

Columbia United Church Of Christ

March 15, 2026
"Stewardship Sunday"



CUCC Open and Affirming/Inclusion Covenant:

Columbia United Church of Christ celebrates God's boundless and unconditional love by intentionally welcoming and affirming all God's children.

No matter who you are or where you are on life's journey;
No matter where you are on your faith journey;
No matter your sexual orientation, gender expression, or identity;
No matter your race, culture, ethnicity, nationality, or politics;
No matter your age, ability, health, relationship status, or family structure;
No matter your social, economic, educational, legal, or life circumstances;
You are welcome here!

Called by Jesus to be an Open and Affirming, inclusive faith community, Columbia United Church of Christ commits to welcoming everyone into the full life of our congregation. Our paths and voices may differ, but we journey in faith together.

*Columbia
United Church
Of Christ*



March 15, 2026

10:30 a.m.

“Stewardship”

**indicates that all are invited to stand, if comfortably able*

“God is my shepherd; I shall want for nothing...”

-Psalm 23:1

Welcome and Greetings

Pastor Rick

Prelude

“In Memory”

Steve Jannetti
Jeanne Cotter

Carrying in the Light of Christ

*Call to Worship

(based on Psalm 23)

Lena Muench

God, You are our Shepherd; we want for nothing.
You bring us pastoral peace and comfort!

**God brings us blessings and Salvation,
Restoring our souls!**

You lead us through the depths of despair;
Through the darkest valleys of life.

**We do not fear misery or evil;
For God is with us, guiding us and protecting us!**

You shower us with abundant blessings;
Healing and restoring us, we are forever yours!

**God’s Goodness and Mercy will pursue us always;
And we will endeavor to dwell in God’s House forever!
Come, let us worship God!**

*Hymn

“Born of God, Eternal Savior”

#542

*Opening Prayer

Lena Muench

God of restoration and wholeness; we know that You call us to have heavenly vision. Too often, the ways of the world and the mandates of our culture blind us to the possibilities of all that You offer. Forgive our spiritual blindness. Restore our vision, that we may be able to see Your abundant blessings in the world, and Your call to be stewards of all You created. Open our eyes, open our hearts, and open our hands that we may freely give of our time, our talents, and our treasures; the bounty You have first given us. In Jesus’ name we pray; Amen.

*Assurance of Blessing

Pastor Rick

As we walk this Lenten path, we draw ever closer to God. Through discipline and service, we see God's presence offering us forgiveness, grace, and new life. Through our repentance and God's grace, we are forgiven, beloved and blessed. Praise be to God!

*Prayer Response

“Jesus, Remember Me”

*Jesus, remember me,
When you come into your Kingdom;
Jesus, remember me,
When you come into your Kingdom!*

*Sharing God's Gift of Peace

May God's Peace be with you!

And also with you!

Children's Time

Pastor Rick

“I Have Decided to Follow Jesus”
(Sung as children return to their seats)

*I have decided to follow Jesus
I have decided to follow Jesus
I have decided to follow Jesus
No turning back, no turning back!*

Mission Moment

“Food Bank & Market”

Mahree Skala

Gospel Lesson

John 9:1-41

Lena Muench

Jesus encounters a man who was blind since birth. The disciples allow cultural beliefs to diminish the dignity of the man, but Jesus lifts him up instead. After healing the man, the Pharisees harshly question him about his dignity. Even the parents of the man are afraid to stand up for him, but he stands proud in the face of adversity. Thanks to the intervention of Jesus, and the courage of the healed man to speak the truth to power and testify about his encounter with Jesus, his dignity was restored. Page #872

Anthem

“Sometimes I Feel Like a Motherless Child”

Celebration Singers

Howard Helvey

Sermon

Rev. Damien Lake

The Rev. Damien Lake is our Associate Conference Minister; a position he has held in our Conference since 2020. He served three congregations as Settled Pastor, two as Interim Pastor, and has worked with many churches as a coach, helping them through the search and call process as well as working with new church starts and revitalization of their ministry in the local community. He is committed to helping churches grow, rethink church, and continue to focus on the “Still Speaking Voice of God.”

