

First Presbyterian Church of Athens

In response to God's grace, the mission of First Presbyterian Church is to create a community where people seek the truth of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, rejoice in worship, and go forth sharing the love of Christ with Athens and the world!

October 4, 2026
8:45 and 11:00 a.m.
World Communion Sunday

GATHERING IN THE NAME OF GOD

Welcome to all who are worshipping with us. As we enter a holy space this morning, please silence your cell phone.

Greeting

Psalm 118:24

This is the day the Lord has made; **let us rejoice and be glad in it!**

Prelude

Shalom

Dan Locklair

Words of Welcome

Song of Gathering

HOLY MANNA

All who hunger, gather gladly; holy manna is our bread.

Come from wilderness and wandering.

Here, in truth we will be fed.

You that yearn for days of fullness, all around us is our food.

Taste and see the grace eternal. Taste and see that God is good.

Call to Worship

Our God has triumphed!

We have been led through the sea to safety.

Our God has triumphed!

We have been freed to be people of God.

***Hymn 281** *Guide Me, O Thou Great Jehovah* CWM RHONDDA

*Call to Confession

*Prayer of Confession

Creating and renewing God, you have made us in your image to carry your life-giving love as a blessing to all the world. Yet we fail again and again to live out your call. We place our trust in money and possessions, in flawed people and broken relationships, in the things that cannot sustain us. We do the things we do not want to do, and we fail to do the things we know you would have us do. Forgive us for all the ways we fall short. Open our eyes, hearts, and minds to your presence, and re-create us in your image each day, for the good of all that you have made.

*Silent Prayer

Lord, have mercy. **Amen.**

*Assurance of Pardon

**Those who are able please stand.*

Please sign and pass the Fellowship Pad, making note of new and old friends, check in on Facebook, and follow us on Instagram (firstpresathensga).

Have you signed up for Realm Connect? If you haven't, please scan the QR code and click "Sign Up." More information about Realm can be found on the church website or on our bulletin boards.



Few Welsh hymns are as well known and loved as *Guide Me, O Thou Great Jehovah*, and 18th-century text that did not gain its popular tune until the 20th century. It is a stirring hymn of pilgrimage filled with imagery from Hebrew Scripture.

At "The Peace," worshipers are invited to greet each other by saying, "The peace of Christ be with you," and responding, "And also with you."

Children are invited to remain in the Sanctuary on Communion Sundays.

Be Known to Us in Breaking Bread is a communion hymn that refers not to the Last Supper, but to the meal at Emmaus shared by Christ and two companions on the road. It is set to a 16th-century psalm tune.

***Congregational Response**

David Ogden



***The Peace**

Since God has forgiven us in Christ, let us forgive one another.
The peace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all.
And also with you.

11:00 a.m. Sacrament of Baptism

Through baptism, we welcome Katherine Iris and James Borealis Tagg, into the one, holy, catholic, and apostolic Church.

***Question to the Congregation**

Do we, as members of the church of Jesus Christ, promise to guide and nurture Kit and Bo, by word and deed, with love and prayer, encouraging them to know and follow Christ? If so, please stand.

***Affirmation of Faith**

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.**

Hymn 492

Baptized in Water

BUNESSAN

HEARING THE WORD OF GOD

Prayer for Illumination

Hymn 327, stanza 1

**O Word of God incarnate, O Wisdom from on high,
O Truth unchanged, unchanging, O Light of our dark sky;
we praise you for the radiance that from the hallowed page,
a lantern to our footsteps, shines on from age to age.**

First Lesson

Matthew 2:13-15, page 880

This is the Word of God for the people of God. **Thanks be to God.**

Second Lesson

Exodus 14:5-7, 10-14, 21-29 page 59

This is the Word of God for the people of God. **Thanks be to God.**

Sermon

Unstuck

Dr. Ryan Baer

RESPONDING TO THE WORD OF GOD

***Hymn 505**

Be Known to Us in Breaking Bread

ST. FLAVIAN

Presentation of Our Tithes and Offerings

8:45 Offertory *Improvisation on Cwm Rhondda*

11:00 Offertory *Bread of the World in Mercy Broken* Peter Aston

Bread of the world in mercy broken, wine of the soul in mercy shed,
by whom the words of life are spoken, and in whose death our sins are dead.
Look on the heart by sorrow broken, look on the tears by sinners shed,
and be thy feast to us the token, that by thy grace our souls are fed. Amen.

