

Third Sunday of Lent
March 12, 2023



First Congregational Church of Fresno
United Church of Christ
2131 N. Van Ness Blvd.
Fresno, CA 93704

Peter Wall
Guest Speaker

Our Gathering

(*Congregation may stand | Responses: Liturgist/**Congregation/all**)

Prelude

“Pastorale” from Sonata No. 1 - A. Guilmant

Scott Horton, organ

Welcome

Peter Wall

Centering Psalm 95

Robbyn Mosley, cantor

(The Congregation sings the *Response with the Choir*)

Response *Antiphon: Robert Fryson, 1994*

D D/F# G D/A A7 D

Let us make a joy - ful noise to God with songs of praise.

O come, let us sing to the Lord; let us make a joyful noise to the rock of our salvation!
Let us come into his presence with thanksgiving; let us make a joyful noise to him
with songs of praise!

For God is a great God and a great Ruler above all gods.

In God's hand are the depths of the earth; the heights of the mountains are also
God's.

Sung Response: “Let us make a joyful noise to God with songs of praise.”

The sea is God's, for God made it, and the dry land, which God's hands have formed.

O come, let us worship and bow down; let us kneel before the Lord, our Maker!

For God is our God, and we are the people of God's pasture and the sheep of God's
hand.

O that today you would listen to God's voice! Do not harden your hearts, as at
Meribah, as on the day at Massah in the wilderness,

Sung Response: “Let us make a joyful noise to God with songs of praise.”

When your ancestors tested me and put me to the proof, though they had seen my work.
For forty years I loathed that generation and said, “They are a people whose
hearts go astray, and they do not regard my ways.”

Therefore in my anger I swore,

“They shall not enter my rest.”

Sung Response: “Let us make a joyful noise to God with songs of praise.”

***Call to Worship**

Alison Chamberlin, liturgist

God of sea and sky, you keep the earth flourishing.

We come before you weary from traveling through barren lands.

Holy One, you give water that sustains body and spirit.

You hydrate us when we need, how we need.

Miracle Worker, you caused a rock to crack and bring forth water.

Crack our hearts open and let your love flow from them like a spring.

***Hymn**

“Crashing Waters at Creation”

#326, pew hymnal

Opening Prayer

Alison Chamberlin, liturgist

Holy One, we are thankful for who you are and all that you are. Your presence is desired here. We take joy in knowing that you are as close to us as our next breath. We thirst for you. May we be filled to overflowing with your love. Amen

Time of Remembrance and Blessing for Eleanor Roberson

Gayle Thornton

Choral Anthem

“Thanks Be to God” - arr. Sheldon Curry

Chancel Choir

Time for Discovery *[children are invited to the chancel steps]*

**Draw the circle wide, draw it wider still;
let this be our song — no one stands alone,
standing side by side. Draw the circle wide.**

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The Lord's Prayer

***Our Creator, 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,
the power, and the glory,
forever. Amen.***

***Hymn**

“Fill My Cup, Lord”

Exodus 17:1-7

The whole Israelite community broke camp and set out from the Sin desert to continue their journey, as the Lord commanded. They set up their camp at Rephidim, but there was no water for the people to drink. The people argued with Moses and said, "Give us water to drink."

Moses said to them, "Why are you arguing with me? Why are you testing the Lord?"

But the people were very thirsty for water there, and they complained to Moses, "Why did you bring us out of Egypt to kill us, our children, and our livestock with thirst?"

So Moses cried out to the Lord, "What should I do with this people? They are getting ready to stone me."

The Lord said to Moses, "Go on ahead of the people, and take some of Israel's elders with you. Take in your hand the shepherd's rod that you used to strike the Nile River, and go. I'll be standing there in front of you on the rock at Horeb. Hit the rock. Water will come out of it, and the people will be able to drink." Moses did so while Israel's elders watched. He called the place Massah and Meribah, because the Israelites argued with and tested the Lord, asking, "Is the Lord really with us or not?"

John 4:5-42

He came to a Samaritan city called Sychar, which was near the land Jacob had given to his son Joseph. Jacob's well was there. Jesus was tired from his journey, so he sat down at the well. It was about noon.

A Samaritan woman came to the well to draw water. Jesus said to her, "Give me some water to drink." His disciples had gone into the city to buy him some food.

