



PARISH

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

SERVICE OF CELEBRATION AND COVENANT RENEWAL

Season of Easter

7 May 2023

Many voices clamor for our attention, new philosophies, modern theologies, and old heresies revived, all call to us and entreat us to listen, but the Father says, "Hear Him." As if He said, "Hear Him, and no one besides." —C. H. Spurgeon

GOD CALLS HIS PEOPLE TO WORSHIP

It is God Himself who calls His people to worship. We do not call ourselves, but it is the King who opens His gates and beckons us into His courts.

Gospel Invitation—Psalm 91:1

He who dwells in the shelter of the Most High will abide in the shadow of the Almighty.

Sung Response—Christ The Lord Is Risen Today, Vs. 1

Christ, the Lord, is ris'n to - day, — al - - - le - lu - ia!

Sons of men and an - gels say, — al - - - le - lu - ia!

Raise your joys and tri - umphs high, al - - - le - lu - ia!

Sing, ye — heav'ns, and earth, re - ply, — al - - - le - lu - ia!

Text: Charles Wesley, 1739; Music: EASTER HYMN, *Lyra Davidica*, 1708.

Call to Worship—from Psalm 125:1-5

Pastor: Those who trust in the Lord are like Mount Zion, which cannot be moved, but abides forever.

All: **As the mountains surround Jerusalem, so the Lord surrounds His people, from this time forth and forevermore.**

Pastor: For the scepter of wickedness shall not rest on the land allotted to the righteous, lest the righteous stretch out their hands to do wrong.

Reader 1: Do good, O Lord, to those who are good,

Reader 2: Do good, O Lord, to those who are upright in their hearts!

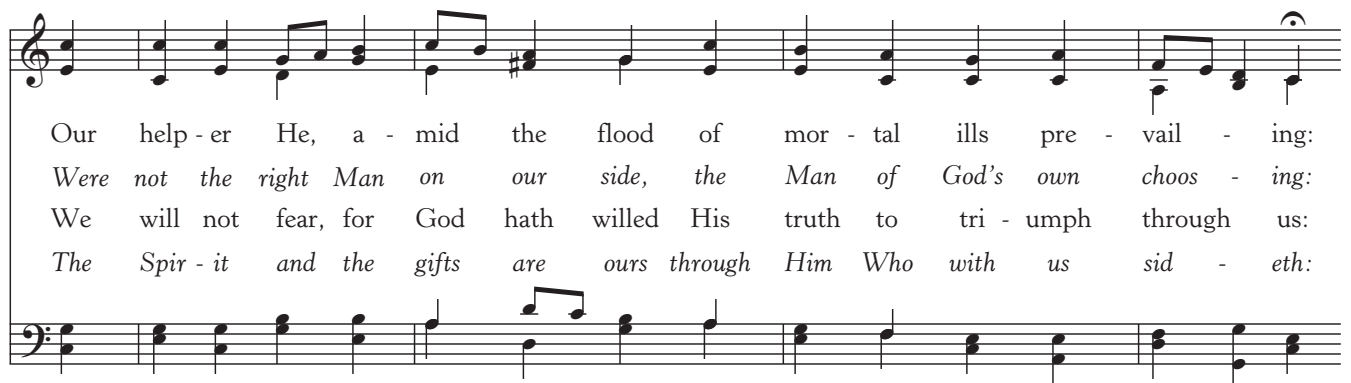
Pastor: Those who turn aside to their crooked ways the Lord will lead away with evildoers!

