

CATONSVILLE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Thirteenth Sunday after Pentecost

August 22, 2021

ORDER OF WORSHIP

Prelude: Berceuse

Louis Vierne

Call to Worship (Responsive)

Choose this day whom you will serve.

*As for me and my household,
we will serve the Lord.*

***Hymn 49** (For those following at home, see page 8.)

"The God of Abraham Praise"

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Call to Confession

Let us confess who we are before a just and merciful God and before one another. Let us pray.

Prayer of Confession (Responsive)

God of Israel and God of Jesus Christ, we would not be here if you had not chosen to touch our lives with your love. We cannot hide our wonder that you should choose to enter our world and our lives in person – in Jesus. Yet we confess that we sometimes have trouble in our decision-making when faced with questions of whether we wholeheartedly serve you or not.

We are often tempted to put other than you first in our lives – when we are faced, often daily, with choices which affect how we live as your faithful people – choices about how we share the gifts you have given us.

Forgive us when the choices we make reflect not your glory, but our own selfishness.

Forgive us when the choices we make revolve around judging or condemning others, of writing others off because of different beliefs and perspectives.



*All who are able, please stand.

Forgive us when the choices we make contribute to our own prosperity and well-being while ignoring the needs of others.

Forgive us when the choices we make diminish our awareness of you, O God, in the midst of those who suffer.

Gracious and loving God, strengthen us where we are weak with the renewing power of your Spirit, so that the choices we make clearly reveal our identity as your faithful people, and as sincere and devoted followers of Jesus Christ, your Son, our Lord – in whose name we pray. Amen.

Declaration of Forgiveness

In body and in soul, in life and in death, our salvation lies in the faith and the hope that we are not our own, but belong to our faithful Savior, Jesus Christ. In Christ, we are forgiven. We are freed from sin. We are given permission to begin again. Amen.

***Response of Praise: Hymn 581** (See page 9.) Gloria Patri

***Passing of the Peace**

Life in Community

The peace and joy of the Lord
be with you and yours today.
Thank you for joining us for worship.
Other announcements....

Children's Message

Hymn 50 (See page 10.) "Deep in the Shadows of the Past"

SHEPHERD'S PIPES

Prayer for Illumination (Unison)

*Open us to your life-giving Word, Holy God.
Help us set aside all that confuses the clarity
you can bring. Focus our attention on the Word
read and proclaimed so we might hear and know
your truth. Amen.*

*All who are able, please stand.

Scripture: Joshua 24:1-2a, 14-18

Message: *The Choices We Make*

Affirmation of Faith (Responsive)

Choose this day whom you will serve, and whom you will worship. Will you worship and serve the LORD in sincerity and faithfulness, or will you follow after other Gods?

Far be it from us that we should forsake the LORD to serve other gods, for it is the LORD our God who has brought us and our ancestors up from the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage, and who has done great things in our sight. Therefore we also will serve the LORD, the LORD is our God.

And to what do you testify?

We are not alone, we live in God's world.

We believe in God:

*Who has created and is creating,
Who has come in Jesus, the Word made flesh
To reconcile and make new,
Who works in us and others by the Spirit.*

We trust in God.

We are called to be the church:

*To celebrate God's presence,
To love and serve others,
To seek justice and resist evil,
To proclaim Jesus, crucified and risen,
Our judge and our hope.*

*In life, in death, in life beyond death,
God is with us.*

We are not alone.

Thanks be to God. Amen.

(Statement of Faith, United Church of Canada)

*All who are able, please stand.

Offering

Freely you have received, freely give. (Matt 10:8b)

You may give online through our website, catonsvillepres.org.

In a time of silence now, let us remember
and give thanks for God's gifts to us this week:
time, talent, money, family, relationships,
friends, life itself.

Then ask yourself:
where is the Spirit leading me this week
to share my gifts through the work
of the church and the love of neighbor?

Musical Offering: "Come, Thou Fount"

arr. Molly Ijames

Prayer of Dedication (Unison)

*Almighty God, from whom all blessings flow,
help us to be thankful for all your gifts. Accept
these offerings as tokens of our thanks and praise.
Accept our commitment to serve and worship you
as our lived response of gratitude. Amen.*

Prayers of the People and the Lord's Prayer

Eternal God,
anxiety constricts and muscles tense as summer wanes,
teachers, staff and students return to school,
and the delta variant looms.

