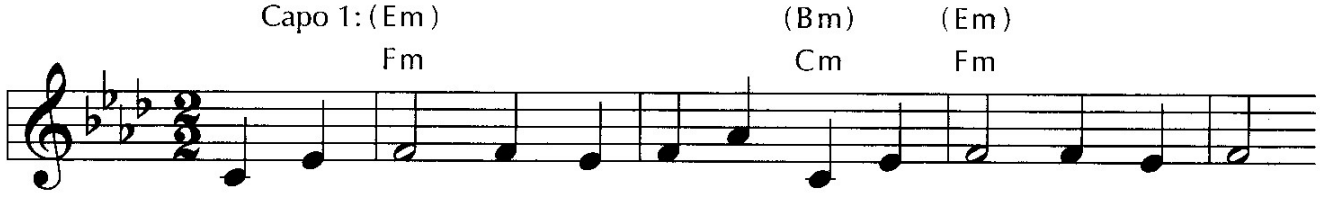
I saw that He is to us everything that is good and comfortable for us: He is our clothing that for love wrappeth us, claspeth us, and all encloseth us for tender love, that He may never leave us; being to us all-thing that is good, as to mine understanding.

Also in this He shewed me a little thing, the quantity of an hazel-nut, in the palm of my hand; and it was as round as a ball. I looked thereupon with eye of my understanding, and thought: *What may this be?* And it was answered generally thus: *it is all that is made*. I marvelled how it might last, for methought it might suddenly have fallen to naught for little[ness]. And I was answered in my understanding: *It lasteth, and ever shall [last] for that God loveth it.* And so All-thing hath the Being by the love of God.
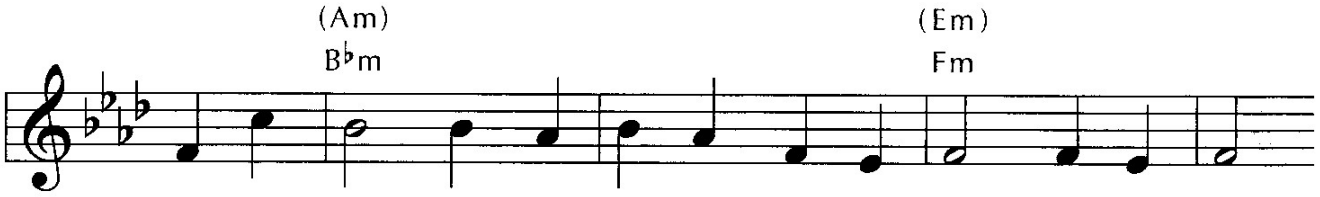
In this Little Thing I saw three properties. The first is that God made it, the second is that God loveth it, the third, that God keepeth it.

We Are One in the Spirit 300
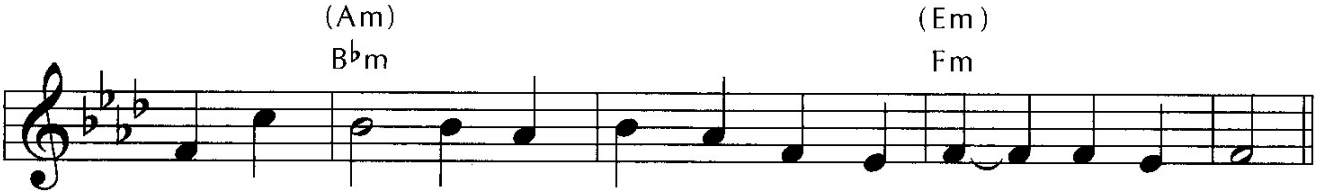
They'll Know We Are Christians by Our Love
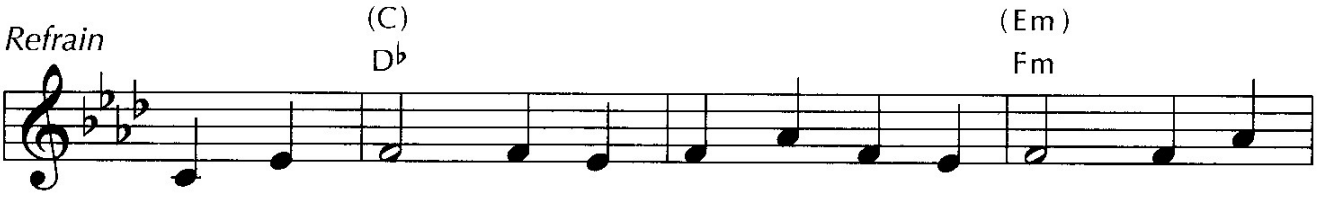


1 We are one in the Spir - it; we are one in the Lord;
2 We will walk with each oth - er; we will walk hand in hand;
3 We will work with each oth - er; we will work side by side;
4 All praise to the Fa - ther, from whom all things come,



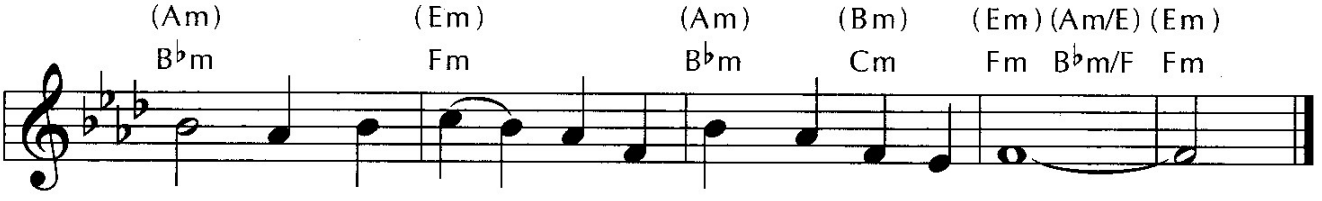
we are one in the Spir - it; we are one in the Lord,
we will walk with each oth - er; we will walk hand in hand,
we will work with each oth - er; we will work side by side,
and all praise to Christ Je - sus, God's on - ly Son,



and we pray that all u - ni - ty may one day be re - stored:
and to - geth - er we'll spread the news that God is in our land:
and we'll guard hu - man dig - ni - ty and save hu-man pride:
and all praise to the Spir - it, who makes us one:



And they'll know we are Chris-tians by our love, by our



love; yes, they'll know we are Chris-tians by our love.