The Samaritan woman asked, "Why do you, a Jewish man, ask for something to drink from me, a Samaritan woman?" (Jews and Samaritans didn't associate with each other.)

Jesus responded, "If you recognized God's gift and who is saying to you, 'Give me some water to drink,' you would be asking him and he would give you living water."

The woman said to him, "Sir, you don't have a bucket and the well is deep. Where would you get this living water? You aren't greater than our father Jacob, are you? He gave this well to us, and he drank from it himself, as did his sons and his livestock."

Jesus answered, "Everyone who drinks this water will be thirsty again, but whoever drinks from the water that I will give will never be thirsty again. The water that I give will become in those who drink it a spring of water that bubbles up into eternal life."

The woman said to him, "Sir, give me this water, so that I will never be thirsty and will never need to come here to draw water!"

Jesus said to her, "Go, get your husband, and come back here."

The woman replied, "I don't have a husband."

"You are right to say, 'I don't have a husband,'" Jesus answered. "You've had five husbands, and the man you are with now isn't your husband. You've spoken the truth."

The woman said, "Sir, I see that you are a prophet. Our ancestors worshipped on this mountain, but you and your people say that it is necessary to worship in Jerusalem."

Jesus said to her, "Believe me, woman, the time is coming when you and your people will worship the Father neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem. You and your people worship

The Father neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem. You and your people worship what you don't know; we worship what we know because salvation is from the Jews. But the time is coming—and is here!—when true worshippers will worship in spirit and truth. The Father looks for those who worship him this way. God is spirit, and it is necessary to worship God in spirit and truth."

The woman said, "I know that the Messiah is coming, the one who is called the Christ. When he comes, he will teach everything to us."

Jesus said to her, "I Am—the one who speaks with you."

Just then, Jesus' disciples arrived and were shocked that he was talking with a woman. But no one asked, "What do you want?" or "Why are you talking with her?" The woman put down her water jar and went into the city. She said to the people, "Come and see a man who has told me everything I've done! Could this man be the Christ?" They left the city and were on their way to see Jesus.

In the meantime the disciples spoke to Jesus, saying, "Rabbi, eat."

Jesus said to them, "I have food to eat that you don't know about."

The disciples asked each other, "Has someone brought him food?"

Jesus said to them, "I am fed by doing the will of the one who sent me and by completing his work. Don't you have a saying, 'Four more months and then it's time for harvest'? Look, I tell you: open your eyes and notice that the fields are already ripe for the harvest. Those who harvest are receiving their pay and gathering fruit for eternal life so that those who sow and those who harvest can celebrate together. This is a true saying, that one sows and another harvests. I have sent you to harvest what you didn't work hard for; others worked hard, and you will share in their hard work."

Many Samaritans in that city believed in Jesus because of the woman's word when she testified, "He told me everything I've ever done." So when the Samaritans came to Jesus, they asked him to stay with them, and he stayed there two days. Many more believed because of his word, and they said to the woman, "We no longer believe because of what you said, for we have heard for ourselves and know that this one is truly the savior of the world."

Message

"Invisible Strings"

Peter Wall

Invitation to Prayer

Sung Call to Prayer

Lord, listen to your children praying:

Lord send your Spirit in this place.

Lord, listen to your children praying:

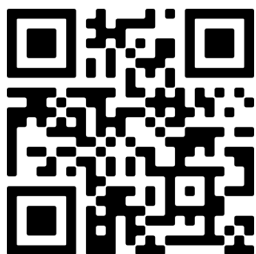
Send us love, send us power, send us grace.

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Prayers of the Church

Invitation to Generosity

Alison Chamberlin, liturgist



Here at the Big Red Church, everyone counts, and every gift counts!

