

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.

# 410 God Is Calling through the Whisper

1 God is call-ing through the whis-per of the Spir - it's deep-est sighs,  
 2 God is call-ing through the voic-es of our neigh-bors' ur-gent prayers,  
 3 God is call-ing through the mu-sic of sub-lime and hu-man arts,

through the thrill of sud-den beau-ties that can catch us by sur-prise.  
 through their long-ing for re-demp-tion and for res-cue from de-spair.  
 through the hymns of earth and an-gels, and the car-ols of our hearts.

Flash of light-ning, crash of thun-der; hush of still-ness, rush of won-der:  
 Place of hurt or face of need-ing; stri-dent cry or si-lent plead-ing:  
 Lift of joy and gift of sing-ing; days and nights our prais-es bring-ing:

God is call - ing—can you hear? God is call - ing—can you hear?  
 God is call - ing—can you hear? God is call - ing—can you hear?  
 God is call - ing—and we hear! God is call - ing—and we hear!

This wide-ranging text reminds us of the many surprising and urgent ways God calls to us, both to draw us near and to send us forth. In the third line of music it is especially effective at harnessing the momentum of the phrases that are each a note higher than the one before.

## 39 Great Is Thy Faithfulness



1 \*Great is thy faith - ful - ness, O God my Fa - ther;  
2 Sum - mer and win - ter, and spring - time and har - vest,  
3 Par - don for sin and a peace that en - dur - eth,

there is no shad - ow of turn - ing with thee.  
sun, moon, and stars in their cours - es a - bove  
thine own dear pres - ence to cheer and to guide,

Thou chang - est not; thy com - pas - sions they fail not.  
join with all na - ture in man - i - fold wit - ness  
strength for to - day and bright hope for to - mor - row:

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

\*Or "Great is thy faithfulness, O God, Creator."

Written as a meditation on Lamentations 3:22–23, this text is one of the few hymns among the 1200 poems by this Methodist writer and pastor that has gained much currency. The tune that appears here was composed especially for these words, and the pairing has proved enduring.

# 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.

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