All: **Peace be upon Israel!**

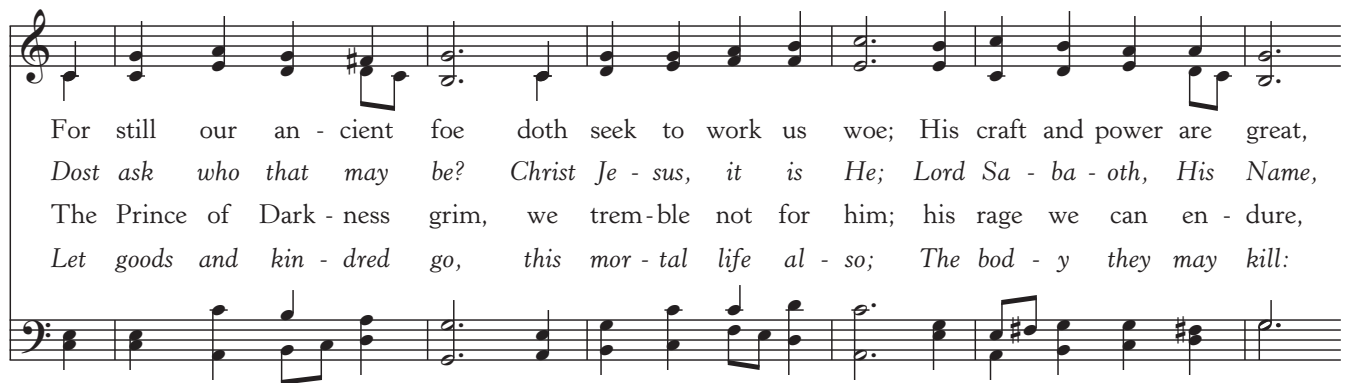
Congregational Hymn—A Mighty Fortress Is Our God



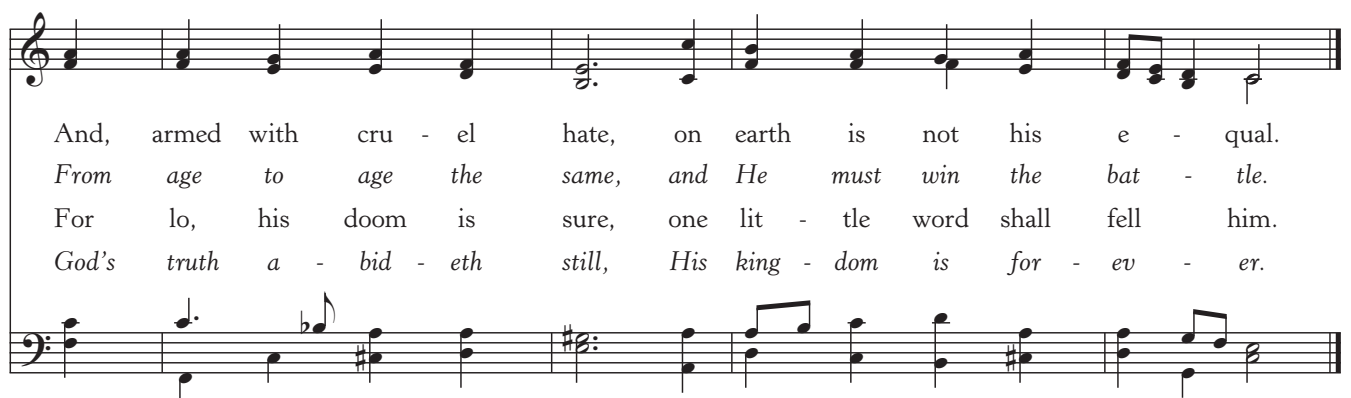
A might - y fort - ress is our God, a bul - wark nev - er fail - ing;
Did we in our own strength con - fide, our striv - ing would be los - ing;
And though this world, with dev - ils filled, should threat - en to un - do us,
That Word a - bove all earth - ly powers, no thanks to them, a - bid - eth;



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 power are great,
Dost ask who that may be? Christ Je - sus, it is He; Lord Sa - ba - oth, His Name,
The Prince of Dark - ness grim, we trem - ble not for him; his rage we can en - dure,
Let goods and kin - dred go, this mor - tal life al - so; The bod - y they may kill:



And, armed with cru - el hate, on earth is not his e - qual.
From age to age the same, and He must win the bat - tle.
For lo, his doom is sure, one lit - tle word shall fell him.
God's truth a - bid - eth still, His king - dom is for - ev - er.

Text: paraphrase of Psalm 46, Martin Luther, 1529, tr. Frederick H. Hedge, 1853;
Music: EIN'FESTE BURG, Martin Luther, 1529.