*Hymn

“In the Bulb There is a Flower”

#433

Community Prayer & Silent Prayer; The Lord’s Prayer

In an effort to encourage inclusion, we suggest using the address “Creator God” in our unison recitation of The Lord’s Prayer. You are certainly welcome to say “Our Father” instead of “Creator,” “Trespases” instead of “debts,” or “Thy” instead of “Your” if you prefer.

Creator God in heaven, hallowed be Your name. Your kingdom come, Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For Yours is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever. Amen.

*Meditation Hymn

“Take My Life, God, Let it Be”

#448

Sharing our Announcements

Pastor Rick

Stewardship Moment

“Sharing the Joy, Spreading the Love”

Keith Birkes

Invitation to the Offering and Consecration of our Gifts

Pastor Rick

To give online text “GIVE” to 573.240.4041

You can also give online by visiting our website: www.columbiaucc.com

Offertory

“Remember Not the Things of the Past”

Steve Jannetti

Bob Hurd

*Prayer of Dedication

Lena Muench

O Generous God, we give thanks to You for Your Steadfast Love which endures forever. May these gifts be used to feed the hunger and satisfy the thirst of those You love throughout Your Creation. We offer our gifts and our selves to You. Amen.

*Benediction

Pastor Rick

*Response

“Let There Be Peace on Earth”

Let there be Peace on Earth and Let it Begin with me!

Let there be Peace on Earth; the Peace that was meant to be!

With God our Creator, Children all are we!

Let us walk with each other in perfect harmony!

Let Peace begin with me; let this be the moment now!

With every step I take let this be my solemn vow:

To take each moment and live each moment in peace eternally!

Let there be Peace on Earth; and let it begin with me!

Postlude

“I Love to Tell the Story”

Steve Jannetti

Fischer / Keveren

COLUMBIA UCC AND UNITED CHURCH FUNDS

United Church Funds is the investment vehicle of the United Church of Christ. Established in 1909, they offer socially responsible investment funds designed to help faith based organizations grow and preserve their financial legacies. Their family of funds enables churches and other ministry settings to customize their investment portfolio to suit their individual needs, risk tolerance and time horizon.

Faithful Stewardship through Planned Giving is the emphasis of United Church Funds. Their goal is to provide the financial means for churches and ministry settings to do the ministry work of the church. Their approach is faith based, expressed in their practice of financial oversight and investing as well as empowerment of ministry goals.

United Church Funds controls over \$1 billion in assets for over 1100 clients across the United Church of Christ, including the national setting of the church and the Missouri Mid-South Conference. Columbia United Church of Christ has held investments with United Church Funds for almost two decades. In 2019, the Church Council of CUCC decided to transfer all of our investment accounts to United Church Funds. Despite the downturn of the stock market in 2020, we have still realized very positive performance with our accounts since inception. We currently have eleven accounts with United Church Funds; most of them are defined in the CUCC Designated Funds Policy Manual (copies in the church office). These funds are:

1. Undesignated Fund (no restrictions or definition)
2. Endowment Fund (defined in policy manual)
3. Scholarship Fund (defined in policy manual)
4. Building Fund (defined in policy manual)
5. Transportation Fund (defined in policy manual)
6. Memorial Fund (defined in policy manual)
7. Nurture & Education Fund (defined in policy manual)
8. Young Adult/Campus Ministry Fund (defined in policy manual)
9. Youth Ministry Fund (defined in policy manual)
10. LODO Ministry Fund (defined in policy manual)
11. New Floor Fund (received donation for our new floor project)

Current total market value of these eleven investment funds is \$638,291. However, most of these funds are designated for special projects, such as building repair or scholarships. Only the Endowment Fund will provide regular income to offset the costs of our Annual Budget; and only AFTER it reaches a balance of \$500,000. When it does, we will be able to draw 5% of the balance annually to offset our Annual Budget.