***Doxology**

Hymn 592

**Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;
praise him, all creatures here below;
praise him above, ye heavenly host;
praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.**

***Prayer of Dedication**

Sacrament of Holy Communion

Invitation to the Lord's Table

The Great Thanksgiving

The Lord be with you.
And also with you.
Lift up your hearts.
We lift them to the Lord.
Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
It is right to give our thanks and praise...

Sanctus

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow-er and might,
heav-en and earth are full of your glo-ry. Ho - san - na
in the high- est. Blessed is he who comes in the
name of the Lord. Ho - san - na in the high - est.

The musical setting of the communion liturgy is by contemporary American composer Thomas Pavlechko.

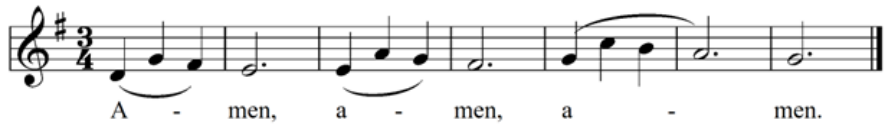


You may mail your check, set up an automatic payment of your estimate of giving through your bank, or donate online using this QR code or at firstpresathens.org/giving. Thank you for your generosity

Memorial Acclamation

Christ has died; Christ is ris - en;
Christ will come a - gain.

The Great Amen



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.

Breaking of the Bread and Giving of the Cup

Communion of the People

Prayer after Communion

SENDING IN THE NAME OF GOD

Savior, Again to Thy Dear Name We Raise was written for a 19th-century English choral festival. It is a prayer for the peace of God on our way home, through the night, and at the end of our earthly life.

***Hymn 539** *Savior, Again to Thy Dear Name We Raise* ELLERS

***Charge and Benediction**

***Congregational Response** AR HYD Y NOS

**Go, my children, fed and nourished, closer to me.
Grow in love and love by serving, joyful and free.
Here my Spirit’s power filled you;
here my tender comfort stilled you.
Go, my children, fed and nourished, joyful and free.**

Postlude *Cwm Rhondda* Paul Manz

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Nurseries for children 4 years old and younger, available from 8:30 a.m. to 12:10 p.m., are located next to the Children’s Ministry Suite and are accessible down the stairs in the Atrium and through the glass door.

A special word of welcome to our guests: thank you for joining us for worship this morning. Please fill out the Fellowship Pad so that we may be in touch. We are delighted you are here and look forward to seeing you again.

Children’s Church is an important developmental time for children, but there are times when children remaining in worship, watching and learning from their parents, is even more valuable. Children are invited to remain in the sanctuary on Communion Sundays.

**AthHalf Pre-Race Service
October 11, 6:30 a.m.**

Invite your racing friends and supporters to join us for worship at 6:30 a.m. in the Atrium.
Due to the race there will be no 8:45 a.m. service on October 11.

THIS WEEK

Sunday, October 4, World Communion Sunday, Food Sunday

- 8:45 a.m. and 11:00 a.m. Services, Dr. Ryan Baer
- 9:45 a.m. Sunday School
- 4:00 p.m. St. Andrews Choir Rehearsal, Room 202
- 4:45 p.m. Youth Choir Rehearsal, Room 202
- 5:30 p.m. Youth Group, The PIT

Monday, October 5

- 2:00 p.m. Circle Two, Staff Conference Room
- 5:30 p.m. Handbell Choir Rehearsal, Handbell Choir Room

Tuesday, October 6

- 2:00 p.m. Circle 3/4
- 7:00 p.m. Circle 6, Home of Ann Dunn

Wednesday, October 7

- 11:30 a.m. Our Daily Bread Lunch, First Baptist Church
- 4:30 p.m. Shakespeare and Friends Class, Staff Conference Room
- 5:30 p.m. Wed@First + LIFT, Fellowship Hall
- 6:30 p.m. Chancel Choir Rehearsal, Room 202

