St. John's United Church of Christ Guidelines for Funerals & Memorial Services Approved by Council: (**Draft Approval: 3/14/2016**) (reception added 4/1/2016)

Purpose:

The resurrection is a central doctrine of the Christian faith and shapes Christians' attitudes and responses to the event of death. Death brings loss, sorrow, and grief to all. In the face of death, Christians do not bear bereavement in isolation but are sustained by the power of the Holy Spirit and the community of faith. The Church offers a ministry of love and hope to all who grieve. Its purpose is to affirm once more the powerful, steadfast love of God from which people cannot be separated, even by death. As this is the basis of a Christian funeral as defined by the Book of Worship of the United Church of Christ (UCC), the Council of St. John's UCC has set forth the following policy on funeral/memorial services which occur at the church.

Pastor:

It is expected that primary arrangements will be made with St. John's pastor. Requests for the participation of a "guest" pastor (including former St. John's pastors) to assist in the service must be made to the pastor; who, if it is appropriate, will extend an invitation.

Service at Church:

Church members are encouraged to use the church for funeral/memorial services. Just as we are baptized by God in church and have been nourished by God through the church, so it is wholly appropriate that thanksgiving to God for our lives should be offered in church.

A Time of Worship:

In the UCC tradition a funeral/memorial service is considered a service of worship, and will be approached with the dignity and joyful celebration accorded worship. A typical order of worship will include: prelude and postlude of sacred music; hymns and songs of praise and faith; scripture lessons from the Old and New Testaments; a message – which expresses thanksgiving to God for the life of the deceased, and reminds all of Christ's resurrection and promise of eternal life; prayers of intercession and thanksgiving; a benediction. In consultation with the pastor, other elements, such as remarks from family members and friends, may be included in the service. The officiating pastor shall make the final determination on the elements of worship.

Type of Service:

St. John's UCC enjoys both traditional and contemporary styles of worship. While it is anticipated that most funeral/memorial services will reflect a traditional approach to worship, a contemporary service format is also possible. While every effort will be made to accommodate a desire for the funeral/memorial service to be contemporary in style, this option ultimately depends on the availability of volunteer/paid musicians and sound board operators; and may require the use of recorded music.

Casket/Cremains:

The casket/cremains of the deceased may be present for the service, and shall arrive at the church at least 45 minutes prior to the announced start time. In order that worship may focus on God, and upon the gift of resurrection, rather than upon the earthly remains of the deceased, the casket will be closed during the service.

Cremation:

Cremation is an appropriate alternative for Christians. Orders of worship and committal remain the same in cases of cremation, with the exception that the committal may take place on a different date from the service in the church. If desired, and possible at the place where cremation takes place, a brief prayer/blessing can be offered as the cremation begins.

<u>Pictures & Photography</u>:

As the focus of Christian worship is God, it is not appropriate to display pictures of the deceased in the sanctuary during the service. Photo displays of the deceased are encouraged, and more appropriately placed in the reception area. Non-flash photography and video is permitted during the service from a stationary position behind the worshipping congregation.

Flowers:

The use of flowers and other forms of decoration are not required, and should be limited in order that they do not distract from the purpose of worship. One or two simple floral arrangements adequately symbolize God's gift of new life.

Visitation:

There may be occasions when it is desirable for visitation with the family to take place at the church rather than the funeral home. In such cases Fellowship Hall is available.

Reception

Simple post-service receptions may be held in the Fellowship Hall of the church. If available, church members will serve as hostess/host for a reception; preparing coffee, iced tea, water, etc., as well as taking care of setting up the space, providing decor, and cleaning up afterwards.

Committal Service:

The pastor is available to lead a brief committal service at the site (locally) where the casket/cremains are to be interred. This service typically includes: scripture; prayers; words of committal; a benediction.

Military/Masonic Rituals:

Christians often hold membership in praiseworthy organizations other than the church. It is most appropriate for memorial rituals of those groups to be held separately from the funeral/memorial service. They are more properly carried out at the funeral home or cemetery.

Fees:

When the deceased was a member:

a. Organist: \$100.00

b. Pastor: no fee, although an honorarium is acceptable

When the deceased was a non-member:

a. Organist: \$100.00b. Pastor: \$150.00

Fees for other musicians should be in accordance with their normal pay scale.

Services taking place on a Saturday or Sunday will require a reasonable custodial fee based upon hours worked and custodian availability. If applicable, the pastor will discuss this fee with you.

