

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

DURHAM, NORTH CAROLINA

Third Sunday of Advent

December 13, 2020

A SERVICE FOR THE WORSHIP OF GOD

(Click [here](#) to connect to today's live worship.)

GATHERING MUSIC *Vom Himmel Hoch, da Komm' Ich Her* J. Pachelbel

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS Mindy Douglas

PRELUDE *Vom Himmel Hoch, da Komm' Ich Her* J. Pachelbel

CALL TO WORSHIP (from Psalm 126) John Weicher

Leader: When the Lord restored the fortunes of Zion,
 then were we like those who dream.

All: **Then was our mouth filled with laughter,
 and our tongue with shouts of joy.**

Leader: Then they said among the nations,
 the Lord has done great things for them.

All: **The Lord has done great things for us,
 and we are glad indeed.**

Leader: Restore our fortunes, O Lord,
 like the watercourses of the Negeb.

All: **Those who sowed with tears
 will reap with songs of joy.**

Leader: Those who go out weeping, carrying the seed,
 will come again with joy, shouldering their sheaves.

All: **Let us worship God.**

ADVENT WREATH CANDLE LIGHTING LITURGY Tony and Teddie Brown

Response (Hymn No. 93, verses 1-2) *Lift Up Your Heads, Ye Mighty Gates* *Truro*

***Lift up your heads, ye mighty gates; behold the King of glory waits;
the King of kings is drawing near; the Savior of the world is here.***

***Fling wide the portals of your heart; make it a temple, set apart
from earthly use for heaven's employ, adorned with prayer and love and joy.***

CONFESSION OF SIN Susan Dunlap

Call to Confession

Prayer of Confession (in unison)

**Merciful God, you love justice;
why, then, do we persist in wrongdoing
and every form of evil?**

**You have given us the gift of your Spirit;
why, then do we quench the Spirit among us?**

You have given us the words of the prophets and the Word himself;
why, then, do we despise and ignore what we have heard from you?
You have sent the light into the world;
why, then, have we loved darkness rather than light?
Forgive us. Restore us.
Till and tend us as your garden
until righteousness and praise spring up,
for the sake of Jesus Christ,
in whose name we pray.

Silent Confession

Assurance of Pardon

Response (Hymn No. 93, verse 3)

Truro

*Redeemer, come! I open wide
my heart to thee; here, Lord, abide.
Let me thy inner presence feel;
thy grace and love in me reveal.*

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

Cris Rivera

Leader: The Lord be with you.

All: **And also with you.**

Leader: Let us pray.

All: **Creator God,**

**Scripture is flooded with dream-like images:
justice rolling like a mighty river,
the prisoner being set free,
good news to the oppressed,
the whole world rejoicing.**

**To our human ears, there are times when these words
can sound like nothing more than a far-off dream.
However, what we know is that to dream is to hope,
and to hope is to imagine,
and to imagine is to wonder,
and to wonder is to believe,
and to believe is to live and breathe for your promised day.
So give us the strength to listen as we dream, O God. Amen.**

HEBREW SCRIPTURE READING

Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11

Cris Rivera

Leader: The Word of the Lord.

All: **Thanks be to God!**

NEW TESTAMENT READING

Luke 1:46b-55

Mitzi Leshner-Thomas

Leader: The Word of the Lord.

All: **Thanks be to God!**

SERMON

"Dreams of Change"

Mitzi Leshner-Thomas

HYMN No. 100 (verses 1-2) *My Soul Cries Out with a Joyful Shout* *Star of County Down*
My soul cries out with a joyful shout that the God of my heart is great,
and my spirit sings of the wondrous things that you bring to the ones who wait.
You fixed your sight on your servant's plight, and my weakness you did not spurn,
so from east to west shall my name be blest. Could the world be about to turn?

Refrain: ***My heart shall sing of the day you bring.***

Let the fires of your justice burn.

Wipe away all tears, for the dawn draws near,
and the world is about to turn.