What will this year bring? What new challenges will we meet?
Have we learned enough, renewed ourselves enough to
begin again? Will we do better? Will we survive?

Gracious and patient God, bear with us in our fear and
uncertainty. Calm our pinched nerves with the Spirit's
deep breath of peace. Guide and direct us with your wisdom.
As we pour ourselves out to you in prayer, hear and receive us,
Holy God. We come as we are.

Great and wonderful God, we praise you for the gifts with
which you bless us. Gifts of renewal, gifts of unexpected grace.

*All who are able, please stand.

Hear us in the silence as we give thanks to you....

Merciful God, strengthen us in prayer that we might lift up the brokenness of this world for your healing. You make all things new, O God, and we offer our prayers for the renewal of our world and the healing of its wounds.

Especially we pray for:

those who remain isolated;
 those who are sick, those newly infected, those with long-term symptoms, the hospitals and hospital personnel under mounting pressure;
 the children who cannot get vaccinated, yet must return to school;
 the people of the world without access to vaccines, to affordable and advanced health care;
 the people of Haiti devastated by earthquake and storms;
 the people of Afghanistan whose future is uncertain;
 for all who are anxious or afraid.

Into the silence, we pour our own cares and worries, and lift up our neighbors, ourselves, and those for whom we have been asked to pray...

O God, you are the well-spring of life. Pour into our thirsty souls the living water of your grace, that we may be refreshed this day to continue in mission and ministry.

May the pressures of this moment not pummel or paralyze, but encourage us to lean into exposed needs and lean on each other, and you, for strength and support.

United as a family of faith and as the Body of Christ, we lift these prayers up to you, God our Creator, Redeemer and Sustainer.

Finally, hear us as we pray the prayer Christ taught us, saying,

*Our Father, who art in heaven,
 hallowed be thy name.*

*All who are able, please stand.

*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 63** (See page 11.) "The Lord is God"

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***Charge and Benediction**

Whom do we worship and serve?
God, and God alone.

May we go into the world renewed in God's faithfulness,
redeemed by Christ, and sent out to serve by the power
of the Holy Spirit.

Postlude: Italian Hymn

Albert Travis

*All who are able, please stand.

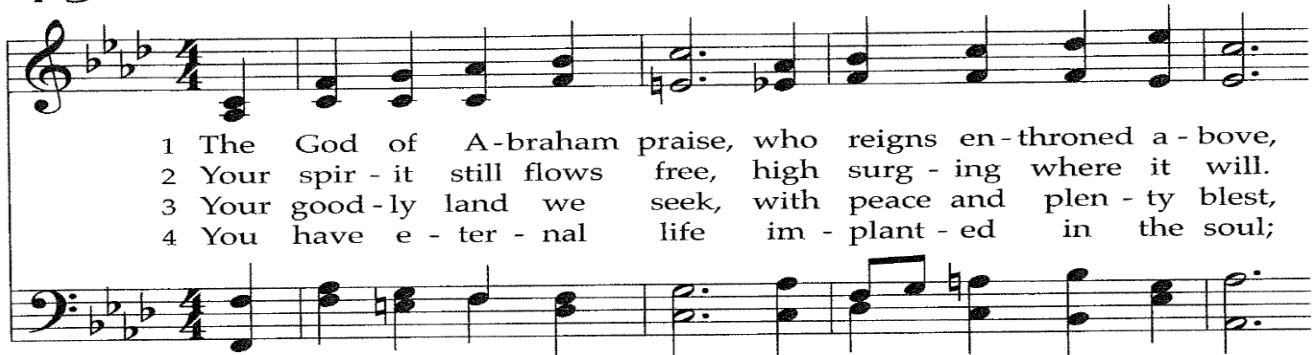
Participants

- Dorothy Boulton, *associate pastor*
- Debbie Davis, *ruling elder/liturgist*
- Kathy and Keith Glennan, *ruling elder; video production*
- Christopher Keenan, *organist*
- Greg Knauf, *vocalist*
- Kenneth E. Kovacs, *pastor*
- Vickie Lord, *social media support*
- Dottie Marshall, *ruling elder/sanctuary set-up*
- Ann Quinn, *clarinetist*