Memorials:

Gifts given in memory of a loved one are appropriate and welcomed. St. John's UCC, or a charitable organization of the donor's choice are potential recipients of such gifts. Guidelines for directing such gifts to the church are outline in St. John's Memorials & Special Gifts Policy.

Final Plans:

Members of St. John's are strongly encouraged to pre-plan their funeral/memorial service. The pastor is willing to be part of this process if desired. Members may pick up a "Final Plan" folder in the church office (or download the form from the church web site: www.stjohnsuccchesterfield.org). Once completed and returned, the forms will be kept in the church's confidential files; where they will be available

for revision. At the time of death, the information will be shared with family members, and the pastor with whom the service is being planned.

Service Order and Funeral Bulletin:

The typical funeral/memorial order of service is listed below. If desired, the church office will create a simple service bulletin based on this order.

A Service of Witness To the Resurrection

Celebrating the Life of (name of person)

Sentences in Procession

Welcome

Call to Worship

Hymn

Old Testament Readings

New Testament Readings

(Family Memories – optional)

The Faith We Claim -- Homily

Silent Celebration

Pastoral Prayer and the Lord's Prayer

Prelude

Hymn

Benediction

Postlude

Possible Scriptural Texts & Hymns:

In those moments when words are difficult, scripture and hymns (sung or played) can speak powerfully for God's people. A partial list of appropriate scripture texts and hymns follows:

Old Testament:

Psalm 23

1) The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want. 2) he makes me lie down in green pastures; he leads me beside still waters; 3) he restores my soul. He leads me in right paths for his name's sake. 4) Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I fear no evil; for you are with me; your rod and your staff – they comfort me. 5) You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; you anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows. 6) Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord forever.

Psalm 46

1) God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.
2) Therefore we will not fear, though the earth should change, though the mountains shake in the heart of the sea; 3) though its waters roar and foam, though the mountains tremble with its tumult. 4) There is a river whose streams make glad the city of God, the holy habitation of the Most High.
5) God is in the midst of the city; it shall not be moved; God will help it when the morning dawns. 6) The nations are in an uproar, the kingdoms totter; he utters his voice, the earth melts. 7) The Lord of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge. 8) Come, behold the works of the Lord; see what desolations he has brought on the earth. 9) He makes wars cease to the end of the earth; he breaks the bow, and shatters the spear; he burns the shields with fire. 10) "Be still and know that I am God! I am exalted among

the nations, I am exalted in the earth." 11) The Lord of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge.

Psalm 90

Lord, you have been our dwelling place in all generations. 2) Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever you had formed the earth and the world, from everlasting to everlasting you are God. 3) You turn us back to dust, and say, "Turn back, you mortals." 4) For a thousand years in your sight are like yesterday when it is past, or like a watch in the night. 5) You sweep them away; they are like a dream, like grass that is renewed in the morning; 6) in the morning it flourishes and is renewed; in the evening it fades and withers. 7) For we are consumed by your anger; by your wrath we are overwhelmed. 8) You have set our iniquities before you, our secret sins in the light of your countenance. 9) For all our days pass away under your wrath; our years come to an end like a sign. 10) The days of our life are seventy years, or perhaps eighty, if we are strong; even then their span is only toil and trouble; they are soon gone, and we fly away. 11) Who considers the power of your anger? Your wrath is as great as the fear that is due you. 12) So teach us to count our days that we may gain a wise heart. 13) Turn, O Lord! How long? Have compassion on your servants! 14) Satisfy us in the morning with your steadfast love, so that we may rejoice and be glad all our days. 15) Make us glad as many days as you have afflicted us, and as many years as we have seen evil. 16) Let your work be manifest to your servants, and your glorious power to their children. 17) Let the favor of the Lord our God be upon us, and prosper for us the work of our hands—O prosper the work of our hands!

