

PLYMOUTH CHURCH

SHARES THE WORSHIP OF GOD

May 12, 2024
Confirmation Sunday



At its heart, a Christian church is not a community of faith but a community seeking it—following Jesus, learning to believe along the Way. On any given day, we may or may not “have faith.” We may or may not believe or love or build up from ruins. We may or may not doubt or dispute or lose heart or complain. But we do follow. We do study. We do explore and engage, attend and interpret, rehearse and enact. And as often as we can, we do turn off the lamp, climb out onto the roof, and behold the inexhaustible sky.

—Matthew Myer Boulton

PRELUDE

The Blessing

Chris Brown, Cody Carnes, Kari Jobe, Steven Furtick

Cherub Choir

Daniel O'Brien, Caítlín Burke, *directors*

Dona Nobis Pacem

Giovanni Palestrina

Seraph Choir

Jemilla Mulvihill, *director*

CALL TO WORSHIP

Drew Brandmeyer

Leader: Gather us in, the brokenhearted
and the joyful.

Congregation: Gather us in, the weak and the strong.

Leader: Gather us in, the fearful and the brave.

Congregation: Gather us in, the young and the old.

Leader: Gather us in, to sing of God's works.

Congregation: Gather us in, to praise Jesus Christ.

Leader: Gather us in, to worship and wonder.

Congregation: Gather us in, to know of God's love.

*HYMN OF PRAISE

O Lord My God! (How Great Thou Art)

1. O Lord my God! when I in awe-some won - der
 2. When through the woods and for - est glades I wan - der,
 3. And when I think that God, his Son not spar - ing,
 4. When Christ shall come with shout of ac - cla - ma - tion

con - sid - er all the worlds thy hands have made,
 and hear the birds sing sweet - ly in the trees;
 sent him to die, I scarce can take it in;
 and take me home, what joy shall fill my heart.

I see the stars, I hear the roll - ing thun - der,
 when I look down from loft - y moun - tain gran - deur
 that on the cross, my bur - den glad - ly bear - ing,
 Then I shall bow in hum - ble ad - o - ra - tion,

thy power through - out the un - i - verse dis - played.
 and hear the brook, and feel the gen - tle breeze;
 he bled and died to take a - way my sin;
 and there pro - claim, my God, how great thou art!

Refrain

Then sings my soul, my Sav - ior God, to thee;
 how great thou art! how great thou art! Then sings my
 soul, my Sav-ior God to thee; how great thou art! how great thou art!

WORDS and MUSIC: Stuart K. Hine, 1899-1989

O STORE GUD
 11 10.11 10 w. refrain

*INVOCATION AND LORD'S PRAYER

Charlotte McGuire

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 trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against
 us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from
 evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the
 glory, forever. Amen.

READING FROM THE PSALTER

Psalm 146:5-10

Helen Dunphy

Leader: Happy are those whose help is the God of Jacob, whose hope is in the Lord their God,

**Congregation: who made heaven and earth,
the sea, and all that is in them;
who keeps faith forever;
who executes justice for the oppressed;
who gives food to the hungry.**

Leader: The Lord sets the prisoners free.
The Lord opens the eyes of the blind.

Congregation: The Lord lifts up those who are bowed down. The Lord loves the righteous.

Leader: The Lord watches over the strangers.
God upholds the orphan and the widow,
but the way of the wicked God bring
to ruin.

**Congregation: The Lord will reign forever,
your God, O Zion, for all generations.
Praise the Lord!**

BAPTISM OF CAROLINE JAYNE TURNER MOFFITT

Minister: Sisters and brothers of the household of faith, will you work to make this church a true spiritual home, lending them the support of your prayers and your example?

Congregation: We will seek to follow Christ so that Andrea and Steve will be strengthened in their resolve, and that Caroline, surrounded by love, may be nurtured in the way that leads to life.

Minister: What will we expect of Caroline?

Congregation: We look to the day when she will sit with us at God's Table, declare faith in Jesus Christ, confirm the heritage which we will pass along to her, and come as an adult to full commitment to God's hopes.

