Westminster Presbyterian Church

December 5, 2021
2nd Sunday of Advent
Communion Sunday

Welcome and Announcements — **Rev. Dr. Enikő Ferenczy**

Prelude — "See, the Conquering Hero Comes" From *Judas Maccabaeus* — G. F. HANDEL

Let us open our hearts and minds to the rhythm of the gathering music as it centers us in God's presence for worship.

***Gathering Words** — **Eric Weiss**
*The * in the liturgy indicates that you are invited to stand in body or in spirit.*

If life was a home, then we would pray—
may love be the foundation.
May God be the cornerstone.
May the Spirit be the windows—ushering light in.
And may hope be the walls—holding us together.

In this hour of worship, let us work toward building that home together.
We may not know the path ahead, but God is here, even now.
Let us give thanks for a foundation of love.
Let us worship Holy God.

***Lighting the Candle of Hope** — **Eric and Rachel Weiss**

E: As we reflect on the foundation of our faith in our lives,
we gather together around the candle of peace.
R: The home we long for is a home that knows peace—

E: peace that rests between us and our grief,
R: peace around our anxiety,
E: peace between us and our self-criticism,
R: peace amidst our relationships,
E: peace at the core of our being,
R: peace hovering through and in our world.

E: The home we long for is a home that knows peace.
R: So today we light the candle of peace—as a reminder and as a prayer.
E: Let it be so. Amen.

***Opening Hymn (printed music at end)** — "Zechariah's Lullaby" (Tune of "Away in a Manger") — REV. ANNA STRICKLAND

Call to Confession **Rachel Weiss**

In our scripture passage for today, Zechariah, a new father, speaks to his newborn son, John the Baptist, for the very first time. I want you to imagine yourself in his shoes . . .

What would you say to a newborn sleeping in your arms? What would you want them to know on their very first day? What would feel important?

I imagine that all of you would speak words of love.
It's impossible not to speak words of love when you're holding a baby, and yet as we grow up, that skill tends to become harder for us to practice. So let us return to our foundation—to words of love, starting with love for ourselves. Let us pray the prayer of confession together.

Prayer of Confession **Rachel Weiss**

Holy God,
when John was born,
Zechariah leaned down
and whispered words of love into his ear.

We know that you do the same for us, day in and day out,
yet we fail to hear it.
We forget that in the beginning we were made good.
We doubt that we could possibly be enough.
We hustle for our self-worth and wear ourselves out aiming for perfection.
We deflect words of praise.
We hide behind shiny first impressions.

Forgive us.
Trusting our worth is the hardest job.
Open our ears as you open our hearts,
so that we might rest on the foundation of goodness
you have laid for us.
Gratefully we pray. Amen.

Silent Confession

Assurance of Forgiveness **Rachel Weiss**

Family of faith,
No matter how old we get,
God continues to say to us:

"You are loved; you are forgiven."
That is the foundation of our lives.
That is the truth upon which we build our home.
So breathe deeply. There is grace and peace here.

Join me in proclaiming this good news:

We are loved. We are forgiven. We are claimed.
This is our foundation.
Thanks be to God. Amen.

Musical Response "Pastorale" CESAR FRANCK/ARR. LANI SMITH

Prayer of Illumination **Rev. Dr. Enikő Ferenczy**

Scripture Reading Luke 1:57-80 **Rev. Dr. Enikő Ferenczy**

57Now the time came for Elizabeth to give birth, and she bore a son. **58**Her neighbors and relatives heard that the
Lord had shown his great mercy to her, and they rejoiced with her.
59On the eighth day they came to circumcise the child, and they were going to name him Zechariah after his
father. **60**But his mother said, "No; he is to be called John." **61**They said to her, "None of your relatives has this
name." **62**Then they began motioning to his father to find out what name he wanted to give him. **63**He asked for a
writing tablet and wrote, "His name is John." And all of them were amazed. **64**Immediately his mouth was
opened, and his tongue freed, and he began to speak, praising God. **65**Fear came over all their neighbors, and all
these things were talked about throughout the entire hill country of Judea. **66**All who heard them pondered them
and said, "What then will this child become?" For, indeed, the hand of the Lord was with him.