Though I am small, my God, my all, you work great things in me,
and your mercy will last from the depths of the past to the end of the age to be.
Your very name puts the proud to shame, and to those who would for you yearn,
you will show your might, put the strong to flight, for the world is about to turn. (Refrain)

A TIME WITH THE CHILDREN

John Weicher

INVITATION TO GIVE AND DEDICATION OF THE OFFERING

John Weicher

NEW MEMBERS SERVICE OF WELCOME

Mindy Douglas

Words of Welcome and Introduction

Affirmation of Faith (All, in unison)

The Apostles' Creed

I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth,
and in Jesus Christ his only Son our Lord;
who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried;
he descended into hell; the third day he rose again from the dead;
he ascended into heaven,
and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty;
from thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead.
I believe in the Holy Ghost; the holy catholic Church;
the communion of saints; the forgiveness of sins;
the resurrection of the body; and the life everlasting. Amen.

Reaffirmation of Baptismal Vows

Prayer

CONCERNS AND CELEBRATIONS, PASTORAL PRAYER, AND THE LORD'S PRAYER

Mindy Douglas

The Lord's Prayer (in unison)

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.

HYMN No. 100 (verses 3-4) *My Soul Cries Out with a Joyful Shout* *Star of County Down*
From the halls of power to the fortress tower, not a stone will be left on stone.
Let the king beware for your justice, tears every tyrant from his throne.
The hungry poor shall weep no more, for the food they can never earn;
there are tables spread; every mouth be fed, for the world is about to turn.

Refrain: *My heart shall sing of the day you bring.*
Let the fires of your justice burn.
Wipe away all tears, for the dawn draws near,
and the world is about to turn.

Though the nations rage from age to age, we remember who holds us fast:
God's mercy must deliver us from the conqueror's crushing grasp.
This saving word that our forebears heard is the promise which holds us bound,
till the spear and rod can be crushed by God, who is turning the world around. (Refrain)

CHARGE AND BENEDICTION

Mitzi Leshner-Thomas

POSTLUDE

Vom Himmel Hoch, da Komm' Ich Her

Otto Diemel

CHRISTMAS *Carolings*



SUNDAY, DEC. 13, 6:30 PM

Zoom link: [https://zoom.us/j/93565707969?](https://zoom.us/j/93565707969?pwd=b2xndS9MTFlXU0cvOFFWT3ppalJodzO9)
[pwd=b2xndS9MTFlXU0cvOFFWT3ppalJodzO9.](https://zoom.us/j/93565707969?pwd=b2xndS9MTFlXU0cvOFFWT3ppalJodzO9)
Want to lead a song? Contact Kathy Conner.

First Presbyterian Church welcomes all who worship with us. We honor and celebrate the human diversity and unity that God gives us in Christ. We welcome individuals of every age, race, nationality, gender, ability, sexual orientation, and economic circumstance to participate fully in the life of the church. On December 6, 103 households tuned in to the 11:00 a.m. live-streamed broadcast of worship.

We welcome in worship today new members *Arthur (Art) Baker and Lara Duffney*. They are married and were received into membership by the FPC Session on November 23. They are joining FPC by Letter of Transfer.

Music Notes:

- 1) **Special thanks** to ***Gordon Campbell*** for his music leadership with today's service. Gordon will serve as organist and interim music director while ***Kathy Parkins*** recovers from shoulder and bicep surgery.
- 2) The ***organ music*** for this Sunday is three settings of the carol, "*Vom Himmel Hoch, da Komm' Ich Her,*" which translates, "*From Heaven Above I Come Here.*"

From Heaven Above I Come Here

From heaven above I come here to bring you good tidings.

I bring you so many good tidings that I will speak and sing about them.

Many thanks to ***Jody Maxwell, Pat Dillon, Keith Rokoske, and Jay Klinck*** for their "behind the scenes" technical assistance with our live broadcasts of worship each Sunday morning. We are also grateful to ***Jennie Alwood*** for the powerful images accompanying our online worship today.

Portions of ***today's worship text*** are taken from *A Sanctified Art - Those Who Dream Words for Worship, Feasting on the Word, and Book of Common Worship (2018)*. ***Hymn texts and music*** are reprinted from *Glory to God* under Onelicense.net: A.713926.

~ Our Celebrations and Concerns ~

CONDOLENCES: The love and concern of the congregation are extended to ***Emily Wilkins and family*** on the death of her ***Uncle Al*** on December 2.

