

Reign of Christ

November 26, 2023



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

Rev. Simon Biasell-Moshrefi
Pastor

Our Gathering

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

Prelude

Scott Horton, organ

Welcome

Rev. Simon Biasell-Moshrefi

***Call to Worship** (inspired by Psalm 100)

Melinda Mobley, liturgist

Make a joyful noise to the Lord! Worship with gladness and singing!

God is Creator, Sustainer, Keeper and Shepherd. Bless God's name.

Enjoy the presence of God! Give thanks and praise!

God is Sovereign and Holy. Bless God's name.

Know that God reigns! God's kingdom comes!

God is Healer, Redeemer, Restorer, and Friend. Bless God's name!

***Hymn**

"Christ is Made the Sure Foundation"

#400, pew hymnal

Prayer for Transformation and New Life

Melinda Mobley

Sovereign God, transform us in your image. Your reign is just and righteous. We go our own way and live according to our own will. Make us your ambassadors. Let us represent you through words and actions. May we release our need for anything that creates a barrier to loving you and our neighbor. May we know and bear witness that we are all neighbors. Amen.

Word of Grace

Choral Anthem

"How Firm a Foundation" - L. Larson

Chancel Choir

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

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**

"Community of Christ"

#314, pew hymnal

Scripture

Matthew 25:31-46

Melinda Mobley

"When the Son of Man comes in his glory and all the angels with him, then he will sit on the throne of his glory. All the nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats, and he will put the sheep at his right hand and the goats at the left. Then the king will say to those at his right hand, 'Come, you who are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world, for I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me.' Then the righteous will answer him, 'Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry and gave you food or thirsty and gave you something to drink? And when was it that we saw you a stranger and welcomed you or naked and gave you clothing? And when was it that we saw you sick or in prison and visited you?' And the king will answer them, 'Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did it to me.' Then he will say to those at his left hand, 'You who are accursed, depart from me into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels, for I was hungry and you gave me no food, I was thirsty and you gave me nothing to drink, I was a stranger and you did not welcome me, naked and you did not give me clothing, sick and in prison and you did not visit me.' Then they also will answer, 'Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison and did not take care of you?' Then he will answer them, 'Truly I tell you, just as you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to me.' And these will go away into eternal punishment but the righteous into eternal life."

Liturgist: For the Word of God in Scripture, for the Word of God within us, and for
the Word of God amongst us.

Congregation: *Thanks be to God.*

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.

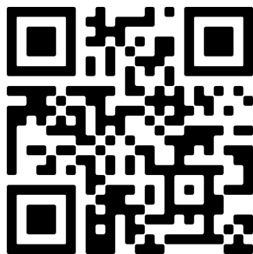
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Prayers of the Church

Rev. Simon Biasell-Moshrefi

Invitation to Generosity

Melinda Mobley



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

“Let the Redeemed of the Lord” - M. Barrett

Chancel Choir

***Doxology** (Tune: OLD HUNDREDTH)

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow,

Praise God, all creatures here below.

Praise God, above, ye heavenly host.

Creator, Christ, and Holy Ghost! Amen.

***Prayer of Dedication and Thanksgiving**

Rev. Simon Biasell-Moshrefi

***Closing Hymn**

"The Church's One Foundation "

#386, pew hymnal

Benediction

Rev. Simon Biasell-Moshrefi

***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

"God of Grace" - P. Manz

Scott Horton, organ

It is our tradition to be seated for the Postlude.

Please join us for refreshments in the Fellowship Hall



*A Celebration
of
Christmas*

*Sunday, December 17th
3:00 p.m.*

*Featuring the Chancel Choir, Handbell Choir
& Musicians of First Congregational Church*

First Congregational Church of Fresno
"The Big Red Church"
2131 N. Van Ness Boulevard
Fresno, CA 93704
559.227.8489

Free Concert - Free-will offering will benefit the Casavant Pipe Organ Fund

This Week at Big Red

Monday, November 27

- ♦ 5:00pm: Yoga - Room 1

Tuesday, November 28

Wednesday, November 29

- ♦ 8:00am: Bible Study - Zoom
- ♦ 6:00pm: Handbell rehearsal - Music Room
- ♦ 7:00pm: Chancel Choir rehearsal - Sanctuary