Columbia United Church of Christ

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Music Coordinator: Mike Pierson mike.pierson.1969@gmail.com
Organist/Accompanist: Steve Jannetti steve.jannetti@yahoo.com
LODO Director: Sara Koenig lodo.sara.koenig@gmail.com
Custodian: Caleb Berry calebprenticeberry@gmail.com
Pastor Emeritus: Rev. Fred Brandenburg

TODAY IN WORSHIP:

Worship Leader: Lena Muench
Song Leader: Sarah Young
Ushers: Phillip Neale & Christine Staelens
Greeters: Sue Ann Schaefer
Technology: Josh Muench & Ted Dachroeden
Council Stewards: Lena Muench & Mary Lorber



Online Giving

NEXT SUNDAY IN WORSHIP:

Worship Leader: Tricia Soncasie
Song Leader: Mike Pierson
Ushers: Brenda & John Muench
Greeters: Tricia Price & Norah Schultz
Technology: Carissa Graves & John Graves
Council Stewards: Ted Dachroeden & Edie Diel

COLUMBIA UCC CHURCH COUNCIL

Moderator: Jerry Kiesling rollzierp50@gmail.com
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Nurture & Education: Lena Muench cfg323@yahoo.com
Outreach & Advocacy: Mahree Skala skalamahree@yahoo.com
Worship & Music: Edie Diel edie@thedandegroup.com
Pastor: Rev. Rick Oberle rick@columbiaucc.com

NURSERY CARE is available for children in kindergarten and younger in the educational wing. If you need help finding it, ask an usher!

BOOK STUDY - 3/19

Our last book study session for “Meet Me Where I Am” will be this Thursday, 3/19 at 6:30 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall. We have had a very rich discussion thus far; come join us for more conversation!

AED TRAINING - 3/22

You may know that we have an AED here at CUCC; but do you know how to operate it? The more who know the better– it could save a life! Stick around after worship on 3/22 to learn the basics about CPR, AED machines, etc.

CUCC SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATIONS DUE - 4/1

CUCC Scholarship applications for the 2026-2027 school year are due 4/1. Applications are available in the church office. Talk to Pastor Rick, Lena Muench, or Corinne Remika to receive one.

FOOD BANK FUN - 3/24

Our next fun shift at the Food Bank will be 3/24. Sign up using the link that was in the Friday email, or talk to Mahree Skala.

HOLY WEEK AT CUCC

Holy Week is almost upon us! We will begin with Sunday School on Palm Sunday (3/29) and special Palm Sunday activities. Good Friday (4/3) worship will be in the Sanctuary at 7:00 p.m. with special readings and music. Easter Sunrise worship will be at 6:30 a.m. outside in the Shelter House, followed by breakfast. Our Easter Egg hunt and activities will begin at 9:00 a.m. and Celebration Worship at 10:30. Come join us!

THIS WEEK'S CALENDAR

Sun	3/15	Bible Study/Sunday School	9:00 a.m.
		Fellowship	10:00 a.m.
		Worship (in person and livestream)	10:30 a.m.
		Stewardship Lunch	12:00 p.m.
Mon	3/16	Loaves and Fishes	4:30 p.m.
		LODO Ministry Team Meeting	6:00 p.m.
		Scouting America	7:00 p.m.
Tue	3/17	Staff Meeting	10:00 a.m.
		Quilters	10:00 a.m.
		Pause to Color	1:00 p.m.
		Church Council Meeting	6:30 p.m.
Wed	3/18	Pastor Rick leads worship at The Bluffs	10:00 a.m.
		Chapel Ringers/Celebration Singers	6:00/7:00 p.m.
		Confirmation Class	7:15 p.m.
Thu	3/19	Book Study- “Meet Me Where I Am”	6:30 p.m.
Sun	3/22	Bible Study/Sunday School	9:00 a.m.
		Fellowship	10:00 a.m.
		Worship (in person and livestream)	10:30 a.m.
		AED Training	12:00 p.m.