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

Brett Younger

*HYMN OF HOPE

Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing

1. Come, thou Fount of ev-'ry bless-ing, tune my heart to sing thy grace;
2. Here I pause a - long my jour-ney; by thy help thus far I've come;
3. O to grace how great a debt - or dai - ly I am called to be!

streams of mer - cy, nev - er ceas - ing, call for songs of loud - est praise.
and I hope, by thy great mer - cy, safe - ly to ar - rive at home.
Let thy good - ness, like a fet - ter, bind my wan - dering heart to thee.

Teach me some me - lo - dious son - net, sung by flam - ing tongues a - bove.
Je - sus sought me when a stran - ger, wan - dering from the fold of God;
Prone to wan - der, Lord, I feel it, prone to leave the God I love;

Praise the mount! I'm fixed up - on it, mount of thy re - deem - ing love.
came to res - cue me from dan - ger, gave his bod - y, shed his blood.
here's my heart, O take and seal it, seal it for thy courts a - bove.

The next day Jesus decided to go to Galilee. He found Philip and said to him, "Follow me."

Now Philip was from Bethsaida, the city of Andrew and Peter. Philip found Nathanael and said to him, "We have found him about whom Moses in the Law and also the Prophets wrote, Jesus son of Joseph from Nazareth."

Nathanael said to him, "Can anything good come out of Nazareth?"

Philip said to him, "Come and see."

BAPTISM OF EVELYN D'HARCOURT

Leader: Do you as a congregation pledge to share the journey of faith?

Congregation: **We rejoice with you. We will pray for you.
We will walk with you in the way of Jesus.**

CONFIRMATION

*Lucy Bishop, Drew Brandmeyer, Evelyn d'Harcourt,
Helen Dunphy, Edrie Kitzman, Charlotte McGuire,
Hayden Moffitt, Avery Owens, Emma Owens, Dashiell Pater*

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH & CONFIRMATION VOWS

Leader: Confirmation students, by your baptism you were made one with us in the body of Christ, the church. We rejoice in the pilgrimage of faith which has brought you to this time and place. We celebrate that you are part of us. Do you affirm your baptism in the faith and family of God?

Confirmands: I do.

Leader: Do you affirm God's call to a life of love, peace, justice, mercy, and compassion?

Confirmands: I do.

Leader: Do you promise to participate in the life of the church, sharing regularly in the worship of God and the work of the church as it serves the community and the world?

Confirmands: I promise, with the help of God.

Leader: Members of Plymouth Church, do you promise to support these confirmands on their continuing journey of faith, and will you commit to growing together with them in God's knowledge and love?

Congregation: We do, and we will.

Leader: Let us, the members of Plymouth Church, express our welcome and affirm our ministry together by reciting together the Plymouth Covenant.

All: We covenant with the Lord and one with another, and do bind ourselves in the presence of God, to walk together in all his ways, according as he is pleased to reveal himself unto us in his blessed word of truth. (Salem Covenant, 1629)