Thursday, November 30

Friday, December 1

Saturday, December 2

Sunday, December 3

- ♦ 9:00am: Roots and Branches - Fireside Room
- ♦ 10:00am: First Sunday of Advent Worship - Sanctuary
- ♦ 11:00am: Family Advent Workshop and Coffee Hour

Upcoming Dates to remember

- * **First Sunday of Advent - Dec 3**
- * **Family Advent Workshop and Coffee Hour- Dec 3**
- * **Celebration of Christmas Concert - Dec 17**
- * **Christmas Eve Family Friendly Worship Service 10am - Dec 24**
- * **Christmas Eve Lessons and Carol Service 9pm - Dec 24**
- * **Epiphany - Jan 7**

Please pick up a directory update form, if you have any changes to email address, cell numbers etc. The new Directory will be coming out in January.

Thank you kindly...K

First Congregational Church of Fresno

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

Pastor

Rev. Simon Biasell-Moshrefi
Simon@bigredchurch.org

Office Administrator

Kymberly Lindsey
Office@bigredchurch.org

Music Director/Organist

Scott Horton

Technicians

Karisa Garza
Brad Jenkins

Caretaker/ Event Coordinator

Pat Morales

Accountant

Penny Leas Peterson

Assisting in Today's Service

Organist: Scott Horton

Liturgist: Melinda Mobley

Ushers: Cliff Dodd, Teresa Fuentes

Technician: Brad Jenkins

Acolytes: Olivia and Faith

Altar Flowers: Jacquie Shore

Coffee Hour: Jacqui, Lindsey and Bailey

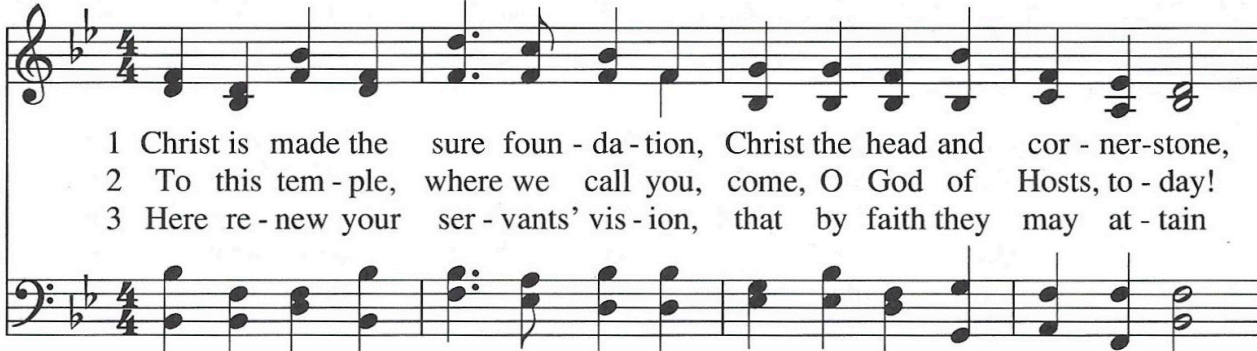
FCCF Open and Affirming Statement

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.