Columbia UCC Prayer List

Please keep in your prayers this week . . .

The Family of Harry Besleme... on their loss

Michael Butterworth... recovering from surgery

Christopher Tennill... on deployment in Middle East

Fred Wilke (Alethea's Father)... more health issues

Evie Marcks... health issues

Jonathon Schultz... recovering from ankle surgery

Steve Price... recovering from infection and pneumonia

Students and staff at Alpha Hart Lewis Elementary . . . our Partner in Education

All those whose lives are affected by state sanctioned terrorism including:

Owen Ramsingh and family,

The family of Renee Good, The family of Alex Pretti,

Jack and Claudia (Pastor Rick's friends), and so many others

Our US Military... deployed in the Middle East

Health Issues:

Jeff Kies, Barry Kirchhoff, Glenn Duermeyer,

Theresa Westgate (Tracie Huffman's Grandmother)

Julie Roper (Alexandra's Mother), Karleen Martindale (Kasper's Mother),

Mark & Connie Fairley, Cody Kile, Dr. Ryan Link; Peri Ann Gulerson;

Julia Marsh (Donna Marsh's Daughter), Jon & Kelly Lund (Edie's friends)

Martha (friend of the Veteto family), Ken (Adam Veteto's Cousin);

Marilyn Coronado & Beverly Wilcox (Corinne Remeika's friends)

Challenges in Life:

Sheila, The Koerkenmeier & Malicoat Families, Kieran Armstrong

Living in Care Facilities:

Gary Ehrhardt, Vernie Blank

Living in Independent Living Facilities:

Don Privitt, Sue Beckman, Linda Evans, Walter & Patty Schroeder

Serving us in the military:

Christopher Tennill, Dane Wilson, Aaron Dachroeden

Pregnancies in our Church Family:

Shelby Oberle & Ryan Furney; Chloe & Mark Eveler

*If you are interested in joining our Prayer Team or have a prayer request
for our team to lift up please contact*

Melba Shaffer (573) 474-2997 melbamaes@gmail.com

Or Tricia Soncasie (314) 374-7477 tsoncasie@aol.com

John 9:1-41

1 As he walked along, he saw a man blind from birth. 2 His disciples asked him, “Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?”

3 Jesus answered, “Neither this man nor his parents sinned; he was born blind so that God’s works might be revealed in him.

4 We must work the works of him who sent me while it is day; night is coming, when no one can work. 5 As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world.”

6 When he had said this, he spat on the ground and made mud with the saliva and spread the mud on the man’s eyes,

7 saying to him, “Go, wash in the pool of Siloam” (which means Sent). Then he went and washed and came back able to see.

8 The neighbors and those who had seen him before as a beggar began to ask, “Is this not the man who used to sit and beg?”

9 Some were saying, “It is he.” Others were saying, “No, but it is someone like him.” He kept saying, “I am he.”

10 But they kept asking him, “Then how were your eyes opened?”

11 He answered, “The man called Jesus made mud, spread it on my eyes, and said to me, ‘Go to Siloam and wash.’ Then I went and washed and received my sight.”

12 They said to him, “Where is he?” He said, “I do not know.” 13 They brought to the Pharisees the man who had formerly been blind.

14 Now it was a Sabbath day when Jesus made the mud and opened his eyes.

15 Then the Pharisees also began to ask him how he had received his sight. He said to them, “He put mud on my eyes. Then I washed, and now I see.”

16 Some of the Pharisees said, “This man is not from God, for he does not observe the Sabbath.” Others said, “How can a man who is a sinner perform such signs?” And they were divided.

17 So they said again to the blind man, “What do you say about him? It was your eyes he opened.” He said, “He is a prophet.”