Thursday, October 8

- 9:05 a.m. Weekday School Chapel, Children's Ministry Suite
- 2:00 p.m. Mellows, Arbor Terrace
- 5:00 p.m. Administration Commission Meeting, Staff Conference Room

Saturday, October 10

- 11:00 a.m. Service of Witness to the Resurrection and Thanksgiving for the Life of Bill Patterson, Sanctuary
- 11:30 a.m. Reception in Memory of Bill Patterson, Atrium

Sunday, October 11 - AthHalf Pre-Race Worship Service, One Service at 11:00 a.m.,

- 6:30 a.m. AthHalf Pre-Race Service, Atrium
- 9:45 a.m. Sunday School
- 11:00 a.m. Worship Service, Ms. Hannah Knight preaching
- 4:00 p.m. St. Andrews Choir Rehearsal, Room 202
- 4:45 p.m. Youth Choir Rehearsal, Room 202
- 5:30 p.m. Youth Group, The PIT

Wed@First + LIFT - October 7

Wed@First is a monthly gathering for mid-week intergenerational fellowship and growth at FPC. **LIFT stands for Living in Faith Together.** One of the great gifts unique to the church is the opportunity to grow alongside people from different generations and LIFT presents us with monthly gatherings for fellowship, study, and fun – all around the dinner table with friends of different ages.

The theme for this fall is “Stewardship of Time and Talents”. We will gather for LIFT on **October 7 (Taziki's), November 4 (Million Dollar Spaghetti night), and December 2 (baked potato and soup bar) from 5:30-6:30 p.m.** and all are invited to participate!

Please RSVP for dinner in the Atrium, online on Realm, or by contacting the church office (e-mail frontdesk@firstpresathens.org or call 706-543-4338) by Mondays at 12:00 p.m. Price is \$12/person and a \$45/family max (complimentary for children 5 and under).

NOTES ON THE SERVICE

WORSHIP LEADERS

Dr. Ryan Baer, *Senior Pastor*

The Rev. Whitney Booth Lockard, *Associate Pastor*

Dr. John Coble, *Director of Music and Organist*

Baptism Elder

Lewis Hudgins

USHERS

8:45 a.m. John Simpson (head), Carl Bergmann

11:00 a.m. Jimbo LaBoon (head),
Emily LaBoon, Larry Baer

SUNDAY MORNING MANAGER

Justin Winstanley

AUDIOVISUAL TECHNICIAN

Bryan Owens

FLOWERS

The Sanctuary flowers are given to the glory of God and in memory of Mrs. Susie Mendenhall by the Mendenhall family.

OCTOBER FLOWER TEAM

Greta Covington (chair), Judy Burch, Sydney Jackson, Wanda Neislar, Leslye Queen

TO AID IN WORSHIP

If you need to leave the sanctuary during the service, a live video feed is available in the Atrium, on Facebook, and YouTube.

Available in the Narthex or from an usher:

- **Personal hearing receivers** usable anywhere in the sanctuary
- **Large-print** hymnals, Bibles, bulletins, and hymnsheets
- **Sermons** from the previous six weeks

CONGREGATIONAL CARE

Prayer requests can be submitted to the church office, 706-543-4338, by the Prayer Request link on our church website (firstpresathens.org) or on the prayer cards in the Fellowship Pads.

New Members First Things Class

Join us for our next FirstThings gathering on **Sunday, October 18** from **12:15 p.m. to 2:30 p.m.** This will be a time to get better acquainted, meet the church staff, and talk about what makes First Presbyterian Church of Athens unique.

On **Sunday, October 25**, new members will meet with the Session (our governing board) at **10:00 a.m.** to be received into membership and will be introduced to the congregation at the 11:00 a.m. service. To RSVP, please call the church office (706-543-4338) or e-mail Rev. Whitney Booth Lockard at whitney@firstpresathens.org by **Tuesday, October 13**.