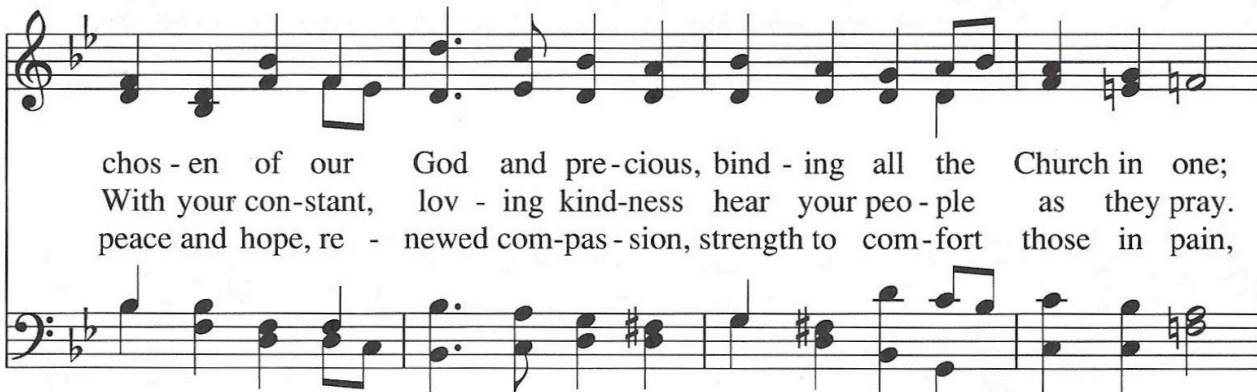
As Christians, we experience God's reconciling love. In response we stand with those who suffer discrimination, isolation and alienation.

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.

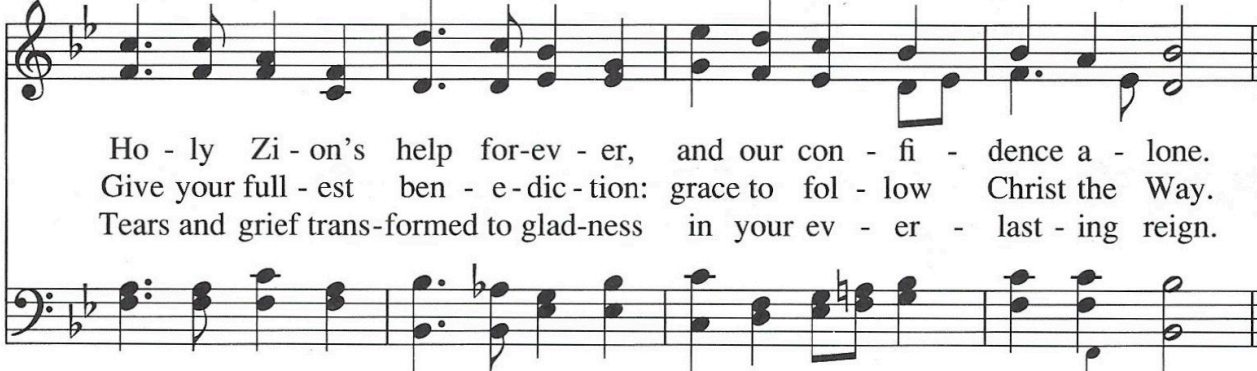
Christ Is Made the Sure Foundation

*Eph. 2:20–22; 1 Pet. 2:4–7**Latin, 6th–8th century
Transl. John Mason Neale, 1851; alt.
St. 3 adapt. Thomas H. Troeger, 1992*


1 Christ is made the sure foun - da - tion, Christ the head and cor - ner - stone,
2 To this tem - ple, where we call you, come, O God of Hosts, to - day!
3 Here re - new your ser - vants' vis - ion, that by faith they may at - tain



chos - en of our God and pre - cious, bind - ing all the Church in one;
With your con - stant, lov - ing kind - ness hear your peo - ple as they pray.
peace and hope, re - newed com - pas - sion, strength to com - fort those in pain,



Ho - ly Zi - on's help for - ev - er, and our con - fi - dence a - lone.
Give your full - est ben - e - dic - tion: grace to fol - low Christ the Way.
Tears and grief trans - formed to glad - ness in your ev - er - last - ing reign.