67Then his father Zechariah was filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke this prophecy:
68"Blessed be the Lord God of Israel,
for he has looked favorably on his people and redeemed them.

69He has raised up a mighty savior for us
in the house of his servant David,
70as he spoke through the mouth of his holy prophets from of old,
71that we would be saved from our enemies and from the hand of all who hate us.
72Thus he has shown the mercy promised to our ancestors,
and has remembered his holy covenant,
73the oath that he swore to our ancestor Abraham,
to grant us **74**that we, being rescued from the hands of our enemies,
might serve him without fear, **75**in holiness and righteousness
before him all our days.
76And you, child, will be called the prophet of the Most High;
for you will go before the Lord to prepare his ways,
77to give knowledge of salvation to his people
by the forgiveness of their sins.
78By the tender mercy of our God,
he dawn from on high will break upon[b] us,
79to give light to those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death,
to guide our feet into the way of peace."

80The child grew and became strong in spirit, and he was in the wilderness until the day
he appeared publicly to Israel.

Sermon **Building the Foundation** **Rev. Dr. Enikő Ferenczy**

***Hymn No. 769** "For Everyone Born" FOR EVERYONE BORN
Verses 1, 2, 3, 5

Great Prayer of Thanksgiving **Rev. Dr. Enikő Ferenczy**

May the God of every mercy be with you.
May you be filled with the tenderness of our God.
Lift up your hearts to the One who looks with grace upon us.
Confident of God's love, we open our hearts to the One who comes to us.
Sing glad songs of praise in this moment.
We join our sisters and brothers in joyful thanksgiving.

It is right, and a good and joyful thing,
always and everywhere to give thanks to you,
Birthing God, creator of heaven and earth.

You formed us in our mother's womb, house of the holy,
growing us in your image.
Our hearts and lungs became a place of opening and welcoming,
doors for the Spirit of Life that you breathed into us.

We have not always understood ourselves as sacred creation,
a place for the dwelling of the Holy inside of us.
We have not always seen that in others.
When we turn away from each other and from you,
your love remains steadfast.
You deliver us from the captivity of isolation and fear,
make covenant to be our steadfast, indwelling God,
and continue to speak to us through prophetic utterance,
in the Spirit and through the people.

In the midst of a time of despair, oppression, division, and fear,
you brought Jesus, your glory made flesh.
He came with tender mercy in his hands,
to shatter our hardened hearts.
He came to shine a bright light in death's eyes,
stunning it into submission
to resurrection's love.

As we draw ever closer to Bethlehem,
as we prepare to journey with Jesus from birth to new life,
As your people gathered at your table, we ask:
pour out your Spirit on us
and on these gifts of joy and wonder.

Though broken, the Bread makes us strong enough
to not only cry out for justice,
but to sacrifice for it,
to not only notice the poor,
but to discover what they have to teach us.

Poured out, the hope of the Cup
can flow through us,
to feed the hungry,
to be reconciled to those we fear,
to welcome all cast aside by the world.

By your Spirit make us one with Christ,
one with each other,
and one in ministry to all the world,
until all find home and life abundant
in the presence of your endless Love.

We ask through the power of your Spirit and in the name of Jesus the Christ,
who taught us to pray, saying:

Our God in heaven, holy is your name.
Your kingdom come,
Your will be done, on earth as is in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins
as we forgive those who sin against us.
Save us from the time of trial
and deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power and the glory are yours.
Now and forever. Amen.

***Closing Hymn No. 109**	"Blest Be the God of Israel"	MERLE'S TUNE
***Benediction**		**Rev. Dr. Enikő Ferenczy**
Postlude	"*Nun Komm', der Heiden Heiland*" Chorale and Variations	TRAD./ARR. J.S. BACH ANDREAS VETTER

The service continues with refreshments and fellowship.