Family Promise Host Weeks October 18-31

FPC will be the host church for Family Promise from October 18 - 31. Volunteers directly impact and assist the families by helping provide a meal, giving a \$25 donation (to First Pres with Family Promise in memo) to purchase groceries or rideshare gift cards, driving the families to job interviews or medical appointments (using the Family Promise van), or helping on Saturday with a children's activity at the Day Center (located at 205 Bray St.) as part of our Go Forth volunteer initiative.

To volunteer, please sign up at tinyurl.com/FPAVolunteer. If you have questions, please contact the Family Promise Coordinators, Susan Boatwright at boatwright.susan@gmail.com or Jean Bock at bockjean@gmail.com.

Go Forth - FPC Day of Service Saturday, October 24

Join us for a morning of church-wide service to and with our neighbors all around Athens! We'll have a few different work sites with projects for children, youth, and adults at all ability levels. Sign up at tinyurl.com/goforth26 and please reach out to Rev. Whitney Booth Lockard (whitney@firstpresathens.org) with any questions.

We will gather in the FPC Fellowship Hall at 9:00 a.m. for breakfast and prayer together before breaking into our groups to "go forth" to share the love of Christ with our neighbors, partnering with our neighbors to serve all over town!

Recommendations for Elders

The Nominations and Elections Committee encourages your participation in the process for nominating Elders. Elders should be persons of faith, dedication, and good judgment. Their manner of life should be a demonstration of the Christian Gospel, both within the church and in the world at large.

Please e-mail your suggestions to Jay Holloway, Chair of the Nominations and Elections Committee, at jaytholloway@gmail.com. You can also fill out the form in the website (www.firstpresathens.org).

Current Elders:
(Not eligible for recommendation)

CLASS OF 2027

Susan Baldwin
Bill Bushnell
Amy Cowsert
Matt Crim
Jay Holloway
Tom Lane
Joan Pinson
Paige Simmons

CLASS OF 2028

Steven Brooks
Courtney Dantzler
Shannon Ferguson
Edward W. (Ned) Phares
Holly Sheats
Lawton Stephens
Madeline Van Dyck
John Webster

CLASS OF 2029

Meghan Bawcum
Stephen Covington
Andrew Griffeth
Anne Marie Miller
Mike Morris
Leslye Queen
Laura Toney
Gail Wilfong

I prayerfully recommend the following for Elder:

Name	Reasons	
Name	Reasons	
Name	Reasons	
Name	Reasons	
Name	Reasons	

Members of the Nominations and Elections Committee are Jay Holloway (Chair), Matt Jones, Jimbo LaBoon, and Beverly Phares.

EDUCATION – FAITH FORMATION

CHILDREN & YOUTH MINISTRIES

Director of Children and Youth Ministries: Hannah Knight

Interns: Morgan Cassidy

Nursery Coordinator: Rita Raines

Children and Worship, 8:45 a.m. and 11:00 a.m.

All children are welcome to remain in worship with their families every Sunday. Children's bulletins, Bibles, Busy Bags, and books are available at the children's tables located in the Narthex and on both sides of the choir loft.

Nursery Play, 8:30 a.m. – 12:15 p.m.

Children's Playroom • Infants – 4 Year Olds

Little ones are invited to Nursery Play during worship and Sunday school. Children will enjoy playtime, Bible stories, and a light snack with church friends.

Children's Church, 11:00 a.m. Worship Service

Children, (pre-K – 2nd grade) are invited to Children's Church after the passing of The Peace*. We will continue worshipping together in the Children's Ministry Suite by listening to God's Word, praying to God, and responding through art and worship.

**No Children's Church on the first Sunday of the month, Communion Sunday. All children are invited to remain in the sanctuary on this special Sunday to take part in worship and Communion with family.*

Contact Hannah Knight (hannah@firstpresathens.org), Director of Children and Youth Ministries, with any questions.

Children's Sunday School meets in the Children's Ministry Suite each Sunday starting at 9:45am. Our younger children participate in **Godly Play** (4 years to 2nd grade), an interactive, hands-on, reflective method of learning and wondering about God's great story. Our **Explorers Class** (3rd – 5th grade) also learn the stories of God's people, through acting out stories, worship and prayer practices, designing and playing games, and more!