GOD SPEAKS TO HIS PEOPLE THROUGH HIS WORD

The Bible is the means by which God graciously reveals Himself to His people—so we listen, read, and study with expectant hearts. God particularly entreats us in His Word to sing psalms. And while all Scripture is appropriate for hymns and spiritual songs, there is a specific exhortation for us to make use of the Psalter as the church's songbook.

Congregational Psalm—Not Unto Us (Psalm 115)



Not un - to us, not us O Lord___ but to Your ho - ly name ac - cord
The i - dols made of sil - ver, gold,___ are works which hu - man hands shall mold—
God, mind-ful of His own, will bless,___ bless Aar - on's house and Is - rael's race;



The glo - ry, which for it a - lone___ His mer - cy and His truth have won.
A mouth they have, yet si - lent be,___ and eyes they have, yet can - not see;
On all His saints, both great and small___ may His in - creas - ing bless - ings fall.



Why should the hea - then na - tions say, "Where is the God these men o - bey?"
No sound of words, no tune - ful note will form with - in___ their voice-less throat.
Both you and yours shall taste the store of Him who made the_ earth of yore.

Last time, to Coda



Our God a - bove in hea - ven dwells;___ Our God shall do___ what-e'er He wills.
Like them shall those that make them be,___ and all that trust them fool - is - hly.
The heav - ens are the Lord's in - deed;___ but earth He's giv - en to man's___ seed.

Coda



The dead His prais - es can - not show, nor they that down to___ si - lence go:_____



But we, yes we, will bless the Lord;___ from this time forth and ev - er - more

Text: Psalm 115:1-8, 12-18, *Lyra Regis*, 1885, alt. Henry C. Haffner, 2022;
Music: BLACK CREEK, Henry C. Haffner, 2022.

Scripture Reading—John 15:1-11

Jesus said, "I am the true vine, and My Father is the vinedresser. Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit He takes away, and every branch that does bear fruit He prunes, that it may bear more fruit. Already you are clean because of the Word that I have spoken to you. Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in Me. I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in Me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from Me you can do nothing. If anyone does not abide in Me he is thrown away like a branch and withers; and the branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned. If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. By this My Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit and so prove to be My disciples. As the Father has loved Me, so have I loved you. Abide in My love. If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love, just as I have kept My Father's commandments and abide in His love. These things I have spoken to you, that My joy may be in you, and that your joy may be full."

Elder: This is the Word of the Lord.

All: Thanks be to God.

Congregational Hymn—Speak, O Lord



Speak, O Lord, as we come to You to re - ceive the food of Your Ho - ly Word.
Teach us, Lord, full o - be - di - ence, ho - ly rev - er - ence, true hu - mil - i - ty;
Speak, O Lord, and re - new our minds; help us grasp the heights of Your plans for us—



Take Your truth, plant it deep in us; shape and fash - ion us in Your like - ness,
Test our thoughts and our at - ti - tudes in the ra - di - ance of Your pur - i - ty.
Truths un - changed from the dawn of time that will ech - o down through e - ter - ni - ty.



That the light of Christ might be seen to-day in our acts of love and our deeds of faith.
Cause our faith to rise; cause our eyes to see Your ma - jes - tic love and au - thor - i - ty.
And by grace we'll stand on Your prom - is - es, and by faith we'll walk as You walk with us.



Speak, O Lord, and ful - fill in us all Your pur - pos - es for Your glo - ry.
Words of pow'r that can nev - er fail— let their truth pre - vail o - ver un - be - lief.
Speak, O Lord, till Your church is built and the Earth is filled with Your glo - ry.

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Reading of the Word—1 John 2:18-27

¹⁸ Children, it is the last hour, and as you have heard that antichrist is coming, so now many antichrists have come. Therefore we know that it is the last hour. ¹⁹ They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would have continued with us. But they went out, that it might become plain that they all are not of us. ²⁰ But you have been anointed by the Holy One, and you all have knowledge. ²¹ I write to you, not because you do not know the truth, but because you know it, and because no lie is of the truth. ²² Who is the liar but he who denies that Jesus is the Christ? This is the antichrist, he who denies the Father and the Son. ²³ No one who denies the Son has the Father. Whoever confesses the Son has the Father also. ²⁴ Let what you heard from the beginning abide in you. If what you heard from the beginning abides in you, then you too will abide in the Son and in the Father. ²⁵ And this is the promise that He made to us—eternal life.