To assure the safety of all, currently we are not passing the offering plates. They are in the back of the sanctuary. We invite you to place your gifts there. Thank you for your generosity.

Note: Prayers were adapted from Rev. Sarah (Are) Speed | A Sanctified Art LLC | sanctifiedart.org. The Great Prayer of Thanksgiving was adapted from Thom Shuman.

Music:	Piano	Divine Gbagbo
	Organ	Ken Shafer
	Guitar/Vocals	Pong Thiemmedh
Tech. Assistant/Event Steward		Tony Mendiola
Refreshments		Lynne & Larry Hamrick
Flowers		Linda Barbu
Sunday Assistant		Lynne & Larry Hamrick

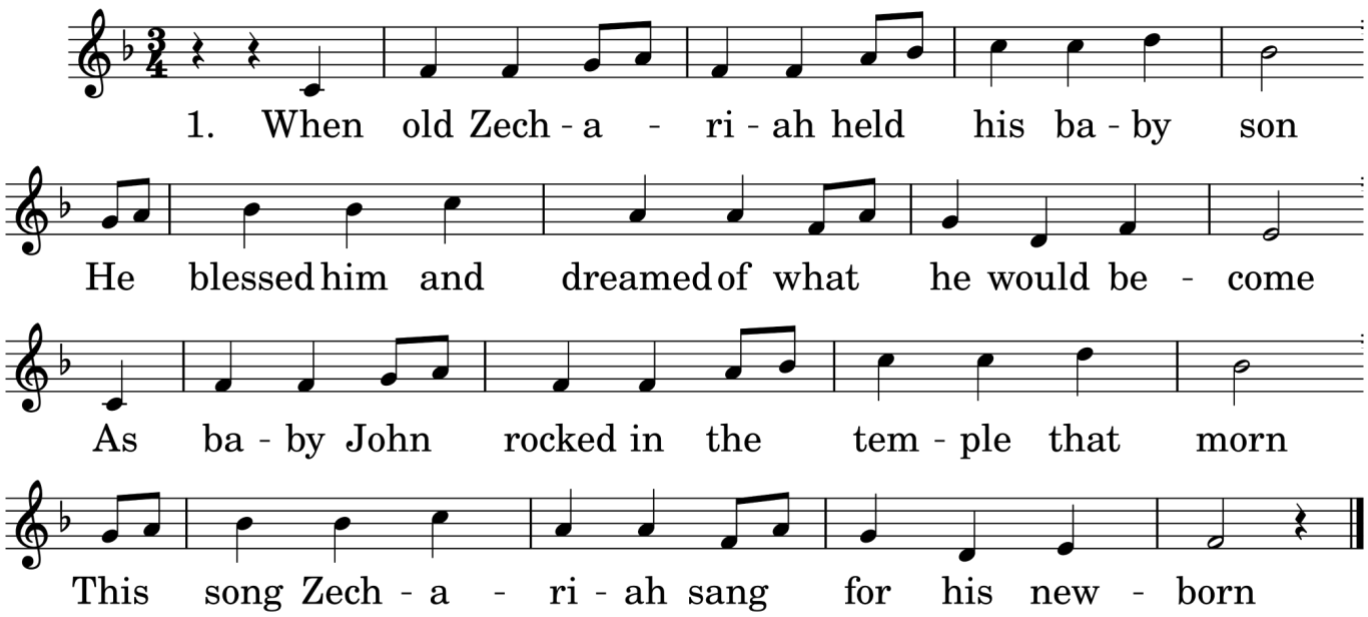
Westminster Presbyterian Church

Pastor Rev. Dr. Enikő Ferenczy
Office Administrator Judy Mowrer
Minister of Music and Worship Arts Dr. Divine Gbagbo
Worship Accompanists Mary-Marie Deauclaire, Ken Shafer
AV Assistant/Event Steward Tony Mendiola
Custodian Kara Akers

353 East Pine Street, Wooster, OH 44691 Phone: 330-263-2398
Office Hours: 9am–noon, Tuesday through Friday
Website: www.wpcwooster.org or www.facebook.com/wpcwooster