Youth Sunday School (6th – 12th grade) meets in the PIT (youth space on basement level) kicking off each Sunday with donuts & fellowship at 9:45am. This class studies scripture that follows the texts of that morning's worship service, engaging these sacred stories alongside games and fun conversation. Middle and high school small groups will meet together sometimes, as well as in separate small groups.

Youth Group (5:30-7:00 p.m.)

This Sunday evening gathering is a safe space for both middle school (6th-8th grades) and high school youth (9th-12th grades) to come as they are to enjoy fellowship, dinner, games, Bible study, and prayer-- a great way to begin the week! The theme for this year is "Fruit of the Spirit" (as found in Galatians 5), so we will learn about love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control — and how those fruits help us to follow Christ in our daily lives. All are welcome — bring a friend!

SUNDAY SCHOOL FOR ADULTS

9:45-10:45 a.m.

Bible Basics • Moses Waddel Room

This fall, we will explore the beginning and early years of Israel's monarchy as recounted in the books of 1 & 2 Samuel. Just as the early Israelites did in ancient times, we will wrestle with the questions of: Who is God? Who are we as God's people? What is God's plan for us and God's creation? If you are interested in learning how these issues are addressed in these Old Testament texts, please join us.

Contacts: David Dantzler (jdaviddantzler@gmail.com) and Elaine Johnson (elaine@firstpresathens.org)

Del Dunn Sunday School Class • Room 308

We offer an in-depth study of scripture in a collegial environment and welcome all who seek to enrich their understanding of the Bible and its application to our daily lives. Several teachers rotate in leading the class in thought-provoking discussions. Our study for the fall is 1 & 2 Timothy and Titus in the LifeGuide Bible studies series published by InterVarsity Press.

Coordinator: Jerry Rogers: jrogerswtw@aol.com.

Zoom ID: 380 330 5940, PW: 245449

Builders • Room 301

This class is a space for anyone navigating the complexities of family life, relationships with children and youth, or careers. Our time together will offer a blend of fellowship, mutual support, Bible study, and service.

Contacts: Dr. Ryan Baer (ryan@firstpresathens.org) or Rev. Whitney Booth Lockard (whitney@firstpresathens.org)

New Voices • Room 310

Our goal is to create joy through art, food, music, prayer, scripture, class-led discussion, community, open-mindedness, and inclusion. This year, we hope to discuss a variety of topics and texts: darkness and light, *Christian Doctrine* (Shirley Guthrie), and *Ecclesiastes for You and Me* (John Iles).

Contact: Lewis Hudgins (lewisahudgins@gmail.com)

Zoom ID: 674 533 8902

Wayne F. Middendorf Men's Bible Class
Bride's Room, Tinsley-Stern

Rev. Will Norman will lead us in discussion on books of the New Testament. On other weeks, we watch and discuss the "Great Churches of Christianity", a DVD series led by Professor William Cook. All are welcome, as are all viewpoints.

Contact: Ian Hardin (ianhardin1@gmail.com)

Zoom ID: 883 5159 0923

Guide Me, O Thou Great Jehovah

CWM RHONDDA 8.7.8.7.8.7.7

William Williams, 1745

Stanza 1 trans. Peter Williams, 1771

Stanzas 2-3 trans. William Williams, 1772

John Hughes, 1907

1. Guide me, O Thou great Je - ho - vah, Pil - grim through this
 2. O - pen now the crys - tal foun - tain, Whence the heal - ing
 3. When I tread the verge of Jor - dan, Bid my anx - ious

bar - ren land; I am weak, but Thou art might - y; Hold me
 stream doth flow; Let the fire and cloud - y pil - lar Lead me
 fears sub - side; Death of death, and hell's de - struc - tion, Land me

with Thy power - ful hand; Bread of heav - en, bread of heav - en,
 all my jour - ney through; Strong de - liv - erer, strong de - liv - erer,
 safe on Ca - naan's side; Songs of prais - es, songs of prais - es

Feed me till I want no more, Feed me till I want no more.
 Be Thou still my strength and shield, Be Thou still my strength and shield.
 I will ev - er give to Thee, I will ev - er give to Thee.