CONFIRMATION PRAYER

*CONFIRMATION HYMN

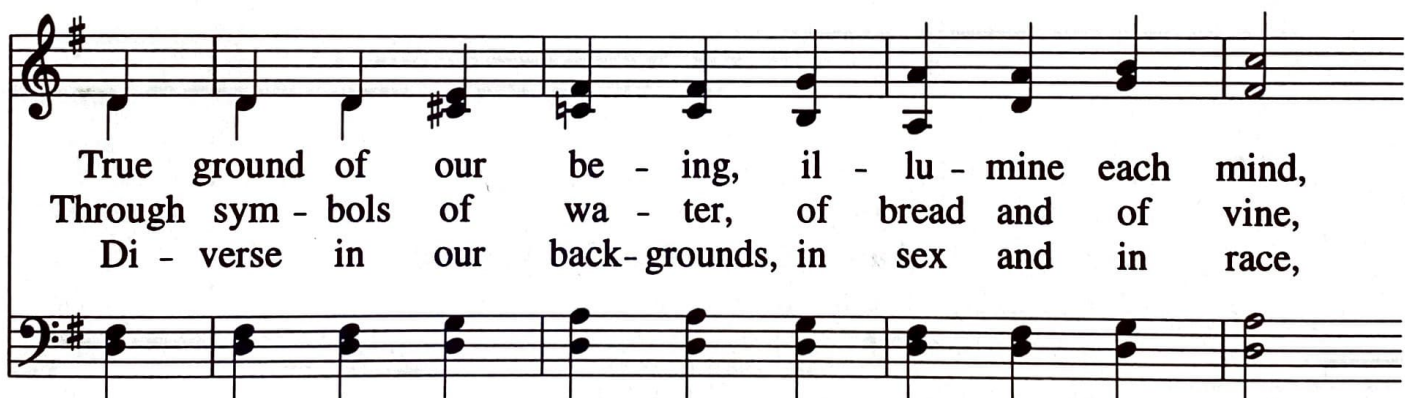
Confirm Us, O God



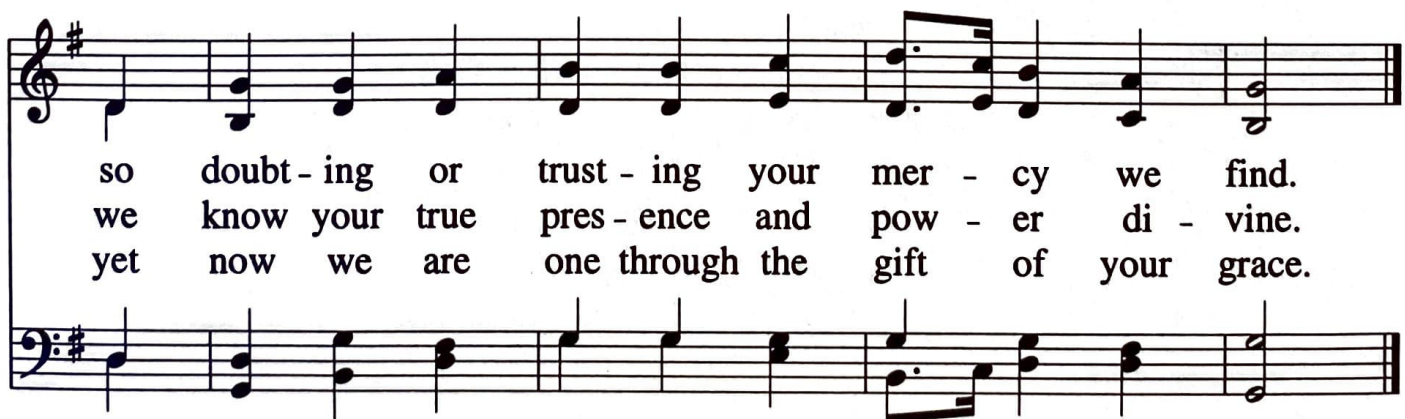
1. Con - firm us, O God, as seek - ers of light,
2. Re - fresh us, O God, in bod - y and soul,
3. U - nite us, O God, in cov - e - nant ways,



new saints in your church who strive for the right.
re - bap - tize with love to make each one whole.
the bod - y of Christ re - spond - ing in praise.



True ground of our be - ing, il - lu - mine each mind,
Through sym - bols of wa - ter, of bread and of vine,
Di - verse in our back - grounds, in sex and in race,



so doubt - ing or trust - ing your mer - cy we find.
we know your true pres - ence and pow - er di - vine.
yet now we are one through the gift of your grace.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Edrie Kitzman

Leader: Everlasting God, we know the stories of faith. But we live like we haven't heard about your love.

Congregation: We confess that we believe we can only trust ourselves. We forget to pay attention to your goodness written into the universe.

Leader: God, hear our prayers.

Silence

Leader: Our attention is self-centered. We rush through our days and wish there was more time to get everything done, but the stories of your faithfulness are part of our everyday life.