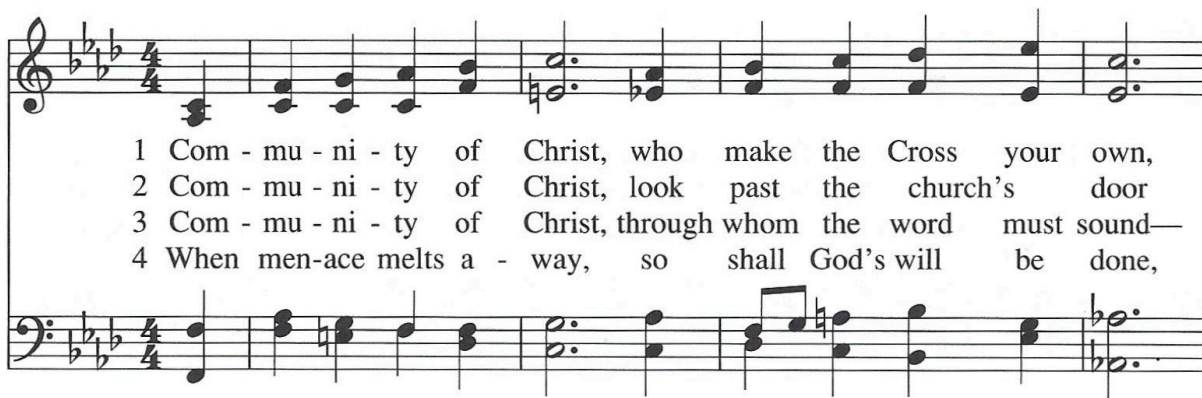
The hymn has its origins in an early Latin poem, Urbs beata Jerusalem, based on passages from Ephesians, 1 Peter, and Revelation. "Holy Zion" refers to the church transcendent, built of "living stones"—the saints of God.

Tune: REGENT SQUARE 8.7.8.7.8.7.
Henry T. Smart, 1867
Alternate tune: WESTMINSTER ABBEY

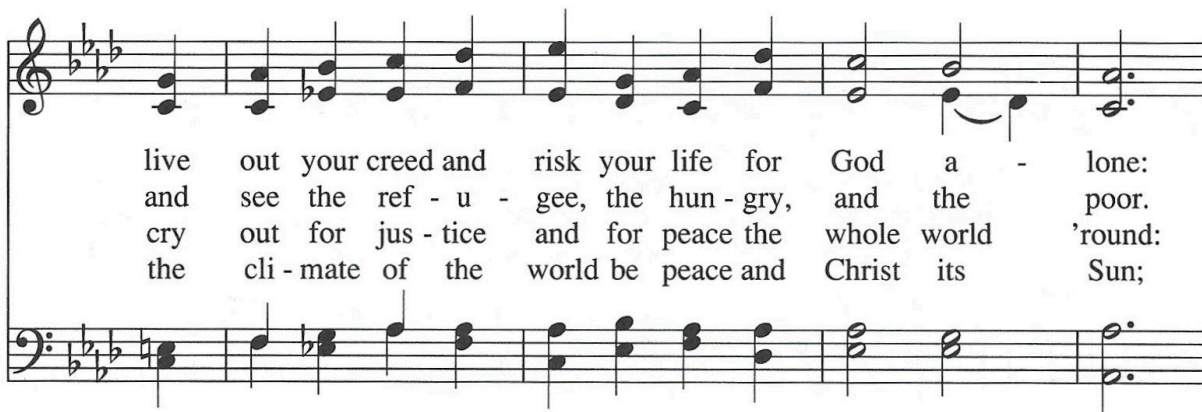
Community of Christ

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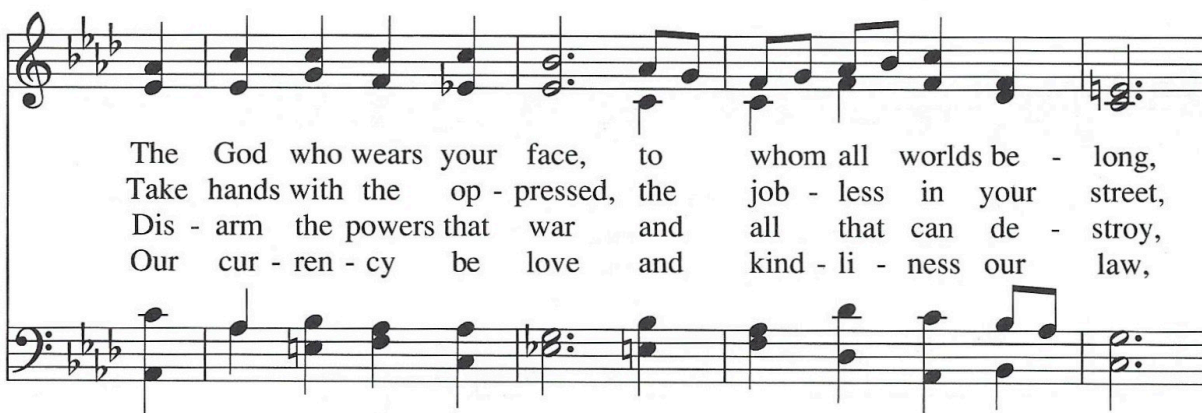
Shirley Erena Murray, 1985