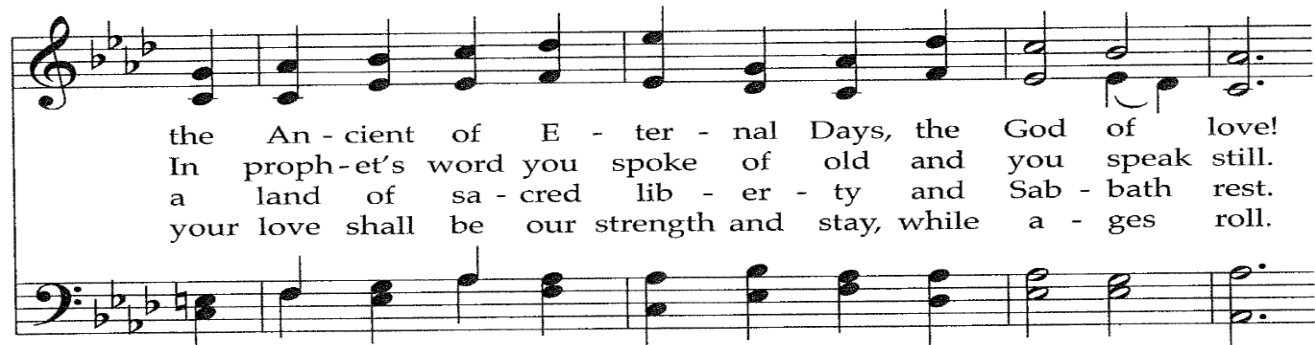
Sources

- *Book of Common Worship* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2018).
- *Worship Resources, The Presbyterian Outlook*.
- *Glory to God: The Presbyterian Hymnal* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2013).
- "Permission to podcast/stream the music in this service obtained from One License with license #A-734388; CCLI Copyright License B 20481088 4/30/2021 + Streaming License B 20481071 4/30/2021"

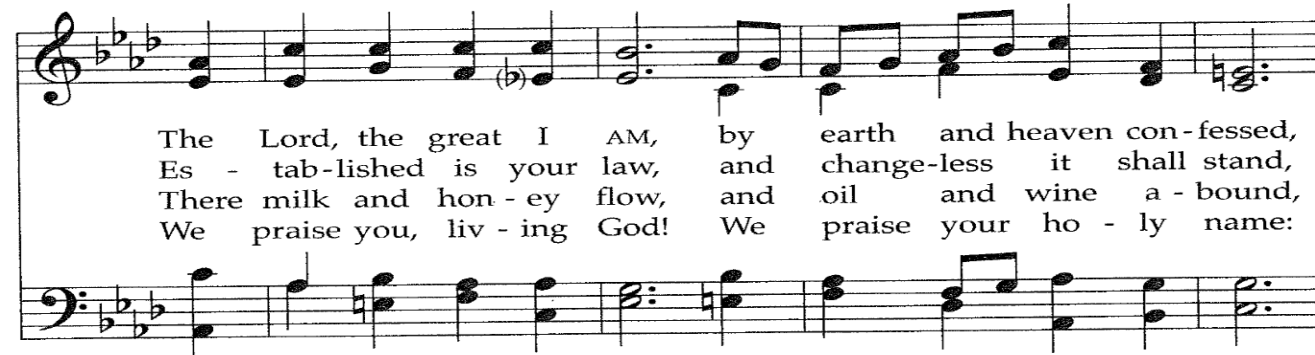
49 The God of Abraham Praise



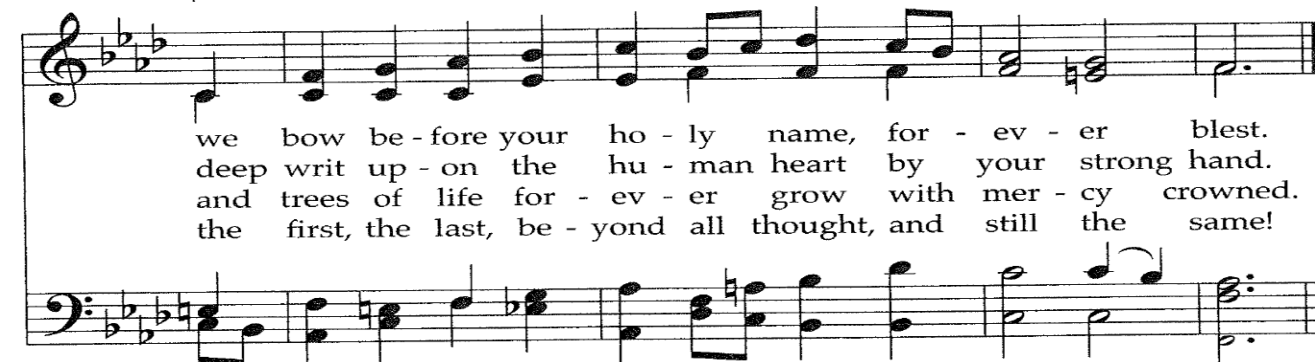
1 The God of A-braham praise, who reigns en-throned a-bove,
 2 Your spir - it still flows free, high surg - ing where it will.
 3 Your good - ly land we seek, with peace and plen - ty blest,
 4 You have e - ter - nal life im - plant - ed in the soul;