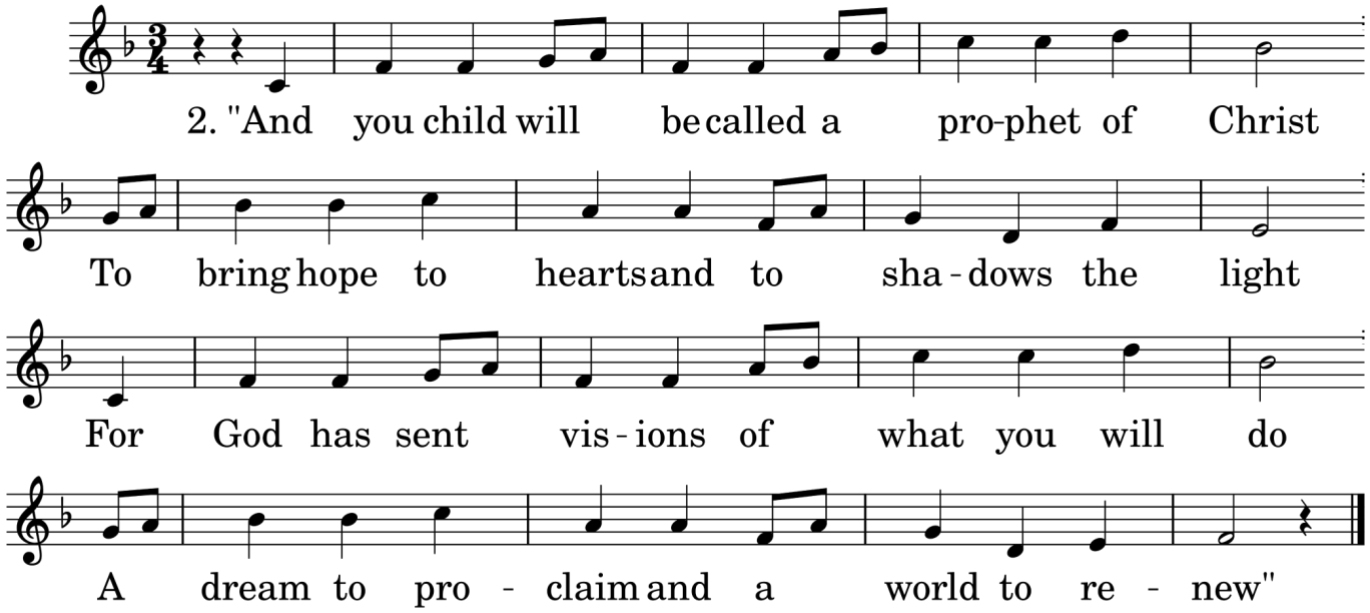
Westminster Presbyterian Church strives to be a safe place for all people to worship regardless of ethnicity, creed, age, cultural background, gender identity, or sexual orientation.