Baptized in Water

492

BUNESSAN 5.5.8.5.5.9

Michael A. Saward, 1981

Gaelic melody
Arr. Dale Grotenhuis, 1985

C Am Dm G F G C

1. Bap-tized in wa - ter, Sealed by the Spir - it, Cleansed by the
2. Bap-tized in wa - ter, Sealed by the Spir - it, Dead in the
3. Bap-tized in wa - ter, Sealed by the Spir - it, Marked with the

Em Am Em G C Am F C/G

blood of Christ, our King; Heirs of sal - va - tion, Trust-ing the
tomb with Christ, our King; One with His ris - ing, Freed and for -
sign of Christ, our King; Born of the Spir - it, We are God's

Am G C G/B Am G7 C

prom - ise, Faith - ful - ly now God's prais - es we sing.
giv - en, Thank-ful - ly now God's prais - es we sing.
chil - dren, Joy - ful - ly now God's prais - es we sing.

Be Known to Us in Breaking Bread 505

ST. FLAVIAN CM

James Montgomery, 1825

Day's *Psalter*, 1562

1. Be known to us in break-ing bread, But do not then de - part;
2. There sup with us in love di - vine; Thy bod - y and Thy blood,

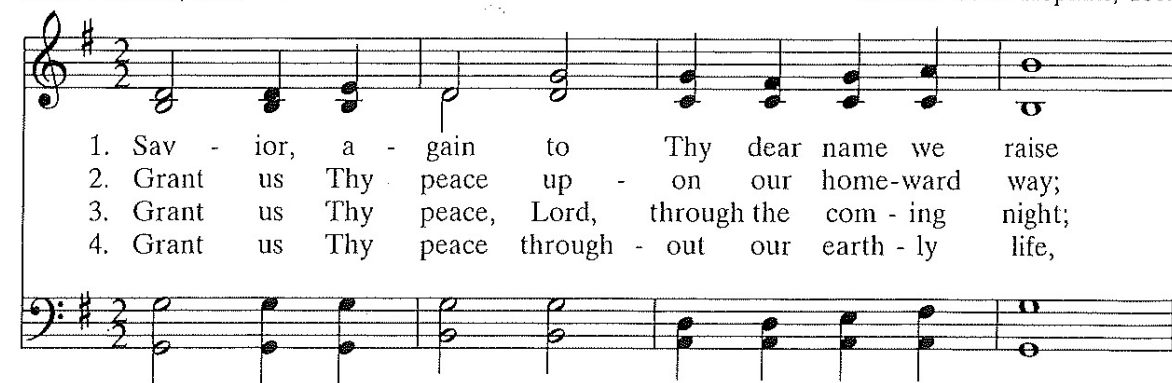
Sav - ior, a - bide with us, and spread Thy ta - ble in our heart.
That liv - ing bread, that heav-en-ly wine, Be our im - mor - tal food.