²⁶ I write these things to you about those who are trying to deceive you. ²⁷ But the anointing that you received from Him abides in you, and you have no need that anyone should teach you. But as His anointing teaches you about everything, and is true, and is no lie—just as it has taught you, abide in Him.

Pastor: This is the Word of the Lord.

All: Thanks be to God.

Sung Response—Be Thou My Vision, Vs. 2



Be Thou my wis-dom, and Thou my true word; I ev-er with Thee and Thou with me, Lord;



Thou my great Fa-ther, I Thy true son; Thou in me dwell-ing, and I with Thee one.

Text: Ancient Irish Poem, tr. Mary Byrne, 1905; Music: SLANE, Traditional Irish Melody.

Sermon—*The Old, Old Story*

—Associate Pastor, Mike Fennema

GOD CALLS HIS PEOPLE TO CONFESSION, REPENTANCE, AND RECONCILIATION

The people of God respond to His Word by confessing their sins, repenting of their sinful ways, and seeking God's favor through the reconciling work of Jesus, the Son of God.

Confession of Sin—from Psalm 130:1-6

Pastor: Lord, we come confessing. Out of the depths we cry to You, O Lord!

All: O Lord, hear our voice!

Pastor: Let Your ears be attentive to the voice of our pleas for mercy!

All: If You, O Lord, should mark iniquities, O Lord, who could stand?

Pastor: But with You there is forgiveness, that You may be feared.

Assurance of Pardon—1 Peter 2:24-25; John 3:16-17

He Himself bore our sins in His body on the tree, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness. By His wounds you have been healed. For you were straying like sheep, but have now returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls.

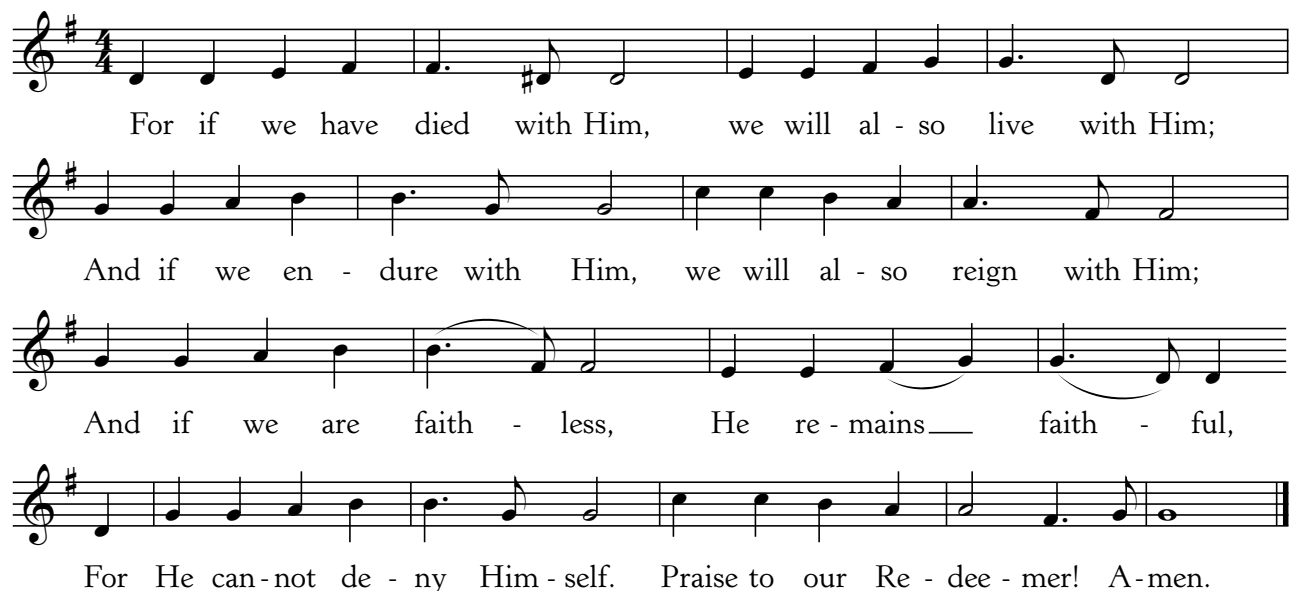
Pastor: This is the promise of God. This is the Word of the Lord.