- ⇒ *There are two donation boxes and giving envelopes for your gifts in the Narthex (the area where an usher handed you an Order of Worship).*
- ⇒ *You can also give through the Givelify App by scanning the QR code with your smartphone camera.*
- ⇒ *BigRedChurch.org/giving/ has more instructions, links, and information about giving to the church. Thank you for supporting and joining in the ministry of this church.*

Offertory

“Take My Yoke Upon You” - D. Nolan & J. Martin

Chancel Choir

***Doxology**

***We give You but Your own,
Whate’er the gift may be;
All that we have is Yours alone,
We give it gratefully. Amen.***

Dedication

Announcements

Ministry Moment

Michele Eskew

***Closing Hymn**

“Come, O Fount of Every Blessing”

#459, pew hymnal

Benediction

Peter Wall

***Blessing Song “Go Now in Peace”**

**Go now in peace, never be afraid;
God will go with you each hour of ev’ry day.
Go now in faith, steadfast, strong and true;
know God will guide you in all you do.
Go now in love and show you believe.
Reach out to others so all the world will see
God will be there, watching from above.
Go now in peace, in faith, and in love.
Amen. Amen. Amen.**

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Postlude

“Allegro assai (b)” from Sonata No. 1 - A. Guilmant

Scott Horton, organ

It is our tradition to be seated during the Postlude.

News from the pews....



1st Congregational Church of Fresno

2131 N. Van Ness Ave

SATURDAY, APRIL 1, 2023

(IN CONJUNCTION WITH CAMBRIDGE AVE YARD SALE)

7:00 am to 2:00 pm

GOT STUFF? GOT CRAFT ITEMS?

We are offering spaces to rent: \$20

Applications are available in the church office and Narthex.



We will also be accepting donations on

Thursday and Friday March 30 & 31st from

5:00pm to 7:00pm only (please, no exceptions).

Gently used items only, small appliances, bookshelves, dressers, lawn equipment, dishware sets (boxed), linens are ok to donate. Please NO CLOTHING!!!

Easter Flowers

Do you have a person you would like honor? Easter Flower order forms are now available in the Narthex and in the church office.



Flash Mob Hallelujah Chorus on Easter

Have you ever wanted to sing the “Hallelujah Chorus” from Handel’s Messiah?

We will be singing this masterpiece as the postlude on Easter Sunday! On Easter, all you will have to do is make your way up to the Chancel area, up with the choir during the singing of “Go Now in Peace,” and we’ll be all set to sing our collective “Hallelujah” to the Risen Lord!

We will be having a single run-through practice every Sunday following worship until Easter. Music and practice CDs will be provided.

*Warning - smiles and feelings of joy are side effects.

Please see/contact Scott Horton to get involved or if you have any questions.

This Week at Big Red

Monday March 13

- ♦ 05:00pm: Yoga - Room 1

Tuesday, March 14

- ♦ 06:00pm: Meeting of the Ministries (M.O.M) - Minturn Chapel

Wednesday March 15

08:00am: Bible Study - Zoom

- ♦ 05:00pm: Yoga - Room 1
- ♦ 05:15pm: Soup Supper - Hosted by the Ministry of Community Outreach Fellowship Hall
- ♦ 06:00pm: Lenten Book Study - Parlor
- ♦ 07:00pm: Chancel Choir rehearsal - Sanctuary

Thursday March 16

Friday March 17

- ♦ 05:00pm: Yoga - Room 1

Saturday March 18

Sunday March 19

- ♦ 09:00am: Roots and Branches - Fireside Room
- ♦ 10:00am: Worship Service - Faye Saxton, Guest Speaking - Sanctuary
- ♦ 11:00am: Coffee Hour - Fellowship Hall

First Congregational Church of Fresno

2131 N. Van Ness Blvd., Fresno, CA 93704 | (559) 227-8489

Guest in the Pulpit

Peter Wall

Music Director/Organist

Scott Horton

Caretaker/ Event Coordinator

Pat Morales

Accountant

Penny Leas Peterson

Office Administrator

Kymberly Lindsey

Office@bigredchurch.org

Technicians

Karisa Garza

Brad Jenkins

Assisting in Today's Service

Organist: Scott Horton

Liturgist: Alison Chamberlin

Ushers: Rebecca Kliewer, Gene Kliewer, Teresa Fuentes

Technician: Karisa Garza

Coffee Hour: Georgette Carillo, Paula Roberts and Pat Morales

Acolytes: Selena Aguerro and Dominick Schoelen-Aguerro

Altar Flowers:

FCCF Open and Affirming Statement

We believe that all people are sacred creations of a loving God. We affirm the diversity that exists among us. We strive to answer the call of Christ by extending his love, compassion and acceptance to everyone. In this spirit, we open our family of faith to people of every religious background, sexual orientation, family composition, physical and mental ability, race, age and gender.