CONCERNS:

- ❖ ***Kathy Parkins***, recovering at home following shoulder and bicep surgery
- ❖ ***Grace Abels***, recovering from back surgery
- ❖ ***Harold Dunlap***
- ❖ ***Kerry Holbrook***
- ❖ ***Jane Rourk***
- ❖ ***Carol Wills***
- ❖ ***Everlyn Bass***, aunt of Valerie McMillian, in hospice care at Duke Hospital
- ❖ ***Daniel Cheney***, brother of Johanna Bernhardt, hospitalized with heart related issues
- ❖ ***Barbara Peck***, former member, will have back surgery on December 14 in Huntsville, AL
- ❖ **The many households impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic**
- ❖ **Those who are grieving during this holiday season**

Care Communities:

Brookdale Durham: **Julian Boswell**

Coasdaile Pavilion: **Bob Rankin**

Dubose Center at The Cedars, Chapel Hill: **Arthur Clark**

Durham Regent: **John Kerr, Ann Prospero**

Durham Ridge: **Phillip Herndon**

Emerald Pond: **Paul Cornsweet**

Hillcrest Convalescent Center: **Walter Chambliss**, father of Will Chambliss

The Forest at Duke: **Fran Bryant**

Family and Friends of the Congregation:

- ❖ **Brendan Bequette**, family friend of Margaret & Miguel Rubiera
- ❖ **Peggy Boulden**, mother of Dick Boulden
- ❖ **Linda Capers**, friend of Li-Chen Chin
- ❖ **Meg Courtney**, daughter of Bob and Mary Lee Clark, active friends of the congregation
- ❖ **Maureen Darcey**, friend of Brianna Bennett
- ❖ **Phil Goss**, friend of the congregation
- ❖ **Candee Herndon**, friend of Kathy Krahenbuhl
- ❖ **Anna Huntley**, active friend of the congregation
- ❖ **Ann Loeblich**, mother of Bruce Loeblich
- ❖ **Peggy Mordecai**, mother of Beth Eisenson
- ❖ **Shannon Putman**, daughter of Mary Putman
- ❖ **Robert Reaves**, husband of Floalice Reaves, friend of the congregation
- ❖ **Joe Rudigier**, brother of Jeanne Hervey



Robert Daye is Retiring!

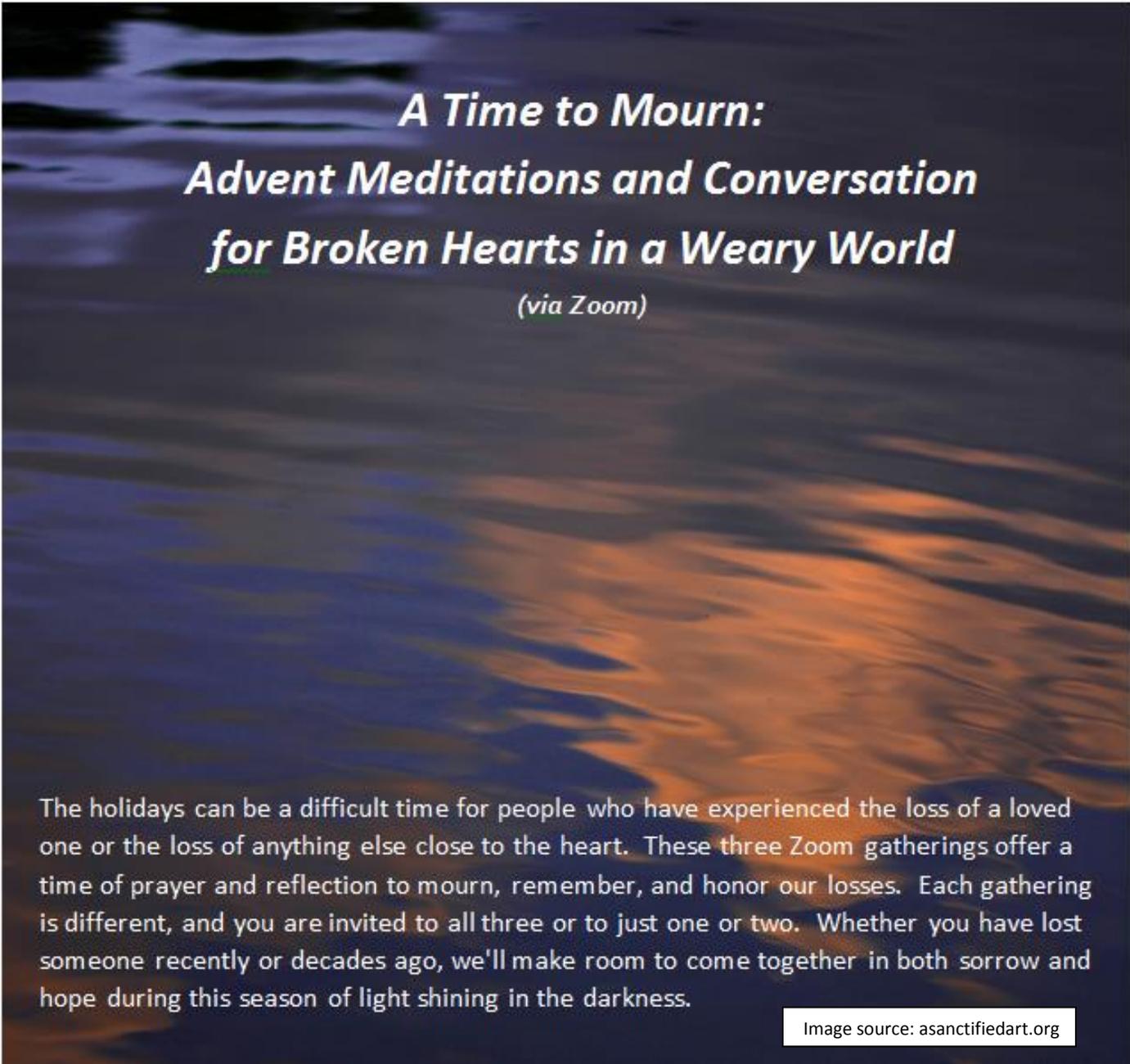
Let's shower him with cards!