the An - cient of E - ter - nal Days, the God of love!
 In proph-et's word you spoke of old and you speak still.
 a land of sa - cred lib - er - ty and Sab - bath rest.
 your love shall be our strength and stay, while a - ges roll.



The Lord, the great I AM, by earth and heaven con-fessed,
 Es - tab-lished is your law, and change-less it shall stand,
 There milk and hon - ey flow, and oil and wine a - bound,
 We praise you, liv - ing God! We praise your ho - ly name:



we bow be - fore your ho - ly name, for - ev - er blest.
 deep writ up - on the hu - man heart by your strong hand.
 and trees of life for - ev - er grow with mer - cy crowned.
 the first, the last, be - yond all thought, and still the same!

Shaped by its traditional Jewish tune, this selection of English stanzas conveys the essence of the *Yigdal*, a canticle based on a medieval Hebrew statement of faith about the nature of God and often used in synagogue worship, alternately chanted by cantor and congregation.

TEXT: Moses Maimonides, 12th cent.; vers. Daniel ben Judah Dayan, 1404; stanzas 1, 3, trans. Thomas Olivers, c.1770, alt.; LEONI
 stanzas 2, 4, trans. Max Landsberg, Newton M. Mann, and William C. Gannett, 1884, 1910, alt. 6.6.8.4.D
 MUSIC: Jewish melody, 17th cent.; adapt. Meyer Lyon and Thomas Olivers, 1770

Glory Be to the Father

581

Glo - ry be to the Fa - ther, and to the

The first system of music is in 4/4 time, key of B-flat major. The vocal line (treble clef) begins with a quarter rest, followed by quarter notes G4, A4, Bb4, and C5. The bass line (bass clef) consists of a series of chords: G2-Bb2, G2-Bb2, G2-Bb2, G2-Bb2, G2-Bb2, G2-Bb2, G2-Bb2, and G2-Bb2.

Son, and to the Ho - ly Ghost; as it was in the be -

The second system continues the melody. The vocal line has quarter notes G4, A4, Bb4, C5, followed by a quarter rest, then quarter notes G4, A4, Bb4, C5. The bass line continues with chords: G2-Bb2, G2-Bb2, G2-Bb2, G2-Bb2, G2-Bb2, G2-Bb2, G2-Bb2, and G2-Bb2.

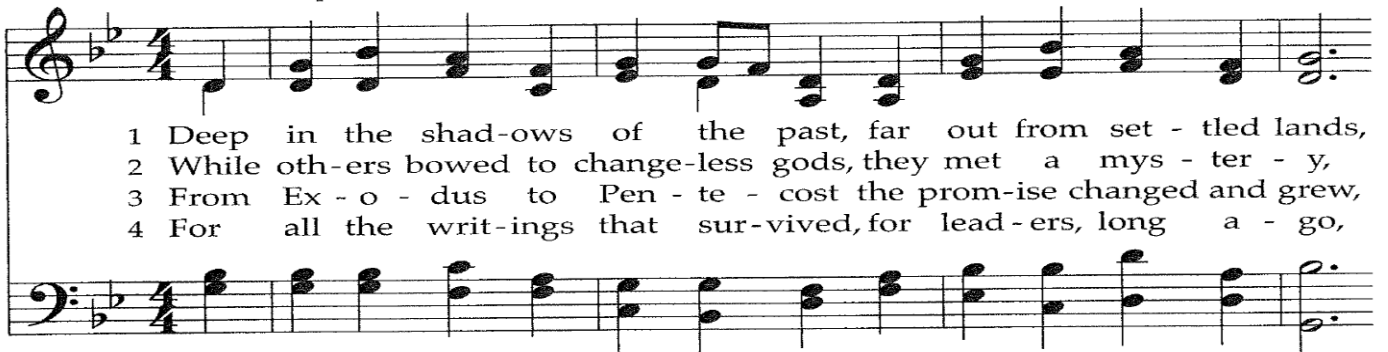
gin - ning, is now, and ev - er shall be,