18 The Jews did not believe that he had been blind and had received his

sight until they called the parents of the man who had received his sight
19 and asked them, “Is this your son, who you say was born blind? How
then does he now see?”

20 His parents answered, “We know that this is our son and that he was
born blind,

21 but we do not know how it is that now he sees, nor do we know who
opened his eyes. Ask him; he is of age. He will speak for himself.”

22 His parents said this because they were afraid of the Jews, for the Jews
had already agreed that anyone who confessed Jesus to be the Messiah
would be put out of the synagogue.

23 Therefore his parents said, “He is of age; ask him.”

24 So for the second time they called the man who had been blind, and they
said to him, “Give glory to God! We know that this man is a sinner.”

25 He answered, “I do not know whether he is a sinner. One thing I do
know, that though I was blind, now I see.”

26 They said to him, “What did he do to you? How did he open your eyes?”

27 He answered them, “I have told you already, and you would not listen.
Why do you want to hear it again? Do you also want to become his
disciples?”

28 Then they reviled him, saying, “You are his disciple, but we are disciples
of Moses.

29 We know that God has spoken to Moses, but as for this man, we do not
know where he comes from.”

30 The man answered, “Here is an astonishing thing! You do not know
where he comes from, yet he opened my eyes.

31 We know that God does not listen to sinners, but he does listen to one
who worships him and obeys his will.

32 Never since the world began has it been heard that anyone opened the
eyes of a person born blind. 33 If this man were not from God, he could do
nothing.”

34 They answered him, “You were born entirely in sins, and are you trying
to teach us?” And they drove him out.

35 Jesus heard that they had driven him out, and when he found him he

said, “Do you believe in the Son of Man?”

36 He answered, “And who is he, sir? Tell me, so that I may believe in him.”

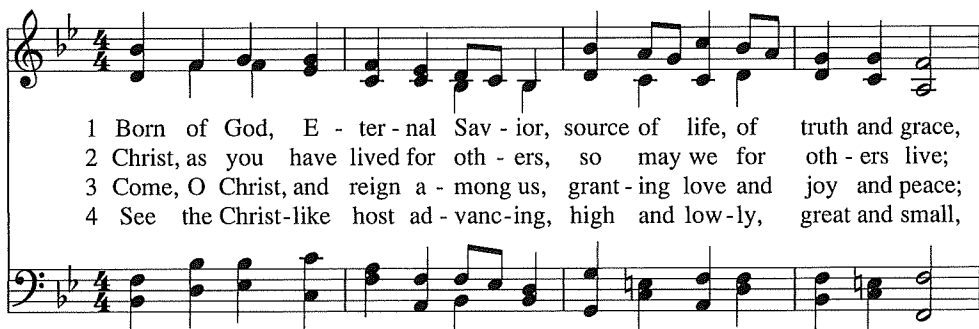
37 Jesus said to him, “You have seen him, and the one speaking with you is he.”

38 He said, “Lord, I believe.” And he worshiped him.

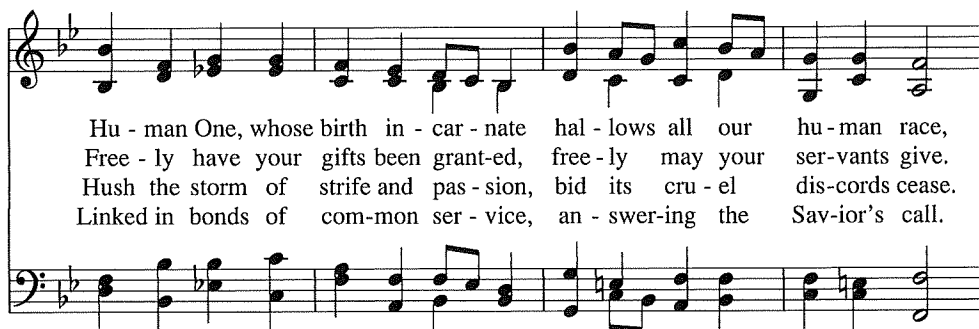
39 Jesus said, “I came into this world for judgment, so that those who do not see may see and those who do see may become blind.”