Congregation: We confess that we're not even present to the lives living us.

Leader: God, hear our prayers.

Silence

Leader: Everlasting, God, we easily forget the long story of your love, at work since the beginning of time. But you were there to order the stars; you were there to give courage to Esther and inspire your disciples; and you are still here, loving us.

Congregation: Hear our prayers, God. Amen

ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS

Everyone of us has messed up too.
Minds change like the weather.
I hope you remember
today is never too late to be brand new.

—Taylor Swift

*GLORIA PATRI

Glory be to the Father,
and to the Son,
and to the Holy Ghost.
As it was in the beginning,
is now, and ever shall be,
world without end.
Amen, Amen.

PASSING OF THE PEACE

LIFE OF THE CHURCH

Dashiell Pater

CHILDREN'S SERMON

Hayden Moffitt and Lucy Bishop

Children are invited to gather at the front of the sanctuary.

Children, ages 3-12, are encouraged to join us for

Sunday school after the children's message.

HYMN OF FAITH

Tell Me the Stories of Jesus

William Parker

Frederick Challinor

Tell me the stories of Jesus I love to hear.
Things I would ask him to tell me if he were here:
scenes by the wayside, tales of the sea,
stories of Jesus, tell them to me.

Hathach went and told Esther what Mordecai had said. Then Esther spoke to Hathach and gave him a message for Mordecai: "All the king's servants and the people of the king's provinces know that, if any man or woman goes to the king inside the inner court without being called, there is but one law: to be put to death. Only if the king holds out the golden scepter to someone may that person live. I myself have not been called to come in to the king for thirty days."

When they told Mordecai what Esther had said, Mordecai told them to reply to Esther, "Do not think that in the king's palace you will escape any more than all the other Jews. For if you keep silent at this time, relief and deliverance will rise for the Jews from another place, but you and your father's family will perish. Who knows? Perhaps you have come to royal dignity for just such a time as this."

Then Esther said in reply to Mordecai, "Go, gather all the Jews to be found in Susa, and hold a fast on my behalf, and neither eat nor drink for three days, night or day. I and my maids will also fast as you do. After that I will go to the king, though it is against the law, and if I perish, I perish."

Mordecai then went away and did everything as Esther had ordered him.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

INVITATION TO OFFERING

Give as you are able, in response to how
God has blessed you.

*We invite you to give as the offering plate
is passed, or online.*



OFFERTORY ANTHEM

Jesus is the Living Stone

Mary McDonald

Raymond Trapp, *Minister of Music*

He is Jesus, rock of ages, our Messiah, the prince of peace,
Lord, our refuge, strength, and power,
and his love will never cease.

He is Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end,
our redeemer, master, savior, Jesus, comforter, and friend.

Jesus is the firm foundation, for our sins his blood atones.
He's the rock, the mighty fortress, Jesus is the living stone.
The foundation never wavered,
like an anchor through every storm.

He's the rock of our salvation, he calms the raging storm.

Yesterday, today, forever his love reaches everyone.

From his birth to heaven's glory, Jesus Christ the great I Am!

Jesus is the firm foundation, for our sins his blood atones.
He's the rock the mighty fortress, Jesus is the living stone.

He's the rock, the mighty fortress,
he is our God, the living stone.

He is the living stone!

***DOXOLOGY**

Old Hundredth

Praise God from whom all blessings flow.

Praise God, all creatures here below.