The third system continues the melody. The vocal line has quarter notes G4, A4, Bb4, C5, followed by a quarter rest, then quarter notes G4, A4, Bb4, C5. The bass line continues with chords: G2-Bb2, G2-Bb2, G2-Bb2, G2-Bb2, G2-Bb2, G2-Bb2, G2-Bb2, and G2-Bb2.

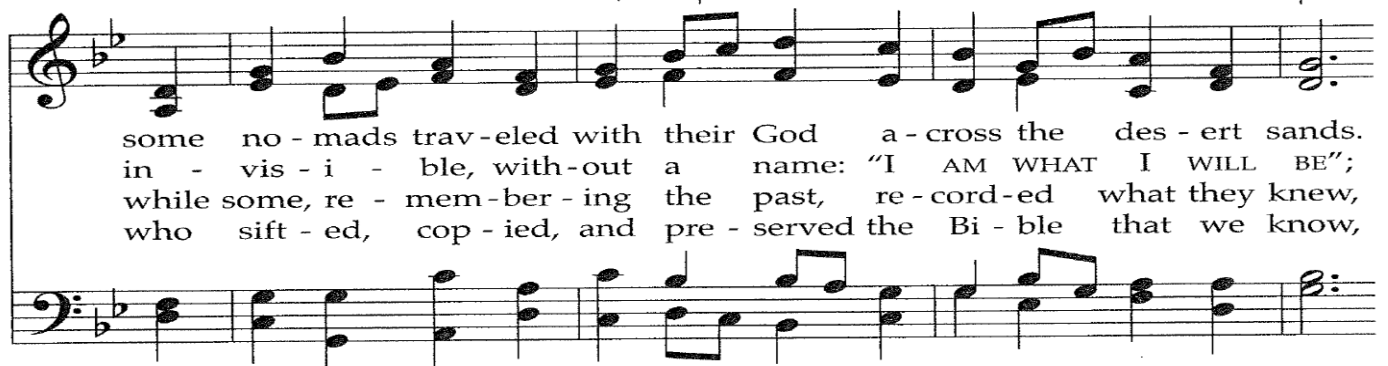
world with - out end. A - men, a - men.

The fourth system concludes the piece. The vocal line has quarter notes G4, A4, Bb4, C5, followed by a quarter rest, then quarter notes G4, A4, Bb4, C5. The bass line continues with chords: G2-Bb2, G2-Bb2, G2-Bb2, G2-Bb2, G2-Bb2, G2-Bb2, G2-Bb2, and G2-Bb2.