Psalm 91

You who live in the shelter of the Most High, who abide in the shadow of the Almighty, 2) will say to the Lord, "My refuge and my fortress; my God, in whom I trust." 3) For he will deliver you from the snare of the fowler and from the deadly pestilence; 4) he will cover you with his pinions, and under his wings you will find refuge; his faithfulness is a shield and buckler. 5) You will not fear the terror of the night or the arrow that flies by day, 6) or the pestilence that stalks in the darkness, or the destruction that wastes at noonday. 7) A thousand may fall at your side, then thousand at your right hand, but it will not come near you. 8) You will only look with your eyes and see the punishment of the wicked. 9) Because you have made the Lord your refuge, the Most High your dwelling place, 10) no evil shall befall you, no scourge come near your tent. 11) For he will command his angels

concerning you to guard you in all your ways. 12) On their hands they will bear you up, so that you will not dash your foot against a stone. 13) You will tread on the lion and the adder, the young lion and the serpent you will trample under foot. 14) Those who love me, I will deliver; I will protect those who know my name. 15) When they call to me, I will answer them; I will be with them in trouble, I will rescue them and honor them. 16) With long life I will satisfy them, and show them my salvation.

Psalm 100

Make a joyful noise to the Lord, all the earth. 2) Worship the Lord with gladness; come into his presence with singing. 3) Know that the Lord is God. It is he that made us, and we are his; we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture. 4) Enter his gates with thanksgiving, and his courts with praise. Give thanks to him, bless his name. 5) For the Lord is good; his steadfast love endures forever, and his faithfulness to all generations.

Psalm 121

I lift up my eyes to the hills—from where will my help come? 2) My help comes from the Lord, who made heaven and earth. 3) He will not let your foot be moved; he who keeps you will not slumber. 4) He who keeps Israel will neither slumber nor sleep. 5) The Lord is your keeper; the Lord is your shade at your right hand. 6) The sun shall not strike you by day, nor the moon by night. 7) The Lord will keep you from all evil; he will keep your life. 8) The Lord will keep your going out and your coming in from this time on and forevermore.

Psalm 130

Out of the depths I cry to you, O Lord. 2) Lord, hear my voice! Let your ears be attentive to the voice of my supplications! 3) If you, O Lord, should mark iniquities, Lord, who could stand? 4) But there is forgiveness with you, so that you may be revered. 5) I wait for the Lord, my soul waits, and in his word I hope; 6) my soul waits for the Lord more than those who watch for the morning. 7) O Israel, hope in the Lord! For with the Lord there is steadfast love, and with him is great power to redeem. 8) It is he who will redeem Israel from all its iniquities.

Ecclesiastes 3:1-8

For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven: 2) a time to be born, and a time to die; a time to plant, and a time to pluck up what is planted; 3) a time to kill, and a time to heal; a time to break down,

and a time to build up; 4) a time to weep, and a time to laugh; a time to mourn, and a time to dance; 5) a time to throw away stones and a time to gather stones together; a time to embrace, and a time to refrain from embracing; 6) a time to seek, and a time to lose; a time to keep, and a time to throw away; 7) a time to tear, and a time to sew; a time to keep silence, and a time to speak; 8) a time to love, and a time to hate; a time for war, and a time for peace.

Isaiah 40:28-31

28) Have you not known? Have you not heard? The Lord is the everlasting God, the Creator of the ends of the earth. He does not faint or grow weary; his understanding is unsearchable. 29) He gives power to the faint, and strengthens the powerless. 30) Even youths will faint and be weary, and the young will fall exhausted; 31) 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.

Isaiah 55:1-13

Ho, everyone who thirsts, come to the waters; and you that have no money, come, buy and eat! Come, buy wine and milk without money and without price. 2) Why do you spend your money for that which is not bread, and your labor or that which does not satisfy? Listen carefully to me, and eat what is good, and delight yourselves in rich food. 3) Incline your ear, and come to me; listen, so that you may live. I will make with you an everlasting covenant, my steadfast, sure love for David. 4) See, I made him a witness to the peoples, a leader and commander for the peoples. 5) See, you shall call nations that you do not know, and nations that do not know you shall run to you, because of the Lord your God the Holy One of Israel, for he has glorified you. 6) Seek the Lord while he may be found, call upon him while he is near; 7) let the wicked forsake their way, and the unrighteous their thoughts; let them return to the Lord, that he may have mercy on them, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon. 8) For my thoughts are not your thoughts, nor are your ways my ways, says the Lord. 9) For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts. 10) For as the rain and the snow come down from heaven, and do not return there until they have watered the earth, making it bring forth and sprout, giving seed to the sower and bread to the eater, 11) so shall my word be that goes out from my mouth; it shall not return to me empty, but it shall accomplish that which I purpose, and succeed in the thing for which I sent it. 2) For you shall go out in joy, and be led back in peace; the mountains and the hills before you shall burst into song and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands. 13) Instead of the thorn shall come up the cypress; instead of the brier shall come up the myrtle; and it shall be the Lord for a memorial for an everlasting sign that shall not be cut off.