Zechariah's Lullaby
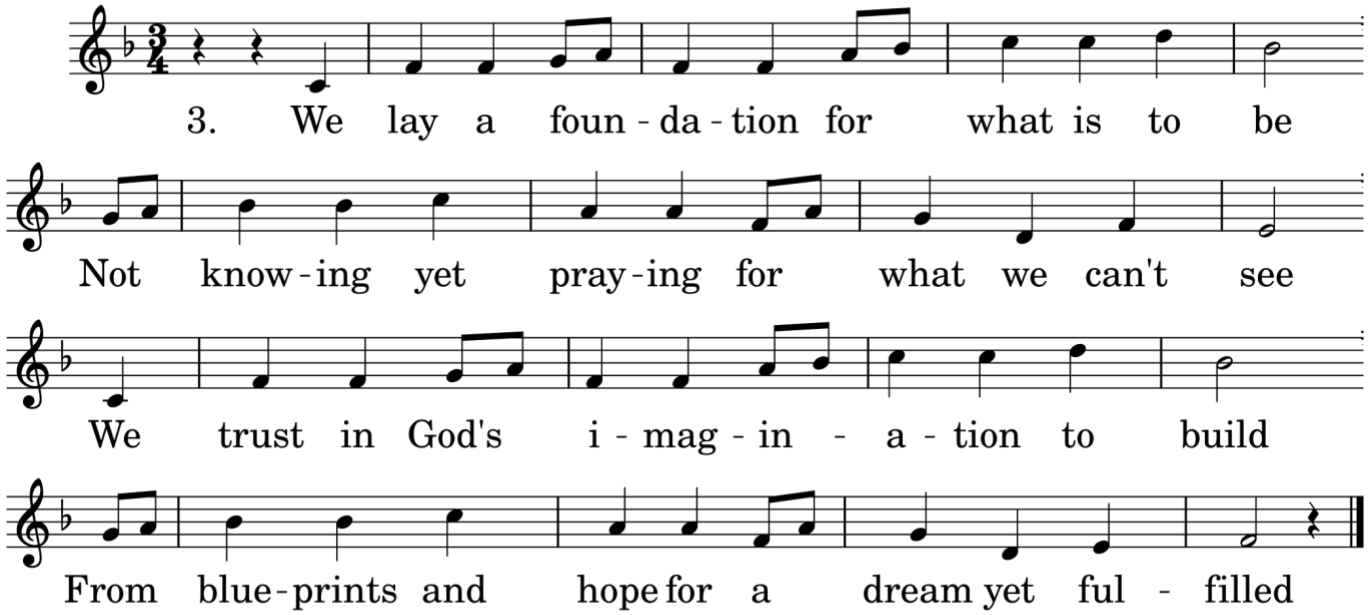


Text: Anna Strickland (2021)
Music (*CRADLE SONG 11.11.11.11*): William J. Kirkpatrick (1895)
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Zechariah's Lullaby
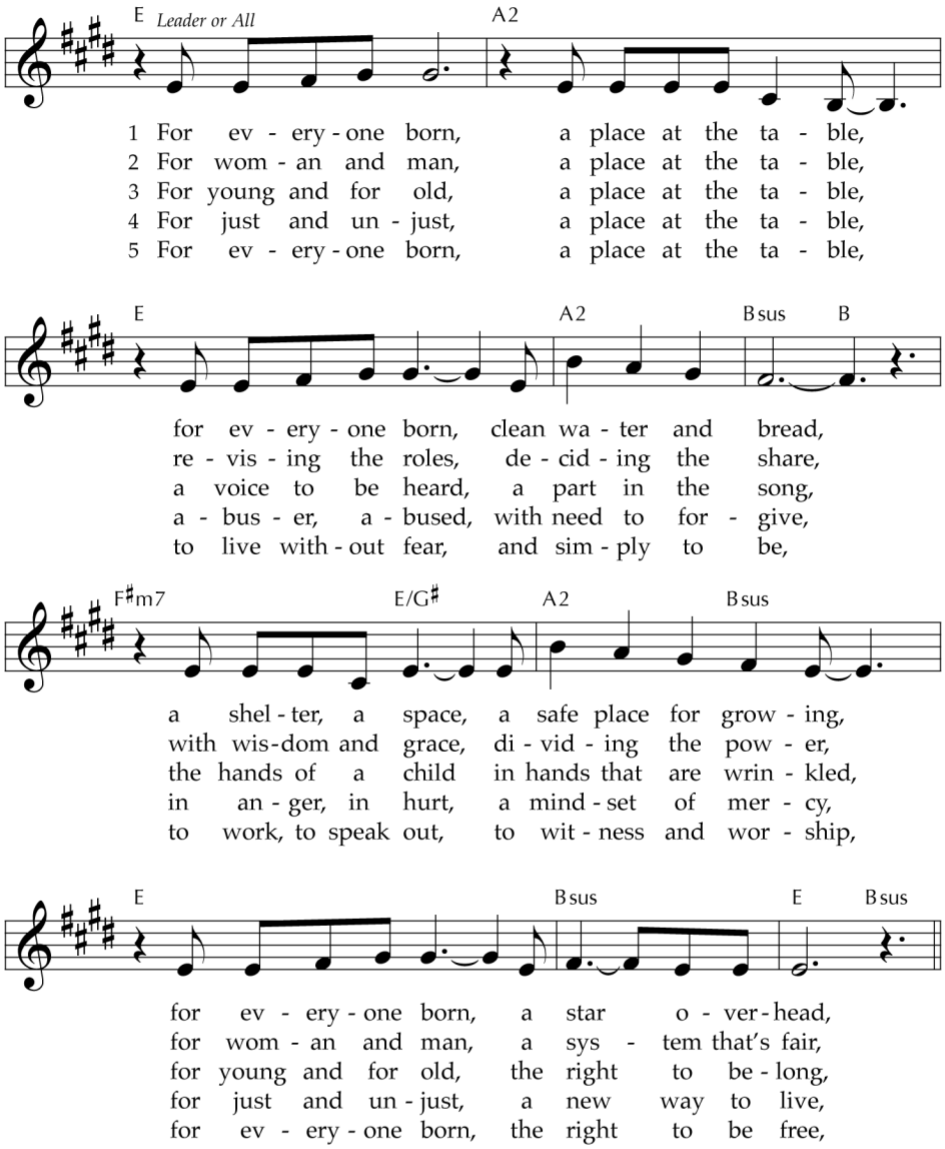