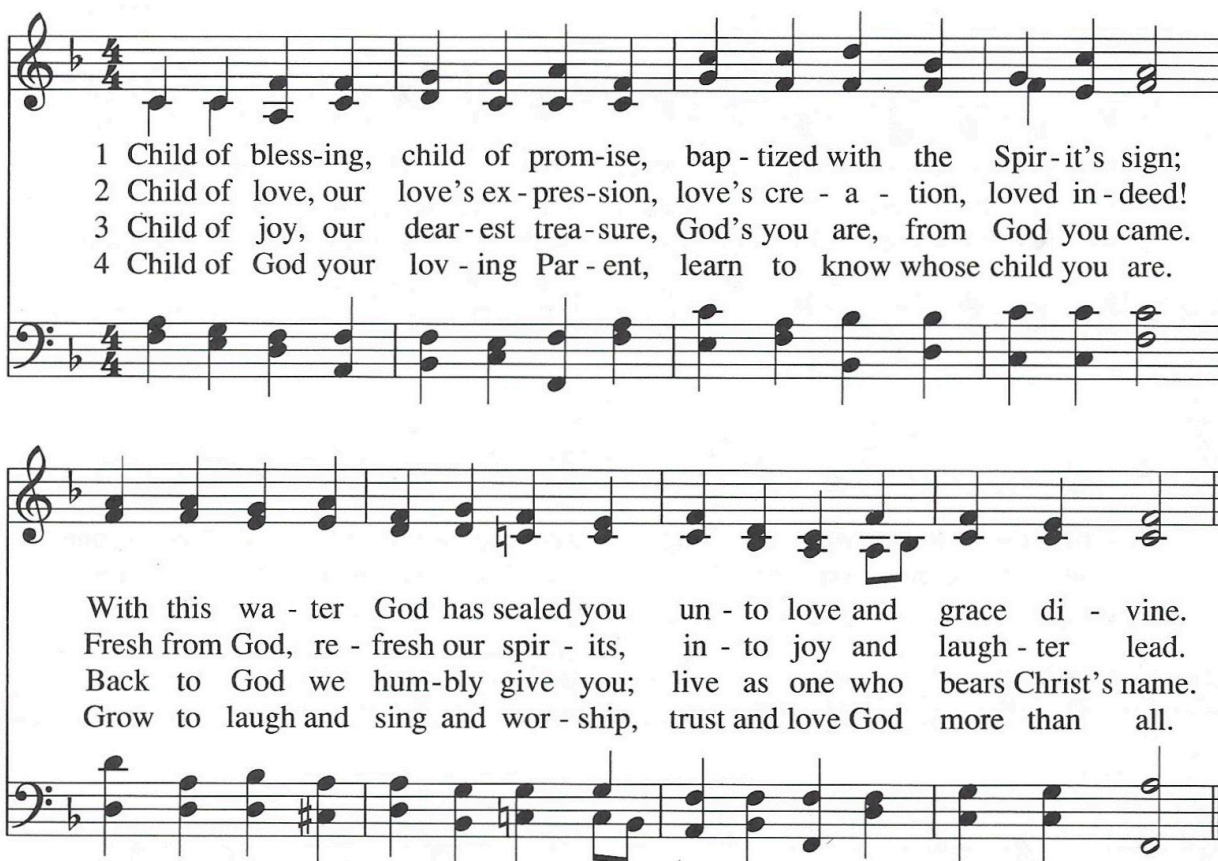
As Christians, we experience God's reconciling love. In response we stand with those who suffer discrimination, isolation and alienation.

We welcome all people to participate fully in our church's life and ministry. We celebrate the variety of talents and perspectives which flow into our spiritual community, continuing to enrich us in ways we could not have predicted or envisioned.

Child of Blessing, Child of Promise

325

Ronald S. Cole-Turner, 1981



1 Child of bless-ing, child of prom-ise, bap - tized with the Spir-it's sign;
 2 Child of love, our love's ex-pres-sion, love's cre - a - tion, loved in-deed!
 3 Child of joy, our dear-est trea-sure, God's you are, from God you came.
 4 Child of God your lov - ing Par - ent, learn to know whose child you are.

With this wa - ter God has sealed you un - to love and grace di - vine.
 Fresh from God, re - fresh our spir - its, in - to joy and laugh - ter lead.
 Back to God we hum-bly give you; live as one who bears Christ's name.
 Grow to laugh and sing and wor - ship, trust and love God more than all.