New Testament:

Matthew 11:28-30

28) "Come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens and I will give you rest. 29) Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me; for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. 30) For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.

Mark 10:13-16

13) People were bringing little children to him in order that he might touch them; and the disciples spoke sternly to them. 14) But when Jesus saw this, he was indignant and said to them, "Let the little children come to me; do not stop them; for it is to such as these that the kingdom of God belongs. 15) Truly I tell you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God as a little child will never enter it" 16) and took them up in his arms, laid his hands on them.

John 14.1-6, 27

Let not your hearts be troubled. Believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many rooms. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, so that where I am, there you may be also. And you know the way to the place where I am going." But Thomas, one of the twelve, said to him, "Lord, we do not know where you are going. How can we know the way?" Jesus said to him, 'I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the father, but by me......Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. I do not give as the world gives to you. Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid.

2 Corinthians 4:16-18

16) So we do not lose heart. Even though our nature is wasting away, our inner nature is being renewed day by day. 17) For this slight momentary

affliction is preparing us for an eternal weight of glory beyond all measure, 18) because we look not at what can be seen but at what cannot be seen; for what can be seen is temporary, but what cannot be seen is eternal.

2 Corinthians 5:1-10

1) For we know that if the earthly tent we live in is destroyed, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. 2) For in this tent we groan, longing to be clothed with our heavenly dwelling - 3) if indeed, when we have taken it off we will not be found naked. 4) For while we are still in this tent, we groan under our burden, because we wish not to be unclothed but to be further clothed, so that what is mortal may be swallowed up by life. 5) He who has prepared us for this very thing is God, who has given us the Spirit as a guarantee. 6) So we are always confident; even though we know that while we are at home in the body we are away from the Lord - 7) for we walk by faith, not by sight. 8) Yes, we do have confidence, and we would rather be away from the body and at home with the Lord. 9) So whether we are at home or away, we make it our aim to please him. 10) For all of us must appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each may receive recompense for what has been done in the body, whether good or evil.

1Thessalonians 4:13-18

13) But we do not want you to be uninformed; brothers and sisters, about those who have died, so that you may have no hope. 14) For since we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so, through Jesus, God will bring with him those who have died. 15) For this we declare to you by the word of the Lord that we who are alive, who are left until the coming of the Lord, will by no means precede those who have died. 16) For the Lord himself, with a cry of command, with the archangel's call and with the sound of God's trumpet, will descend from heaven, and the dead in Christ will rise first. 17) Then we who are alive, who are left, will be caught up in the clouds together with them to meet the Lord in the air; and so we will be with the Lord forever. 18) Therefore encourage one another with these words.

1 Peter 1:3-9

3) Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! By his great mercy he has given us a new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, 4) and into an inheritance that is imperishable,

undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you, 5) who are being protected by the power of God through faith and salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. 6) In this you rejoice, even if now for a little while you have had to suffer various trials, 7) so that the genuineness of your faith-being more precious than gold that, though perishable, is tested by fire-may be found to result in praise and glory and honor when Jesus Christ is revealed. 8) Although you have not seen him, you love him; and even though you do not see him now, you believe in him and rejoice with an indescribable and glorious joy, 9) for you are receiving the outcome of your faith, the salvation of your souls.