Our sexton, **Robert Daye**, will be retiring at the end of 2020 after 43 years of faithful service to the church. While Robert deserves to be honored in-person with a big send-off into retirement, the pandemic has led us to plan a virtual celebration instead.

On Sunday, December 20, beginning at 2:00 p.m., the congregation will meet via the church's YouTube channel and hear stories and see photos of Robert's time with us. Members of Robert's family have been asked to come and share in this momentous occasion.

Thank you to those of you who submitted stories and photos for this event and sent contributions for the love offering. **We now ask that you help us with one more thing: A CARD SHOWER for Robert! Please send cards (or personal notes) to the church by December 16th.** These will be presented to Robert at the celebration, along with the love offering.

Click [here](#) to access FPC's Advent resources and activities



***A Time to Mourn:
Advent Meditations and Conversation
for Broken Hearts in a Weary World***
(via Zoom)

The holidays can be a difficult time for people who have experienced the loss of a loved one or the loss of anything else close to the heart. These three Zoom gatherings offer a time of prayer and reflection to mourn, remember, and honor our losses. Each gathering is different, and you are invited to all three or to just one or two. Whether you have lost someone recently or decades ago, we'll make room to come together in both sorrow and hope during this season of light shining in the darkness.

Image source: [asanctifiedart.org](https://www.asanctifiedart.org)

LEADERS: Mitzi Leshner-Thomas and Susan Dunlap

TIME: Sundays, December 6, 13, 20 from 4:00-5:00 p.m.

ZOOM LINK: <https://zoom.us/j/99260154711>

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, DURHAM

ADVENT PRAYERS



THURSDAYS, 8 PM

[HTTPS://WWW.FACEBOOK.COM/FIRSTPRESDURHAM/](https://www.facebook.com/firstpresdurham/)



Support for Those who Mourn

Growing thru Grief offers year-round support to people who have lost a loved one. Currently we are meeting on zoom each week. Here is a preview of our coming speakers:

December 15	Andrea Bowen	Care for the Grieving Self through the Holidays
December 22	Janet Stolp	To be determined
December 29	Vivian Harris	The Ugly Shoes Club

If you would like to attend any or all of these sessions, please send your request to admin@growingthrugrief.org. Then we can send you the information. Everyone must register every week. We need to receive your inquiry by 8 am on Monday for Tuesday's session.

We meet each Tuesday from 4:15-6, with a presentation plus small group discussion. For more information about Growing thru Grief, check out our website, growingthrugrief.org.



Friday, December 18, 12 noon-1:00 p.m. (Online)

Join NC Poet Laureate *Jaki Shelton Green* for a Zoom discussion on one of James Baldwin's essays, *Equal in Paris*, written shortly before Christmas 1949. Green is the first African American and third woman to be appointed as a North Carolina Poet Laureate. This presentation will provide a different perspective and lens for reimagining Christmas this holiday season. Registration is free, but donations are encouraged. [Click here](#) to register.