Ronald Cole-Turner, a teacher of theology, is an ordained minister of the United Church of Christ. He is an award-winning author on the interface of science and religion.

Tune: STUTTGART 8.7.8.7.
 Attrib. to Christian F. Witt (1660–1716), in
 Psalmodia Sacra, Gotha, 1715

Crashing Waters at Creation

326

Sylvia G. Dunstan, 1991

Gen. 1:1–5; Exod. 14:21–22; Mark 1:9–11; John 4:13–14

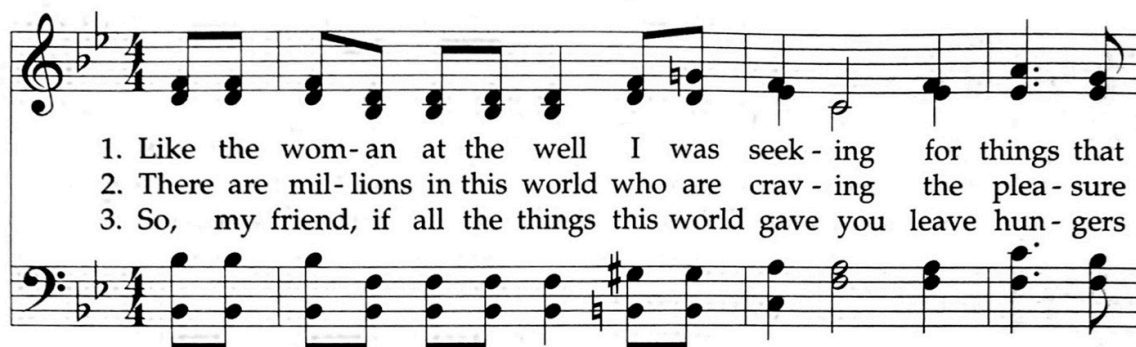
- | | |
|--|--|
| <p>1 Crash-ing wa-ters at cre-a-tion
 or-dered by the Spir-it's breath,
 First to wit-ness day's be-gin-ning
 from the bright-ness of night's death.</p> | <p>3 Cleans-ing wa-ter once at Jor-dan
 closed a-round the One fore-told,
 O-pened to re-veal the glo-ry
 ev-er new and ev-er old.</p> |
| <p>2 Part-ing wa-ter stood and trem-bled
 as the cap-tives passed on through,
 Wash-ing off the chains of bond-age—
 chan-nel to a life made new.</p> | <p>4 Liv-ing wa-ter, nev-er end-ing,
 quench the thirst and flood the soul.
 Well-spring, Source of life e-ter-nal,
 drench our dry-ness, make us whole.</p> |

Hymnwriter Sylvia Dunstan wrote this text to accompany a prayer for blessing the water in the United Church of Canada baptismal rites. She has credited the work of Miriam Therese Winter as her inspiration for some of the imagery in the last stanza.

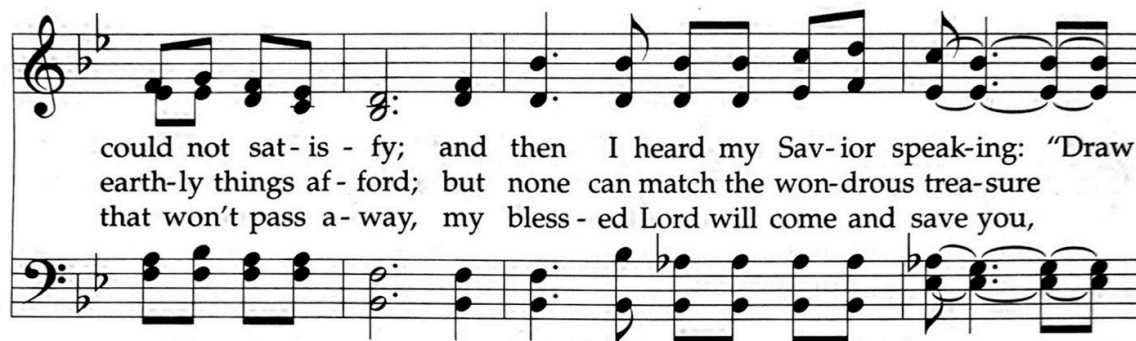
Tune: STUTTGART 8.7.8.7.
 Attrib. to Christian F. Witt (1660–1716), in
 Psalmodia Sacra, Gotha, 1715