Revelation 21:1-4; 22-25

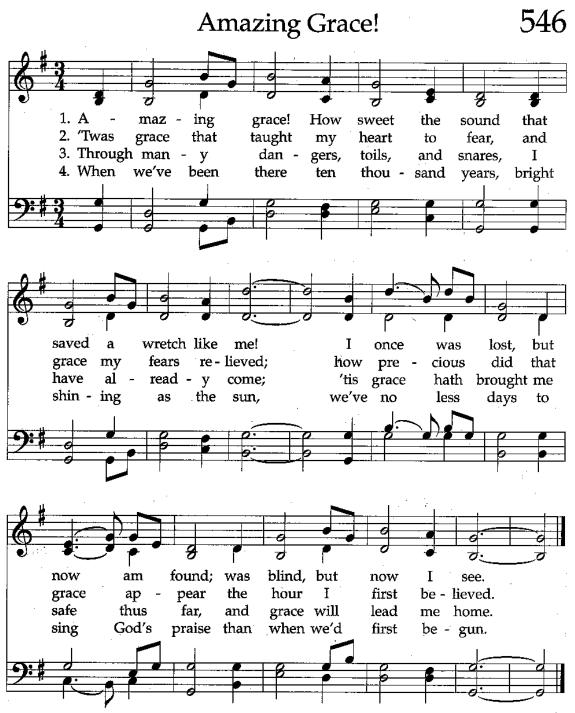
1)Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. 2) And I saw the holy city, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. 3) And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "See, the home of God is among mortals. He will dwell with them as their God, they will be his peoples, and God himself will be with them; 4) he will wipe every tear from their eyes. Death will be no more; mourning and crying and pain will be no more, for the first things have passed away." 22) I saw no temple in the city, for its temple is the Lord God the Almighty and the Lamb. 23) And the city has no need of sun or moon to shine on it, for the glory of God is its light, and its lamp is the Lamb. 24) The nations will walk by its light, and the kings of the earth will bring their glory into it. Its gates will never by shut by the day-and there will be no night there.

Revelation 22:3-5

3) Nothing accursed will be found there anymore. But the throne of God and the Lamb will be in it, and his servants will worship him; 4) they will see his face, and his name will be on their foreheads. 5) And there will be no more night; they need no light of lamp or sun, for the Lord God will be their light and they will reign forever and ever.

<u>Hymns</u>: This list is not exhaustive. It is meant to provide a suggested group of hymns that are appropriate for a funeral/memorial service. Other hymns may be chose from the Hymnal.

- 546 Amazing Grace
- 595 Be Thou My Vision
- 637 For All The Saints
- 86 Great is Thy Faithfulness
- 33 How Great Thou Art
- 227 In the Garden
- 561 It is Well With My Soul
- 2 Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee
- 557 Just a Closer Walk
- 548 Old Rugged Cross
- 77 On Eagle's Wings
- 628 Precious Lord Take My Hand
- 340 Softly And Tenderly
- 585 What a Friend We Have in Jesus
- 536 When We Are Living



WORDS: John Newton, 1779; st. 4 anonymous MUSIC: Virginia Harmony, 1831; harm. Edwin O. Excell, 1900 NEW BRITAIN CM



WORDS: Irish song (8th century); tr. Mary E. Byrne, 1905; versed by Eleanor H. Hull, 1912, alt.

SLANE 10 10.9 10

MUSIC: Traditional Irish melody; harm. Carlton R. Young, 1963

For All the Saints



WORDS: William W. How, 1864, alt. MUSIC: Ralph Vaughan Williams, 1906

SINE NOMINE 10 10 10 w. alleluias





WORDS and MUSIC: Stuart K. Hine, 1953, based on a Swedish folk melody and a poem by Carl Gustav Boberg, 1885