40 Some of the Pharisees who were with him heard this and said to him, “Surely we are not blind, are we?”

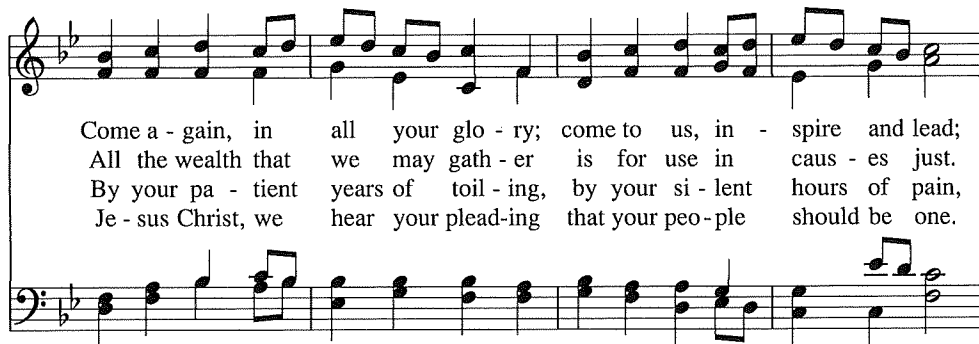
41 Jesus said to them, “If you were blind, you would not have sin. But now that you say, ‘We see,’ your sin remains.

*1 Pet. 4:8-11; John 17:11; Matt. 6:10**Somerset T. C. Lowry, 1893; alt.*


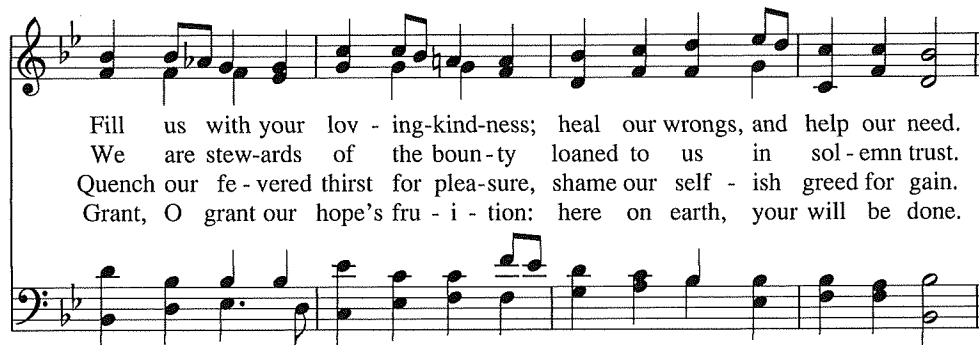
1 Born of God, E - ter - nal Sav - ior, source of life, of truth and grace,
 2 Christ, as you have lived for oth - ers, so may we for oth - ers live;
 3 Come, O Christ, and reign a - mong us, grant - ing love and joy and peace;
 4 See the Christ-like host ad - vanc - ing, high and low - ly, great and small,



Hu - man One, whose birth in - car - nate hal - lows all our hu - man race,
 Free - ly have your gifts been grant - ed, free - ly may your ser - vants give.
 Hush the storm of strife and pas - sion, bid its cru - el dis - cords cease.
 Linked in bonds of com - mon ser - vice, an - swer - ing the Sav - ior's call.



Come a - gain, in all your glo - ry; come to us, in - spire and lead;
 All the wealth that we may gath - er is for use in caus - es just.
 By your pa - tient years of toil - ing, by your si - lent hours of pain,
 Je - sus Christ, we hear your plead - ing that your peo - ple should be one.