Savior, Again to Thy Dear Name We Raise 539

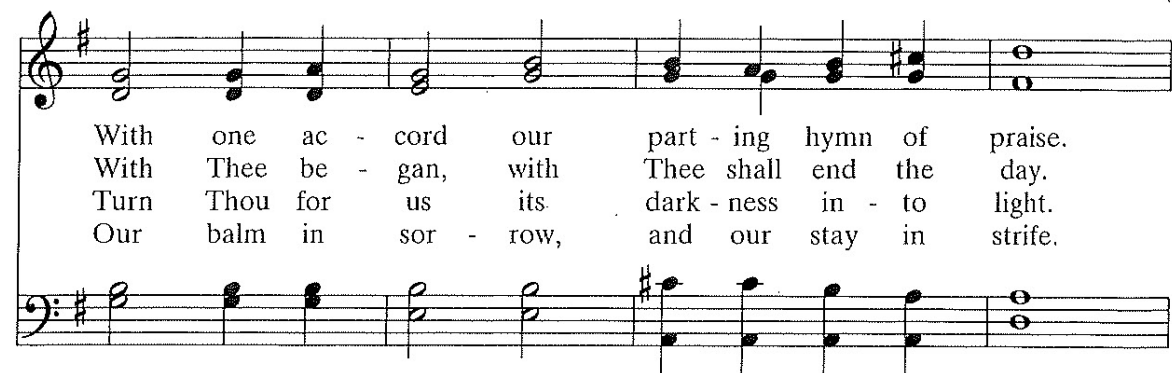
ELLERS 10.10.10.10

John Ellerton, 1866

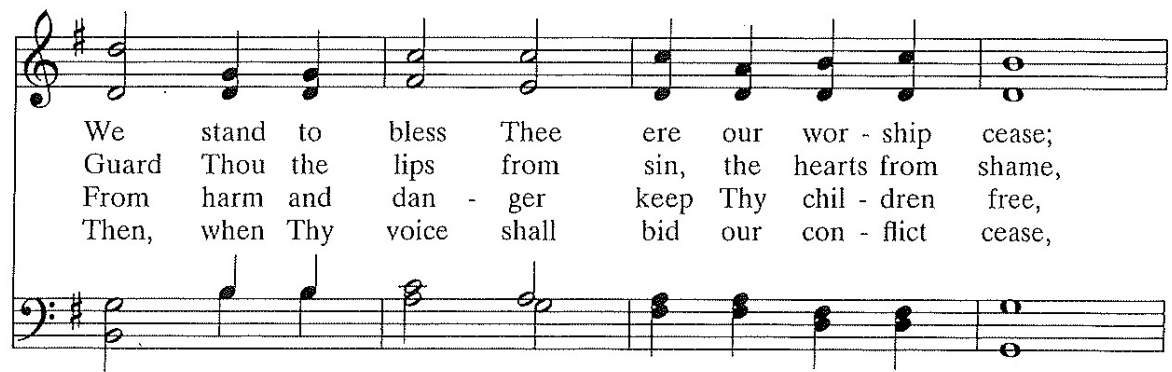
Edward John Hopkins, 1869



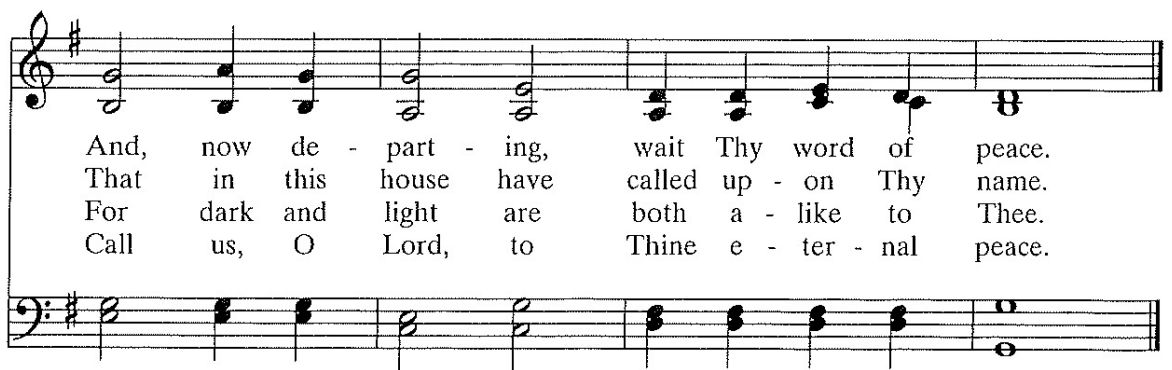
1. Sav - ior, a - gain to Thy dear name we raise
 2. Grant us Thy peace up - on our home-ward way;
 3. Grant us Thy peace, Lord, through the com - ing night;
 4. Grant us Thy peace through - out our earth - ly life,



With one ac - cord our part - ing hymn of praise.
 With Thee be - gan, with Thee shall end the day.
 Turn Thou for us its dark - ness in - to light.
 Our balm in sor - row, and our stay in strife.



We stand to bless Thee ere our wor - ship cease;
 Guard Thou the lips from sin, the hearts from shame,
 From harm and dan - ger keep Thy chil - dren free,
 Then, when Thy voice shall bid our con - flict cease,



And, now de - part - ing, wait Thy word of peace.
 That in this house have called up - on Thy name.
 For dark and light are both a - like to Thee.
 Call us, O Lord, to Thine e - ter - nal peace.