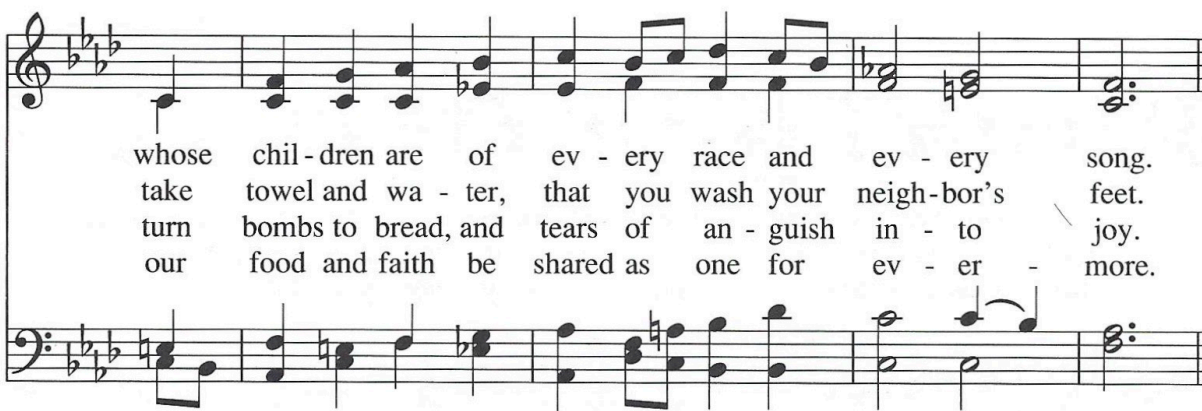
1 Com - mu - ni - ty of Christ, who make the Cross your own,
2 Com - mu - ni - ty of Christ, look past the church's door
3 Com - mu - ni - ty of Christ, through whom the word must sound—
4 When men-ace melts a - way, so shall God's will be done,



live out your creed and risk your life for God a - lone:
and see the ref - u - gee, the hun - gry, and the poor.
cry out for jus - tice and for peace the whole world 'round:
the cli - mate of the world be peace and Christ its Sun;



The God who wears your face, to whom all worlds be - long,
Take hands with the op - pressed, the job - less in your street,
Dis - arm the powers that war and all that can de - stroy,
Our cur - ren - cy be love and kind - li - ness our law,



whose chil - dren are of ev - ery race and ev - ery song.
take towel and wa - ter, that you wash your neigh - bor's feet.
turn bombs to bread, and tears of an - guish in - to joy.
our food and faith be shared as one for ev - er - more.

Shirley Erena Murray has grown up within the Ecumenical Movement and addresses related themes such as Christian unity and social justice in her hymnody. This text was first sung at the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of New Zealand.