Fill us with your lov - ing-kind-ness; heal our wrongs, and help our need.
 We are stew - ards of the boun - ty loaned to us in sol - emn trust.
 Quench our fe - vered thirst for plea - sure, shame our self - ish greed for gain.
 Grant, O grant our hope's fru - i - tion: here on earth, your will be done.

Born in Dublin, Ireland, Somerset T. C. Lowry was a priest of the Church of England and author of several prose and poetic works. This hymn, originally titled "For Unity," was written while he served in North Holmwood, Surrey.

Tune: WEISSE FLAGGEN 8.7.8.7.D.
 Tochter Zion, Cologne, 1741
 Alternate tune: BEECHER

In the Bulb There Is a Flower

Natalie Sleeth, 1985

Unison

1 In the bulb there is a flow - er; in the seed, an ap - ple tree;
 2 There's a song in ev - ery si - lence, seek - ing word and mel - o - dy;
 3 In our end is our be - gin - ning; in our time, in - fin - i - ty;

in co - coons, a hid - den prom - ise: but - ter - flies will soon be free!
 there's a dawn for ev - ery dark - ness, bring - ing hope to you and me.
 in our doubt there is be - liev - ing; in our life, e - ter - ni - ty.

In the cold and snow of win - ter there's a spring that waits to be,
 From the past will come the fu - ture; what it holds, a mys - ter - y,
 In our death, a res - ur - rec - tion; at the last, a vic - to - ry,

un - re - vealed un - til its sea - son, some - thing God a - lone can see.
 un - re - vealed un - til its sea - son, some - thing God a - lone can see.
 un - re - vealed un - til its sea - son, some - thing God a - lone can see.

Natalie Sleeth composed her "Hymn of Promise" first as a choral anthem and then adapted it to this version for congregational singing. It was dedicated to her husband, Ronald Sleeth, who died shortly after she completed it.

Tune: PROMISE 8.7.8.7.D.
 Natalie Sleeth, 1985

Take My Life, God, Let It Be

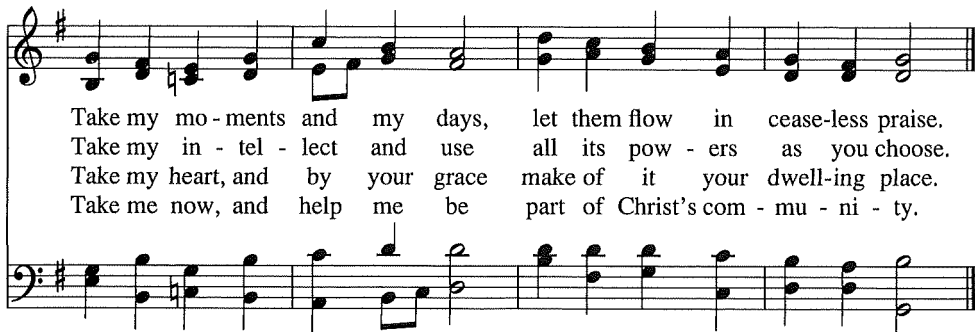
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Frances R. Havergal, 1874; alt.

Rom. 12:1



1 Take my life, God, let it be con - se - crat - ed faith - ful - ly.
2 Take my spir - it, let it move at the im - pulse of your love.
3 Take my will; your will be done! Make your will and mine be one.
4 Take my love and help it grow; let my lov - ing ov - er - flow.



Take my mo - ments and my days, let them flow in cease - less praise.
Take my in - tel - lect and use all its pow - ers as you choose.
Take my heart, and by your grace make of it your dwell - ing place.
Take me now, and help me be part of Christ's com - mu - ni - ty.

Frances R. Havergal wrote her hymn following a visit to Areley House in Worcestershire, England. Among the ten persons at the house were "some unconverted . . . some converted but not rejoicing." Before she left, "everyone had got a blessing."

Tune: VIENNA 7.7.7.7.

Justin H. Knecht, 1797

Alternate tune: HENDON