Fill My Cup, Lord

351



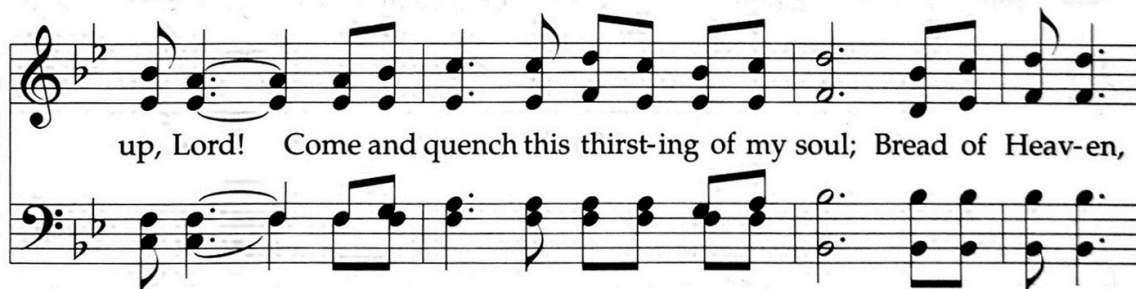
1. Like the wom-an at the well I was seek - ing for things that
 2. There are mil-lions in this world who are crav - ing the plea - sure
 3. So, my friend, if all the things this world gave you leave hun - gers



could not sat - is - fy; and then I heard my Sav - ior speak - ing: "Draw
 earth - ly things af - ford; but none can match the won - drous trea - sure
 that won't pass a - way, my bless - ed Lord will come and save you,



from my well that nev - er shall run dry."
 that I find in Je - sus Christ my Lord. Fill my cup, Lord, I lift it
 if you kneel to him and hum - bly pray:



up, Lord! Come and quench this thirst - ing of my soul; Bread of Heav - en,

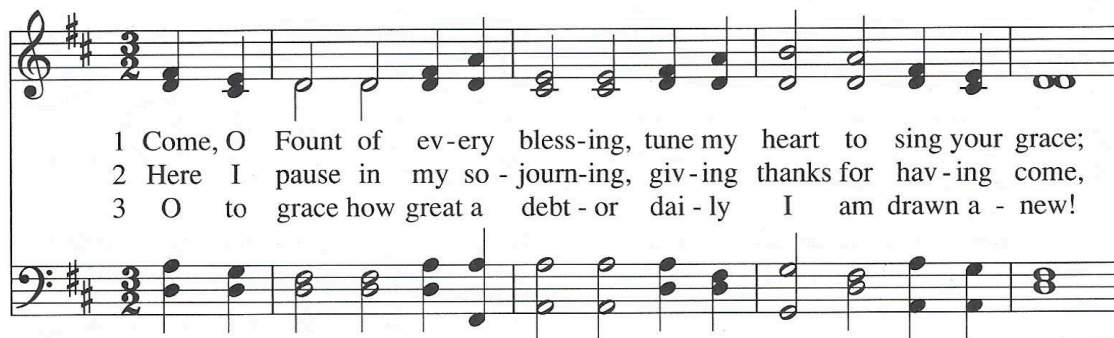


feed me 'til I want no more—fill my cup, fill it up and make me whole!