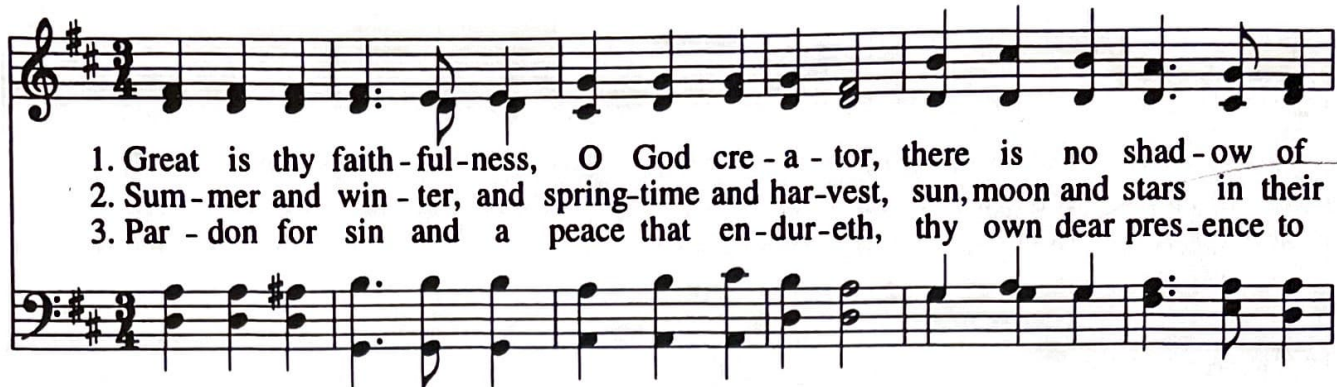
Praise God above, ye heavenly hosts.

Praise Father, son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.

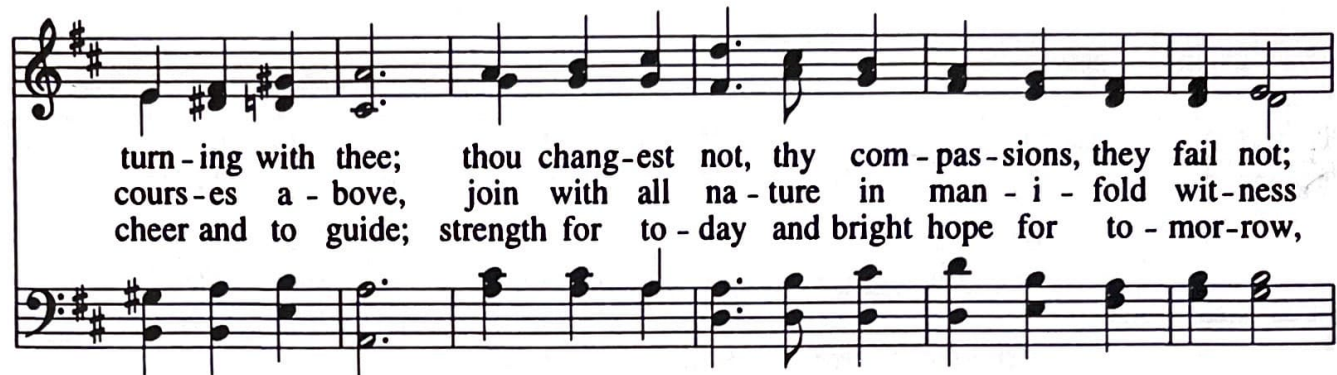
***OFFERTORY PRAYER**

*HYMN OF HOPE

Great Is Thy Faithfulness



1. Great is thy faith-ful-ness, O God cre-a-tor, there is no shad-ow of
2. Sum-mer and win-ter, and spring-time and har-vest, sun, moon and stars in their
3. Par-don for sin and a peace that en-dur-eth, thy own dear pres-ence to



turn-ing with thee; thou chang-est not, thy com-pas-sions, they fail not;
cours-es a-bove, join with all na-ture in man-i-fold wit-ness
cheer and to guide; strength for to-day and bright hope for to-mor-row,