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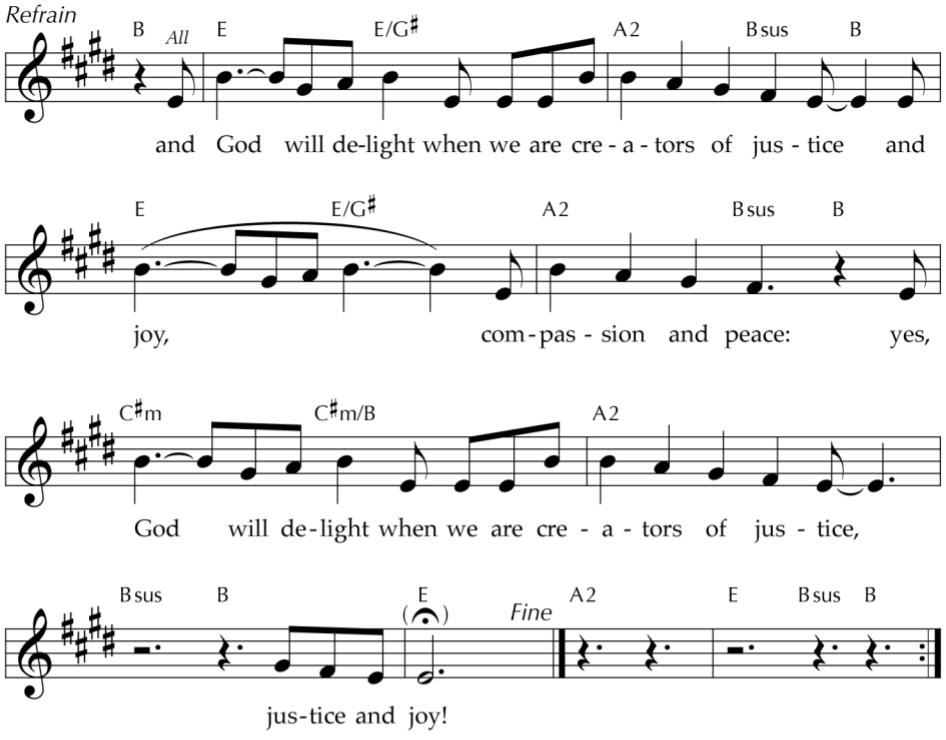
769 For Everyone Born