HELPING OUR NEIGHBORS . . .

From Iglesia Emanuel: Here's a little thank you video we made to show our gratitude to all our partners in ministry who have so generously supported the food bank all this time. THANK YOU AND BLESS YOU, and happy holidays! - *Julio and Marty Ramirez-Eve*

[Iglesia Emanuel Food Bank Thank You](#)



Please remember that the church must receive your charitable contributions by midnight on Monday, December 31, 2020; or the gift must be postmarked by December 31, 2020, if mailed, to be deductible on your 2020 taxes.

If you wish to make a contribution by credit card, this may be done through the church's website (<https://firstpres-durham.org>) at any time. **To be deductible on your 2020 taxes, please initiate the gift by Tuesday, December 29. On-line contributions scheduled for December 31 will not reach us in time.**

If you wish to make a donation through a gift of stock, please notify Tom Bloom, Business Administrator (t.bloom@firstpres-durham.org) **as soon as possible.**

Members aged 70 ½ + who own an IRA may be able to make a tax-excludable gift directly to First Presbyterian and have that gift satisfy any required minimum distribution for this year. Please contact your IRA administrator ASAP if you wish to consider this giving option for tax year 2020.

CHURCH STAFF

Tom Bloom, Business Administrator
Lenore Champion, Children's Ministry Director
Robert Daye, Sexton
Mindy Douglas, Pastor/Head of Staff
Susan Dunlap, Parish Associate

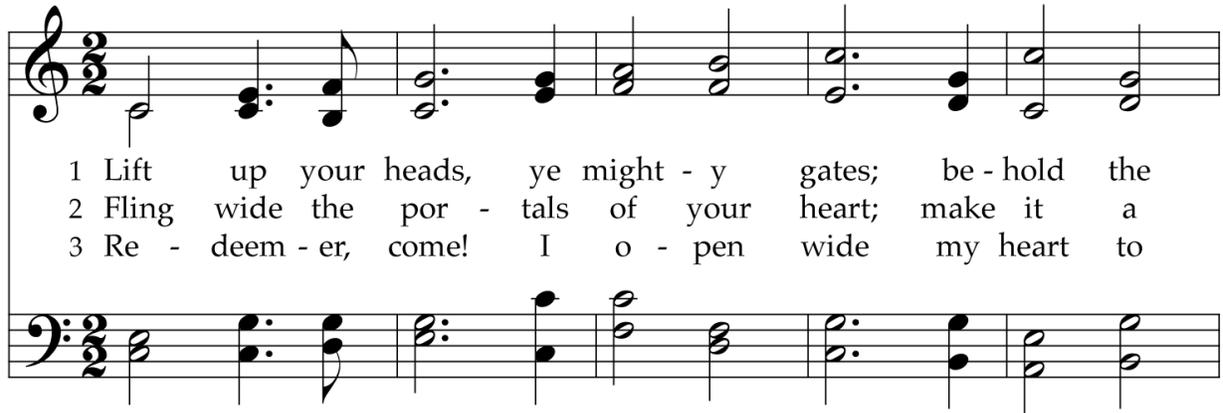


Sybil King, Administrative Assistant
Mitzi Leshner-Thomas, Associate Pastor
Valerie McMillian, Parish Administrator
Kathy Parkins, Minister of Music
John Weicher, Associate Pastor

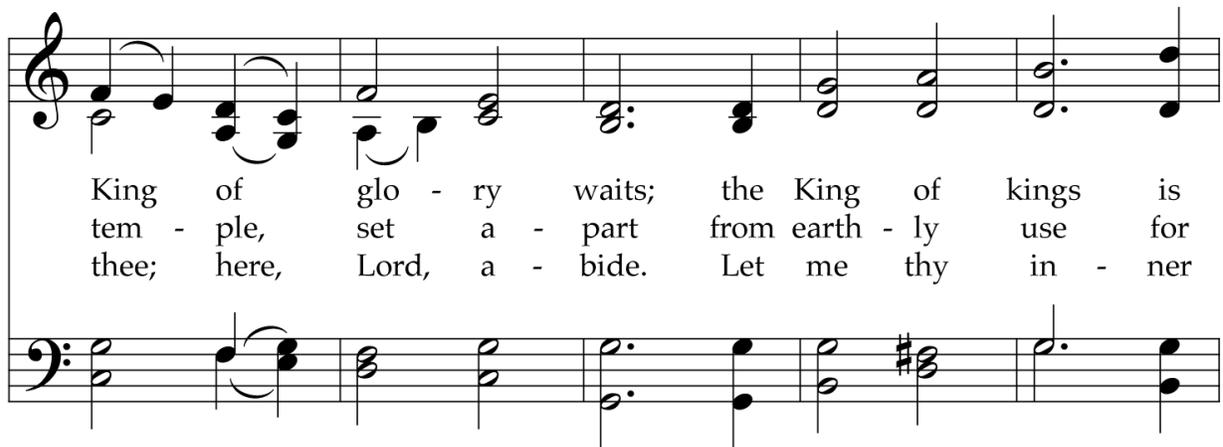
**For more information about First Presbyterian Church, email the church office:
info@firstpres-durham.org or visit our website: <https://firstpres-durham.org>.**