O STORE GUD 11 10.11 10 w. refrain

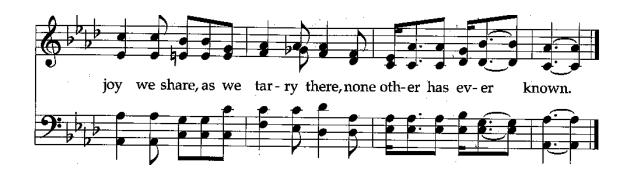


In the Garden



WORDS and MUSIC: C. Austin Miles, 1913

GARDEN 89.557 w. refrain



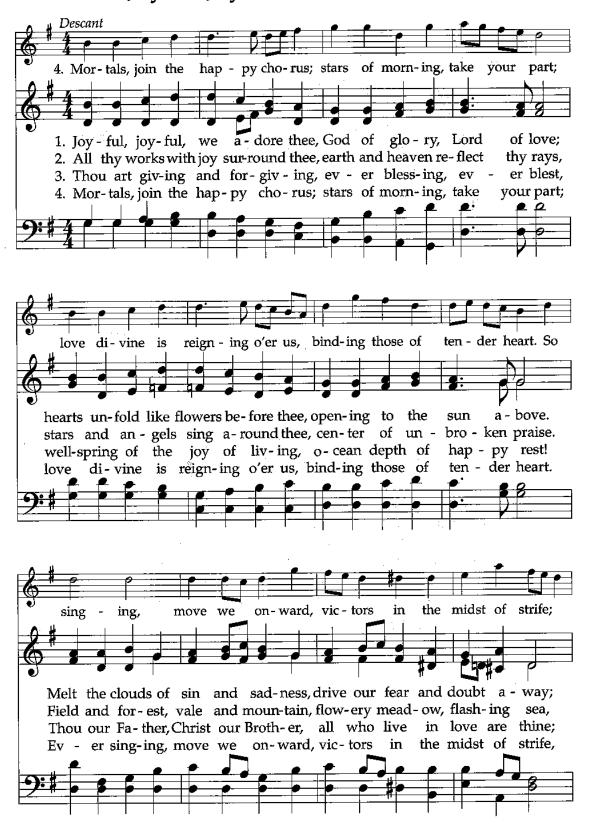
It Is Well with My Soul



MUSIC: Philip P. Bliss, 1876

VILLE DU HAVRE 11 8.11 9 w. refrain

Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee

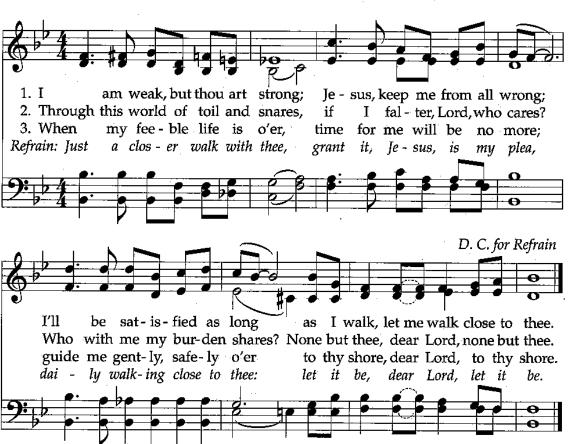


WORDS: Henry van Dyke, 1907, alt.

MUSIC: Ludwig van Beethoven, 1824; arr. Edward Hodges, 1864; desc. Susan Adams, 1995

HYMN TO JOY 87.87D

Just a Closer Walk with Thee 557



WORDS and MUSIC: Anonymous

CLOSER WALK Irr. w. refrain



WORDS and MUSIC: George Bennard, 1913



On Eagle's Wings





Precious Lord, Take My Hand

628



WORDS and MUSIC: Thomas A. Dorsey, 1932

PRECIOUS LORD 66.9D

Softly and Tenderly





546 - Amazing Grace

What a Friend We Have in Jesus



WORDS: Joseph Scriven, 1855 MUSIC: Charles C. Converse, 1868 CONVERSE 87.87D

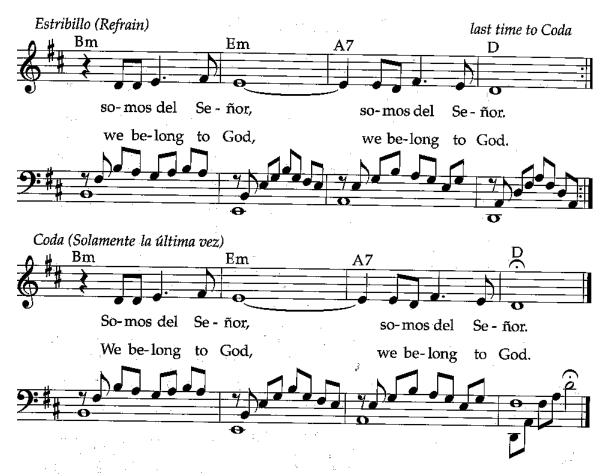
Pues Si Vivimos (When We Are Living)



WORDS: St. 1 anonymous, tr. Elise S. Eslinger, 1983; st. 2, 3, 4 Roberto Escamilla, 1983, tr. George Lockwood, 1987 MUSIC: Traditional Spanish melody; harm. *Celebremos*, 1983, alt.

SOMOS DEL SEÑOR Irr. =112-120

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- 3. En la tristeza y en el dolor, en la belleza y en el amor, sea que suframos o que gocemos, Estribillo
- En este mundo, hemos de encontrar gente que llora y sin consolar.
 Sea que ayudemos o que alimentemos, Estribillo
- 3. 'Mid times of sorrow and in times of pain, when sensing beauty or in love's embrace, whether we suffer, or sing rejoicing, *Refrain*
- 4. Across this wide world, we shall always find those who are crying with no peace of mind, but when we help them, or when we feed them, *Refrain*