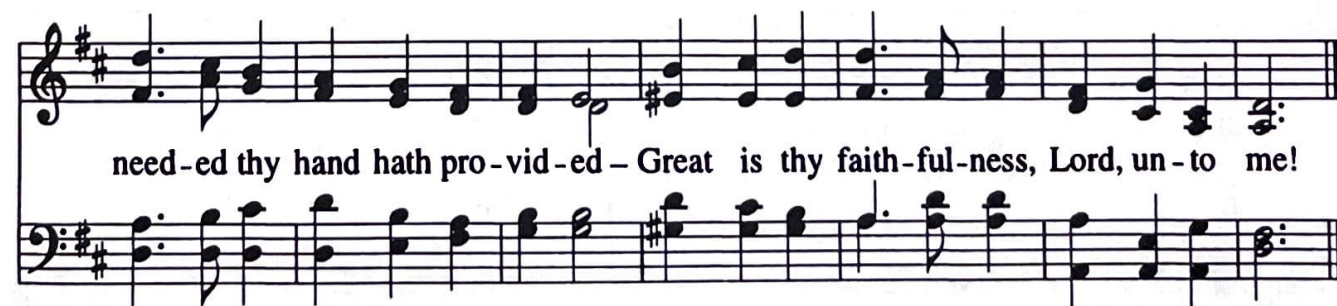
Refrain



as thou hast been thou for-ev-er wilt be.
to thy great faith-ful-ness, mer-cy and love. Great is thy faith-ful-ness!
bless-ings all mine, with ten thou-sand be-side!



Great is thy faith-ful-ness! Morn-ing by morn-ing new mer-cies I see; all I have



need-ed thy hand hath pro-vid-ed - Great is thy faith-ful-ness, Lord, un-to me!

Have you not known? Have you not heard?

Has it not been told you from the beginning?

Have you not understood from the foundations of the earth?

It is God who sits above the circle of the earth,
and its inhabitants are like grasshoppers,
who stretches out the heavens like a curtain
and spreads them like a tent to live in,
who brings princes to naught,
and makes the rulers of the earth as nothing.

Scarcely are they planted, scarcely sown,
scarcely has their stem taken root in the earth,
when God blows upon them, and they wither,
and the tempest carries them off like stubble.

To whom, then, will you compare me,
or who is my equal? says the Holy One.

Lift up your eyes on high and see:

Who created these?

The one who brings out their host and numbers them,
calling them all by name;
because God is great in strength,
mighty in power,
not one is missing.

Why do you say, O Jacob,
and assert, O Israel,

“My way is hidden from the Lord,
and my right is disregarded by my God”?

Have you not known? Have you not heard?

The Lord is the everlasting God,
the Creator of the ends of the earth.
God does not faint or grow weary.
God's understanding is unsearchable.
God gives power to the faint
and strengthens the powerless.
Even youths will faint and be weary,
and the young will fall exhausted,
but those who wait for the Lord shall renew their strength.
They shall mount up with wings like eagles.
They shall run and not be weary.
They shall walk and not faint.

For the Word of God in scripture,
for the Word of God within us,
for the Word of God around us,
thanks be to God.

CHORAL ANTHEM

Within Us Flows a River
Lindy Thompson and Mark Miller
Sarah Hutchison, *soloist*

Within us flows a river. We are trees along its banks,
drawing in our sustenance, giving back our thanks.
Our strength is gained in stages 'til in season we bear fruit.
Living water brings us life, nourishing each root.
The Spirit is the river, so dwells God within the soul,
nourishing the fallowness, making fragments whole.
The flow of love sustains us, grace and mercy make us clean.
Broken hearts begin to heal, new growth can be seen.
God be in the tree, in the bud, and in the flower.
May we bring forth fruit at the Spirit's chosen hour.

Cultivate our faith, prune our worry and regret.
Drawing from you, may we blossom for you yet.
May we blossom.