305 EAST MAIN STREET DURHAM, NORTH CAROLINA 27701 919.682.5511

Lift Up Your Heads, Ye Mighty Gates 93



1 Lift up your heads, ye might - y gates; be - hold the
2 Fling wide the por - tals of your heart; make it a
3 Re - deem - er, come! I o - pen wide my heart to



King of glo - ry waits; the King of kings is
tem - ple, set a - part from earth - ly use for
thee; here, Lord, a - bide. Let me thy in - ner



draw - ing near; the Sav - ior of the world is here.
heaven's em - ploy, a - dorned with prayer and love and joy.
pres - ence feel; thy grace and love in me re - veal.

100 My Soul Cries Out with a Joyful Shout

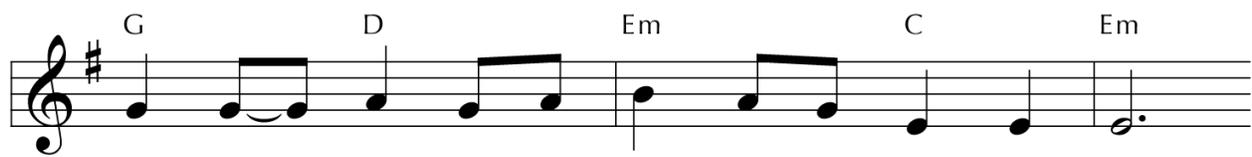
Canticle of the Turning



1 My soul cries out with a joy - ful shout that the
2 Though I am small, my God, my all, you
3 From the halls of power to the for - tress tower, not a
4 Though the na - tions rage from age to age, we re -



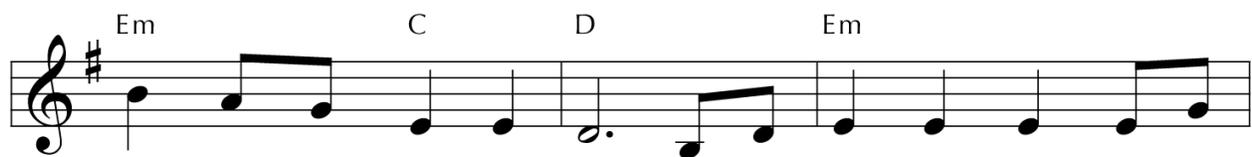
God of my heart is great, and my spir - it sings of the
work great things in me, and your mer - cy will last from the
stone will be left on stone. Let the king be - ware for your
mem - ber who holds us fast: God's mer - cy must de -



won - drous things that you bring to the ones who wait.
depths of the past to the end of the age to be.
jus - tice tears ev - ery ty - rant from his throne.
liv - er us from the con - quer - or's crush - ing grasp.



You fixed your sight on your ser - vant's plight, and my
Your ver - y name puts the proud to shame, and to
The hun - gry poor shall weep no more, for the
This sav - ing word that our fore - bears heard is the



weak - ness you did not spurn, so from east to west shall my
those who would for you yearn, you will show your might, put the
food they can nev - er earn; there are ta - bles spread; ev - ery
prom - ise which holds us bound, till the spear and rod can be

name be blest. Could the world be a - bout to turn?
 strong to flight, for the world is a - bout to turn.
 mouth be fed, for the world is a - bout to turn.
 crushed by God, who is turn - ing the world a - round.

Refrain

My heart shall sing of the day you bring. Let the

fires of your jus - tice burn. Wipe a - way all tears, for the

dawn draws near, and the world is a - bout to turn.