Tune: LEONI 6.6.8.4.D.
Traditional Hebrew melody
Adapt. Meyer Lyon, 1770

Eph. 2:13-22; 4:4-6; 1 Cor. 3:11

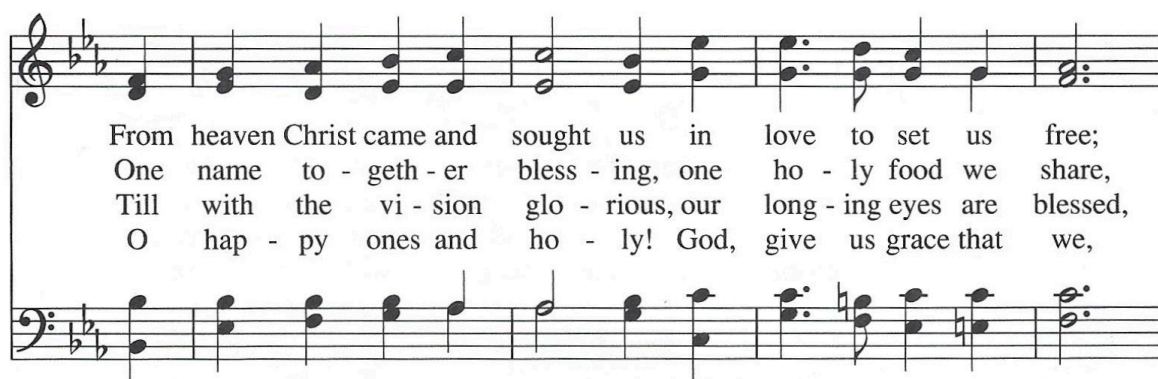
Samuel J. Stone, 1866; alt.



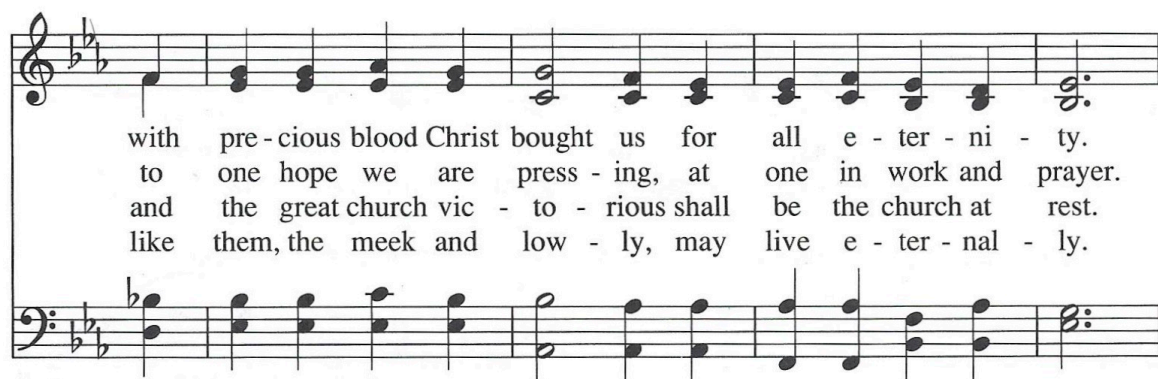
1 The church's one foun - da - tion is Je - sus Christ our Lord;
 2 E - lect from ev - ery na - tion, yet one o'er all the earth,
 3 'Mid toil and trib - u - la - tion, and tu - mult of our war,
 4 Yet we on earth have un - ion with God, the Three-in - One,



we are Christ's new cre - a - tion by wa - ter and the word;
 one char - ter of sal - va - tion, one God, one faith, one birth,
 we wait the con - sum - ma - tion of peace for - ev - er - more;
 and mys - tic sweet com - mu - nion with those whose rest is won.



From heaven Christ came and sought us in love to set us free;
 One name to - geth - er bless - ing, one ho - ly food we share,
 Till with the vi - sion glo - rious, our long - ing eyes are blessed,
 O hap - py ones and ho - ly! God, give us grace that we,



with pre - cious blood Christ bought us for all e - ter - ni - ty.
 to one hope we are press - ing, at one in work and prayer.
 and the great church vic - to - rious shall be the church at rest.
 like them, the meek and low - ly, may live e - ter - nal - ly.

Like the writings of Ambrose many centuries earlier, this hymn was born out of a doctrinal dispute. The young priest Samuel J. Stone composed twelve hymns on the articles of the Apostles' Creed in support of those reacting against nontraditional views of biblical scholarship. This hymn is based on article nine, "the holy Catholic Church."

Tune: AURELIA 7.6.7.6.D.
 Samuel S. Wesley, 1864