

GATHERING

406 We Are Standing on Holy Ground

Holy Ground

G D A D G D Em
 We are stand - ing on ho - ly ground,
 D G F#m F#m7 B7
 and I know that there are an - gels all a -
 E Gm D A7 D G
 round; let us praise Je - sus
 D Em F#m7 G D G
 now; we are stand - ing in his
 D Em7 D G D
 pres - ence on ho - ly ground.

The phrase "holy ground" resonates with the experience of Moses at the burning bush, where he had an encounter with God (Exodus 3:5; also quoted in the martyr Stephen's sermon, Acts 7:33). The reference to angels may recall Jacob's vision (Genesis 28:12-17) or Hebrews 12:22.

488 I Was There to Hear Your Boring Cry



1 "I was there to hear your born - ing cry; I'll be there when
 2 "When you heard the won - der of the Word, I was there to
 3 "In the mid - dle a - ges of your life, not too old, no



you are old. I re - joiced the day you were bap - tized to
 cheer you on. You were raised to praise the liv - ing Lord to
 lon - ger young, I'll be there to guide you through the night, com -



see your life un - fold. I was there when you were but a
 whom you now be - long. If you find some - one to share your
 plete what I've be - gun. When the eve - ning gent - ly clos - es



child with a faith to suit you well; in a blaze of
 time and you join your hearts as one, I'll be there to
 in and you shut your wea - ry eyes, I'll be there as



light you wan - dered off to find where de - mons dwell."
 make your vers - es rhyme from dusk till ris - ing sun."
 I have al - ways been with just one more sur - prise."



4 "I was there to hear your born - ing cry; I'll be there when you are old.



I re - joiced the day you were bap - tized to see your life un - fold."

Originally created to accompany a video series on baptism, this hymn speaks in the imagined conversational voice of God, assuring the person being baptized of God's presence throughout the changing stages of life. It offers a reminder that baptism is a once-in-a-lifetime event.

698 Take, O Take Me as I Am

The musical score is written for voice and piano. It consists of two systems of music. The first system has a vocal line and a piano accompaniment line. The vocal line begins with a whole note chord, followed by a half note chord, and then a quarter note chord. The piano accompaniment consists of a steady eighth-note bass line and a treble line with chords. The lyrics are: "Take, O take me as I am; sum-mon out what I shall". The second system also has a vocal line and a piano accompaniment line. The vocal line has a half note chord, followed by a quarter note chord, and then a half note chord. The piano accompaniment continues with the same eighth-note bass line and treble line. The lyrics are: "be; set your seal up-on my heart and live in me."

The brevity of this text and tune invite repeated singing, either as a sustained chain of sound or as a sung response in a series of prayers. It offers a more reflective approach to the same theme of self-dedication evident in older hymns such as "Just as I Am" (see no. 442).

69 I, the Lord of Sea and Sky

Here I Am, Lord

G Am D G C G D
Leader or All

1 I, the Lord of sea and sky, I have heard my peo - ple cry.
 2 I, the Lord of snow and rain, I have borne my peo-ple's pain.
 3 I, the Lord of wind and flame, I will tend the poor and lame.

G Em C Am7 D G

All who dwell in dark and sin my hand will save. I, who
 I have wept for love of them. They turn a - way. I will
 I will set a feast for them. My hand will save. Fin-est

Am D G C G D

made the stars of night, I will make their dark - ness bright.
 break their hearts of stone, give them hearts for love a - lone.
 bread I will pro - vide till their hearts be sat - is - fied.

G Em C Am7 C/G D D7

Who will bear my light to them? Whom shall I send?
 I will speak my word to them. Whom shall I send?
 I will give my life to them. Whom shall I send?

Refrain
 All G C G D G C G D G

Here I am, Lord. Is it I, Lord? I have heard you

Am7 G Am7 D G C G C

call-ing in the night. I will go, Lord, if you

G C G D G Am7 D7 G Am7 G

lead me. I will hold your peo - ple in my heart.

The stanzas here need to be understood as representing the voice of God, while the refrain (based on Isaiah 6:8) is the faithful human response to God's call. This becomes clearer if a leader or small group sings the stanzas, with the congregation joining on the refrain.

God, Be the Love to Search and Keep Me

O Christ, Surround Me



1 God, be the love to search and keep me; God, be the prayer to
2 Bind to my-self the Name of Ho - ly, great cloud of wit - ness-
3 Bright-ness of sun and glow of moon-light, flash - ing of light-ning,
4 Walk - ing be-hind to hem my jour - ney, go - ing a - head to
5 Christ in the eyes of all who see me, Christ in the ears that



move my voice; God, be the strength to now up - hold me:
es en - fold; proph - ets, a - pos - tles, an - gels wit - ness:
strength of wind, depth of the sea to soil of plan - et:
light my way, and from be - neath, a - bove, and all ways:
hear my voice, Christ in the hearts of all who know me:



O Christ, sur-round me; O Christ, sur-round me.

This hymn is a 21st-century adaptation of the traditional Celtic prayer style known as a *lorica* (Latin for "armor" or "breastplate"). Many such petitions for God's presence and protection were never written down, but this one is based on an example attributed to St. Patrick.