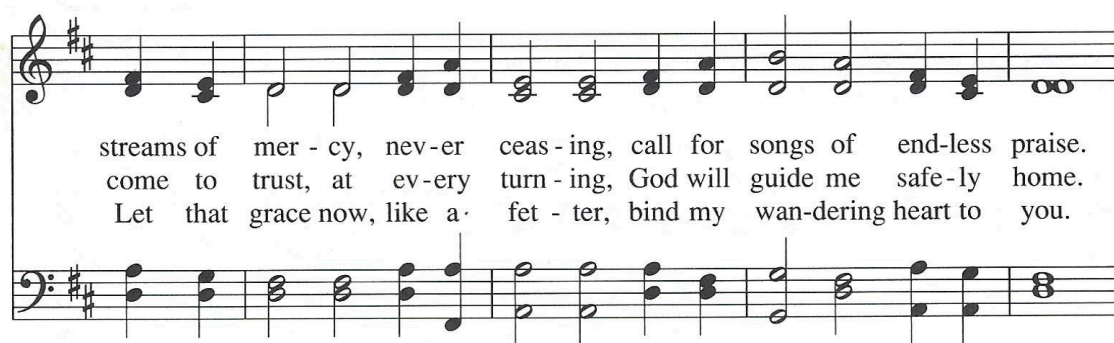
Come, O Fount of Every Blessing

Ps. 36:7-9

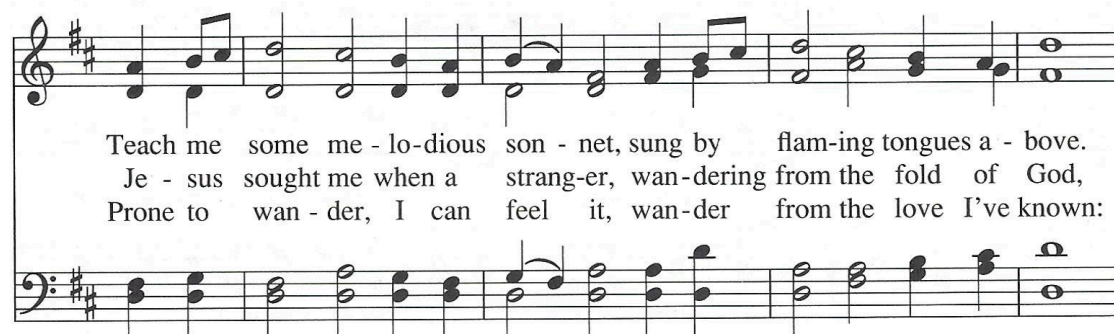
Robert Robinson, 1758; alt.



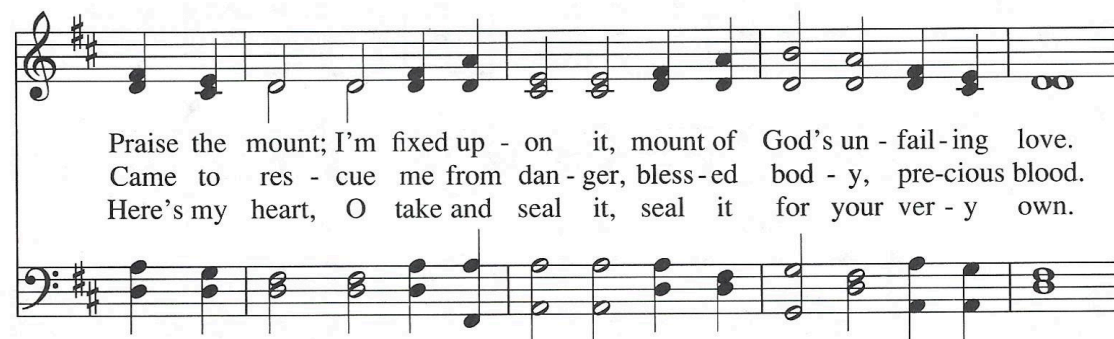
1 Come, O Fount of ev-ery bless-ing, tune my heart to sing your grace;
 2 Here I pause in my so - journ-ing, giv-ing thanks for hav-ing come,
 3 O to grace how great a debt - or dai - ly I am drawn a - new!



streams of mer - cy, nev-er ceas-ing, call for songs of end-less praise.
 come to trust, at ev-ery turn-ing, God will guide me safe-ly home.
 Let that grace now, like a - fet - ter, bind my wan-dering heart to you.



Teach me some me - lo-dious son - net, sung by flam-ing tongues a - bove.
 Je - sus sought me when a strang-er, wan-dering from the fold of God,
 Prone to wan - der, I can feel it, wan-der from the love I've known:



Praise the mount; I'm fixed up - on it, mount of God's un - fail-ing love.
 Came to res - cue me from dan - ger, bless-ed bod - y, pre-cious blood.
 Here's my heart, O take and seal it, seal it for your ver - y own.

Converted to Methodism at age twenty, Robert Robinson soon became a Calvinistic Methodist preacher and later gained great popularity. The melody, associated with this text since 1813, is an American folk tune.

Tune: NETTLETON 8.7.8.7.D.
 John Wyeth's Repository of Sacred Music, 1813