All: For God so loved the world, that He gave His only Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life.

Pastor: For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through Him.

All: Thanks be to God.

Sung Response—The Creed Of Timothy



For if we have died with Him, we will al - so live with Him;

And if we en - dure with Him, we will al - so reign with Him;

And if we are faith - less, He re - mains___ faith - ful,

For He can - not de - ny Him - self. Praise to our Re - dee - mer! A - men.

HEAVENLY GIFT—*EUCCHARISTO*

As God beckons His people to the bounty of His table, they make joyous profession of their fealty to Him.

Profession of Faith—The Apostles' Creed

We believe in God: the Father Almighty, the Creator of Heaven and Earth;

And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord: who was conceived of the Holy Spirit,
Born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate,
Was crucified, died and was buried. He descended into Hell.
On the third day He rose again from the dead.
He ascended into Heaven and now sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty;
From whence He shall come to judge the living and the dead.

We believe in the Holy Spirit; the one holy church—both visible and invisible;
The communion of saints; the forgiveness of sins;
The resurrection of the body; and the life everlasting. *Amen.*

Sursum Corda

Pastor: The Lord be with you.

People: **And also with you.**

Pastor: Lift up your hearts.


People: **We lift them up to the Lord.**

Pastor: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

People: **It is right to give Him thanks and praise.**

Pastor: It is right, and a good and joyful thing, always and everywhere to give thanks to You, Father Almighty, Creator of Heaven and Earth. Therefore, we praise You, Triune God, and we join our voices with the angels, the archangels, and the whole company of Heaven in this hymn of eternal praise:

WOMEN



MEN Ho-ly, ho-ly, ho - ly, Lord. Ho-ly, ho-ly, God of pow'r and might,
Ho-ly, ho-ly, ho - ly, Lord. Ho-ly, ho-ly, God of pow'r and might, -
Heav'n and Earth are full of Your glo - ry. Ho-san-na in the high - est.
Heav'n and Earth are full of Your glo - ry. Ho san-na in the high - est.
Bless-ed is He who comes in the name of the Lord. Ho-san-na in the
Bless-ed is He who comes in the name of the Lord. Ho-san-na in the high - est, Ho
high - est, Ho san-na in the high - est, Ho - san-na in the high - est. A - men.
san-na in the high - est, Ho san-na in the high - est. A - men.

WORDS OF INSTITUTION AND THE LORD'S TABLE

This table is open to all baptized Christians who have made a profession of faith. You may come forward to receive the bread and wine or grape juice.

Congregational Psalm—My Soul Waits In Expectation (Psalm 62)



My soul waits in ex - pec - ta - tion, and de - pends on God in - deed.
In my God I rest and glo - ry, for sal - va - tion is most sure.
All you peo - ples, all you na - tions, all times place in Him your trust!



All my strength and my sal - va - tion, does from Him a - lone pro - ceed.
In the God and Rock of strength, — Is — my — re - fuge most se - cure.
Pour out all your heart be - fore Him, trust in — no - thing but His love.



He a - lone is my — Sal - va - tion, He a - lone my sure de - fense;
I shall not be great - ly shak - en, From my Strong - hold and De - fense.
God is a re - fuge for — His peo - ple. Pow'r be - longs to God a - lone!



He — a - lone my sure de - fense.
From — my Strong - hold and De - fense.
Pow - er be - longs to God a - lone.

Text: from Psalm 62, alt. Nathan George, 2011; Music: Nathan George, 2011.

Congregational Hymn—I Know That My Redeemer Lives



I — know that my re - deem - er lives, glor - y, hal - le - lu - jah!
He — lives to bless me — with His love; glor - y, hal - le - lu - jah!
He — lives to crush the fiends of hell; glor - y, hal - le - lu - jah!