SERMON

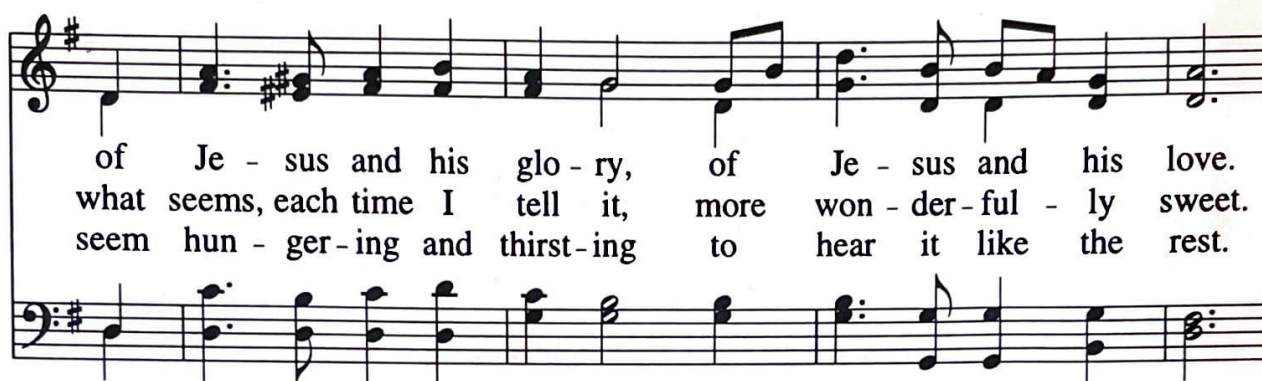
“Our Stories”

*HYMN OF RESPONSE


I Love to Tell the Story (verses 1-2)



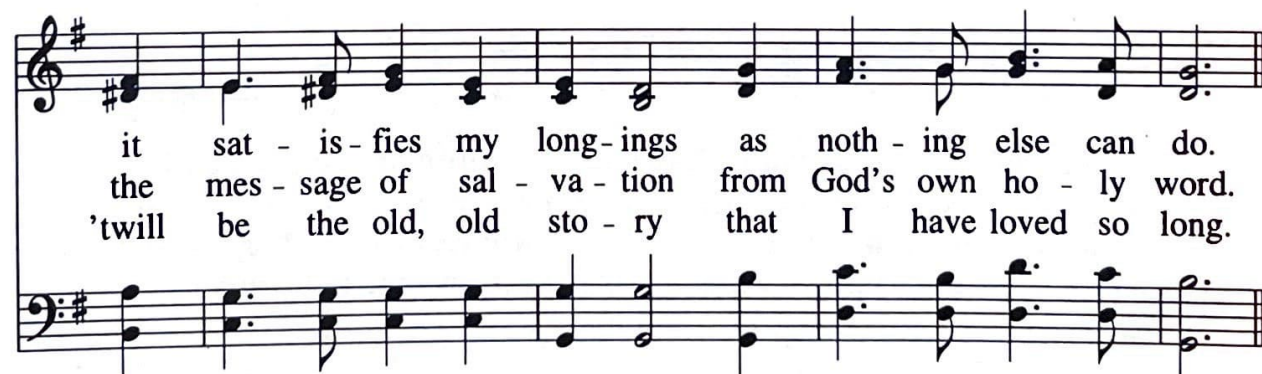
1. I love to tell the sto - ry of un - seen things a - bove,
2. I love to tell the sto - ry; 'tis pleas - ant to re - peat
3. I love to tell the sto - ry, for those who know it best



of Je - sus and his glo - ry, of Je - sus and his love.
what seems, each time I tell it, more won - der - ful - ly sweet.
seem hun - ger - ing and thirst - ing to hear it like the rest.



I love to tell the sto - ry, be - cause I know 'tis true;
I love to tell the sto - ry, for some have nev - er heard
And when, in scenes of glo - ry, I sing the new, new song,



it sat - is - fies my long - ings as noth - ing else can do.
the mes - sage of sal - va - tion from God's own ho - ly word.
'twill be the old, old sto - ry that I have loved so long.

Refrain

I love to tell the sto - ry, 'twill be my theme in glo - ry,
to tell the old, old sto - ry of Je - sus and his love.

WORDS: Katherine Hankey, c. 1868
MUSIC: William G. Fischer, 1869

HANKEY
76.76D w. refrain

*BENEDICTION

Confirmands

*PARTING STANZA

I Love to Tell the Story (verse 3)

*Out here in the dark,
underneath a canopy of stars—
constellations falling from your heart—
they tell me that I'm not alone.*

—Ellie Holcomb