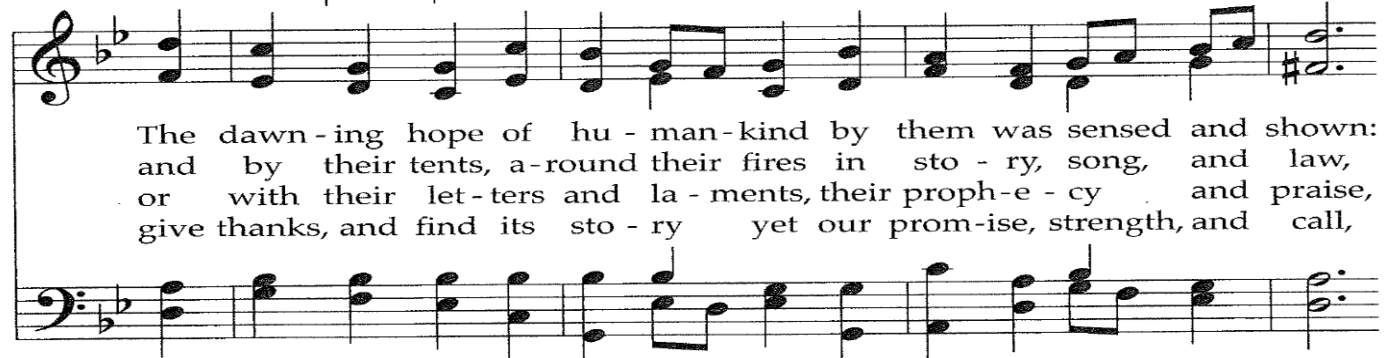
Deep in the Shadows of the Past 50



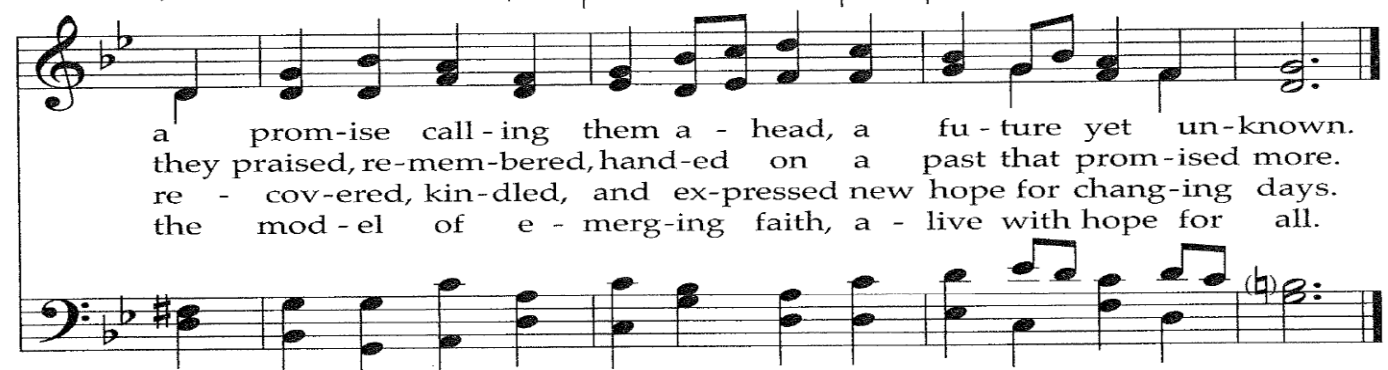
1 Deep in the shad-ows of the past, far out from set - tled lands,
 2 While oth-ers bowed to change-less gods, they met a mys - ter - y,
 3 From Ex - o - dus to Pen - te - cost the prom-ise changed and grew,
 4 For all the writ-ings that sur-vived, for lead-ers, long a - go,



some no - mads trav-eled with their God a - cross the des - ert sands.
 in - vis - i - ble, with-out a name: "I AM WHAT I WILL BE";
 while some, re - mem - ber - ing the past, re - cord - ed what they knew,
 who sift - ed, cop - ied, and pre - served the Bi - ble that we know,



The dawn - ing hope of hu - man - kind by them was sensed and shown:
 and by their tents, a - round their fires in sto - ry, song, and law,
 or with their let - ters and la - ments, their proph - e - cy and praise,
 give thanks, and find its sto - ry yet our prom-ise, strength, and call,



a prom-ise call - ing them a - head, a fu - ture yet un - known.
 they praised, re - mem - bered, hand - ed on a past that prom - ised more.
 re - cov - ered, kin - dled, and ex - pressed new hope for chang - ing days.
 the mod - el of e - merg - ing faith, a - live with hope for all.

This vivid text reminds us of two truths we often forget: how deeply our faith is rooted in God's enduring covenant with the descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and how much we can learn from their story. The tune began life as the setting for a family Christmas card.

The Lord Is God

63



1 The Lord is God, the Lord a - lone! Give hon - or, thanks, and praise
 2 With all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind and might,
 3 At night or day, at home, a - way, to - geth - er and a - part,
 4 The Lord is God, the Lord a - lone! Give hon - or, thanks, and praise



to God, the mak - er of all things and giv - er of our days.
 O peo - ple, love the Lord your God, the source of truth and light.
 O chil - dren, take these ho - ly words and keep them in your heart.
 to God, the mak - er of all things and giv - er of our days.



This hymn paraphrases the *Shema* (Deuteronomy 6:4–9), an ancient and central affirmation of Jewish monotheistic faith that observant Jews still recite twice a day. Jesus knew it well and called it the first and great commandment (Matthew 22:38/Mark 12:28–29/Luke 10:26–28).

TEXT: David Gambrell, 2011

MUSIC: Carl Gotthelf Gläser, 1828; arr. Lowell Mason, 1839

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