What com - fort this sweet sen - tence gives, glor - y, hal - le - lu - jah!
He — lives to plead my — cause a - bove; glor - y, hal - le - lu - jah!
He — lives and doth with - in me dwell; glor - y, hal - le - lu - jah!



Shout — on, pray on, we're gain - ing ground, glor - y, hal - le - lu - jah!



The dead's a - live, and the lost is found, glor - y, hal - le - lu - jah!

Text: Samuel Medley, 1775; Music: ANTIOCH (SHOUT ON), F. C. Wood,
The Sacred Harp, 1850; arr. Henry C. Haffner, 2017.

GOD'S PEOPLE RESPOND IN GRATEFUL PRAISE, PETITIONS, TITHES & OFFERINGS

Our praying, serving, and giving are essential aspects of worship. It is here that our faith moves from our heads and hearts into our lives and callings.

Prayer of Thanksgiving and Intercession—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.*

Congregational Hymn—Abide, O Dearest Jesus

A - bide, O dear - est Je - sus, a - mong us with Thy grace,
A - bide with heav'n - ly bright - ness a - mong us, prec - ious Light;
A - bide with Your pro - tec - tion a - mong us, Lord, our strength;

That Sa - tan may not harm us, nor we to sin give place.
Your truth di - rect and keep us from err - or's gloom - y night.
Lest world and Sa - tan fell us and ov - er come at length.

A - bide, O dear Re - deem - er, a - mong us with Your Word
A - bide, with rich - est bless - ing, a - mong us boun - teous Lord,
A - bide, O faith - ful Sav - ior, a - mong us with Your love;

And thus now and here af - ter true peace and joy af - ford.
Let us in grace and wis - dom grow dai - ly through Your Word.
Grant stead - fast - ness and help us to reach our home a - bove.

Text: Joshua Stegmann, 1628, tr. August Crull, 1923; Music: ST. THEODULPH, Melchoir Teschner, c. 1615.

GOD SENDS HIS PEOPLE OUT

After calling His people into His presence, forgiving their sins, instructing them in His Word, and providing a foretaste of the marriage supper of the Lamb, God sends His people into the world to show His light in the darkness.

Benediction—Numbers 6:24-26

The Lord bless you and keep you; the Lord make His face to shine upon you and be gracious to you; the Lord lift up His countenance upon you and give you peace. *Amen.*

Sung Response—Doxology

Praise God from whom all bless - ings flow; praise Him, all crea - tures here be - low;

praise Him a - bove ye heav'n-ly host: Praise Fa - ther, Son, and Ho - ly Ghost. A - men.

Text: Thomas Ken, 1674; Music: OLD 100TH, Louis Bourgeois, 1551.

Announcements

Worship Notes:

In this morning's sermon text, John contrasts truth with lies (1 John 2:21, 27). Addressing a fearful audience that is opposed by deceitful "antichrists" in the "last hour," he urges his readers to hold fast to the truth of Christ, and comforts them with the knowledge that "what you heard from the beginning abides in you" (1 John 2:24). Because Christ is the "true vine" (John 15:1) and we are the branches bearing the fruit of His love, we have strength to resist the "Prince of Darkness" (*A Mighty Fortress Is Our God*) and the "idols made of silver and gold" (*Not Unto Us—Psalm 115*). Because He "lives and doth within me dwell" (*I Know That My Redeemer Lives*), we can say with confidence, "I will not be greatly shaken" (*My Soul Waits In Expectation—Psalm 62*). Taking John's advice to heart, throughout the service we pray asking the Lord to "take [His] truth, plant it deep in us" (*Speak, O Lord*), to dwell with us as our "true word" (*Be Thou My Vision*), and to "direct and keep us from error's gloomy night" (*Abide, O Dearest Jesus*).

—Henry C. Haffner

Key Words: Continue, Anointed, Truth, Denies, Abide, Beginning, Son, Father
Keystone Verse: Let what you heard from the beginning abide in you. If what you heard from the beginning abides in you, then you too will abide in the Son and in the Father. (1 John 2:24)



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All Biblical quotes taken from the English Standard Version unless otherwise noted.