This hymn from a noted New Zealand hymnwriter affirms that God's hospitality transcends the barriers erected by human society and that we who have been created in God's image are called to live in ways that reflect our Creator's values: justice and joy, compassion and peace.
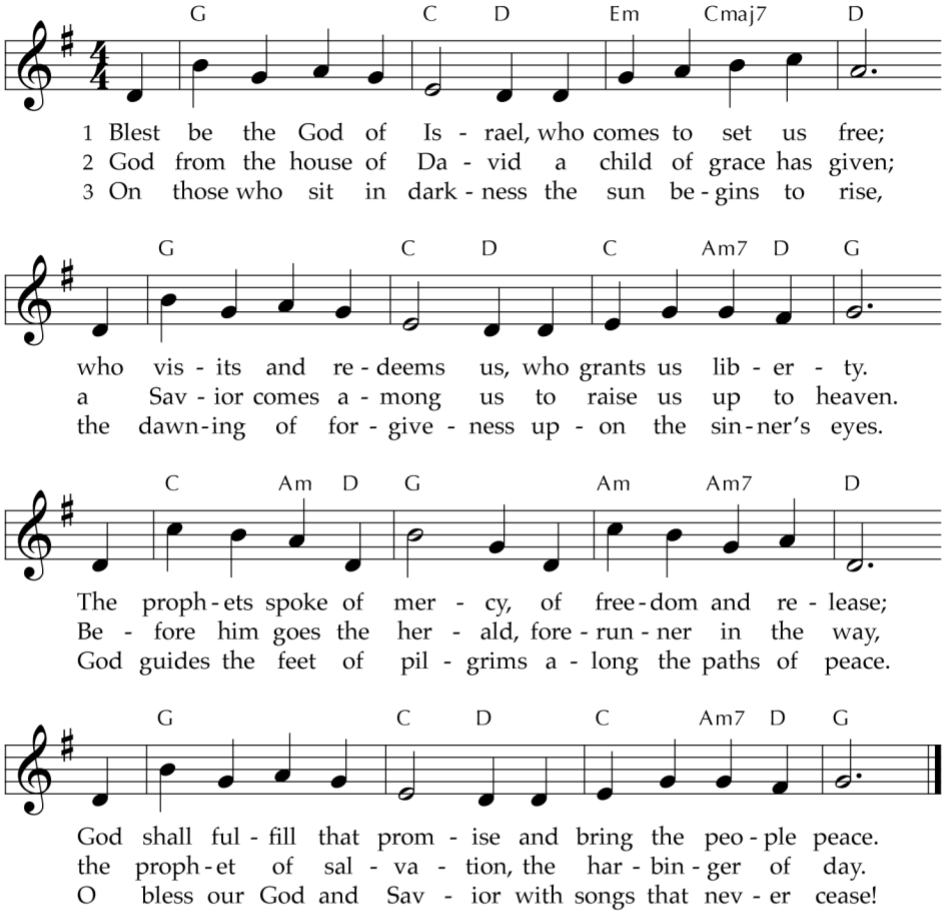
TEXT: Shirley Erena Murray, 1998
MUSIC: Brian Mann, 2006
Text © 1998 Hope Publishing Company
Music © 2006 Brian Mann (admin. General Board of Global Ministries t/a GBGMusik)

FOR EVERYONE BORN
11.10.11.10 with refrain


Refrain
B
All
E
E/G♯
A2
Bsus
B
and God will de-light when we are cre - a - tors of jus - tice and
E
E/G♯
A2
Bsus
B
joy, com-pas - sion and peace: yes,
C♯m
C♯m/B
A2
God will de-light when we are cre - a - tors of jus - tice,
Bsus
B
E
Fine
A2
E
Bsus
B
jus-tice and joy!

109 Blest Be the God of Israel

Song of Zechariah



This 20th-century British paraphrase of the Song of Zechariah (Luke 1:68–79) broadens the implications of what John the Baptist's father says in order to affirm that God's work is ongoing. The tune is named for the composer's oldest sister, who was his first piano teacher.

TEXT: Michael Perry, 1973, alt.
MUSIC: Hal H. Hopson, 1983
Text © 1973 The Jubilate Group (admin. Hope Publishing Company)
Music © 1983 Hope Publishing Company

MERLE'S TUNE
7.6.7.6.D