

463 How Firm a Foundation

1 How firm a foun - da - tion, ye saints of the Lord,
 2 "Fear not, I am with thee, O be not dis - mayed,
 3 "When through the deep wa - ters I call thee to go,
 4 "When through fi - ery tri - als thy path - way shall lie,
 5 "The soul that on Je - sus hath leaned for re - pose,

is laid for your faith in God's ex - cel - lent Word!
 for I am thy God, and will still give thee aid;
 the riv - ers of sor - row shall not o - ver - flow;
 my grace, all suf - fi - cient, shall be thy sup - ply;
 I will not, I will not de - sert to its foes;

What more can be said than to you God hath said,
 I'll strength - en thee, help thee, and cause thee to stand,
 for I will be near thee, thy trou - bles to bless,
 the flame shall not hurt thee; I on - ly de - sign
 that soul, though all hell should en - deav - or to shake,

to you who for ref - uge to Je - sus have fled?
 up - held by my righ - teous, om - nip - o - tent hand.
 and sanc - ti - fy to thee thy deep - est dis - tress.
 thy dross to con - sume, and thy gold to re - fine.
 I'll nev - er, no, nev - er, no, nev - er for - sake."

It seems odd now to think of singing this text to ADESTE FIDELES, but mainline churches did so well into the 20th century because of a cultural bias against shape note music. The vigor of the present tune seems especially right for the final line's reference to Hebrews 13:5.

FORGIVENESS

447

We Are Forgiven

G Am D7 Gsus G C

We are for - giv - en. We are for - giv - en. Thanks be to

G Am7 Dsus D G Am

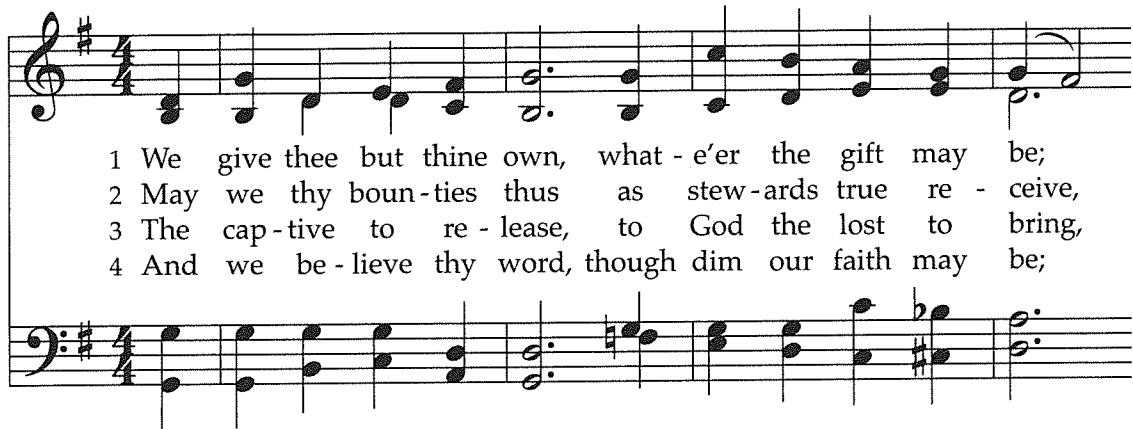
God. Thanks be to God. We are for - giv - en.

D7 Gsus G C G Am7 D G

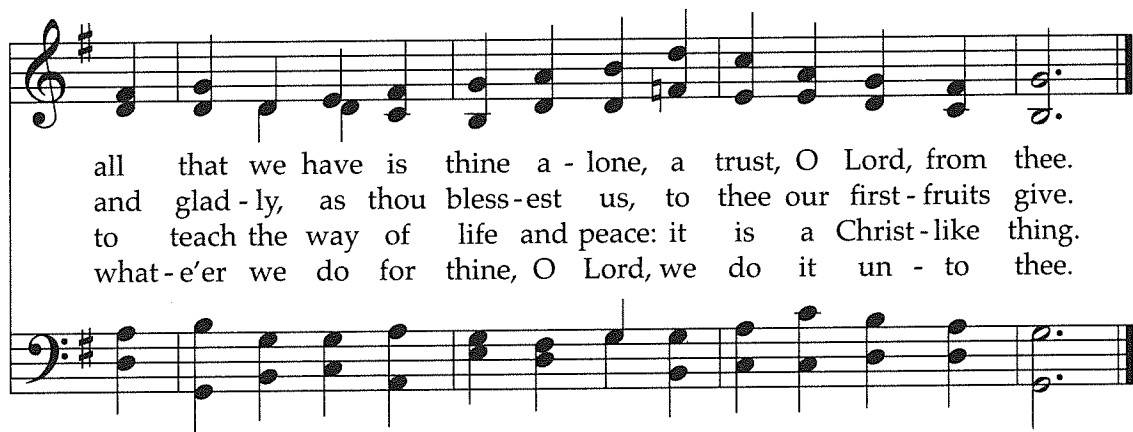
We are for - giv - en. Thanks be to God. Thanks be to God.

To sing, rather than simply say, a response to the Declaration of Forgiveness has the effect of making the moment both more affirmative and more corporate. The musical repetition of the two sentences also strengthens awareness of what it means to be assured of God's pardon.

We Give Thee but Thine Own 708



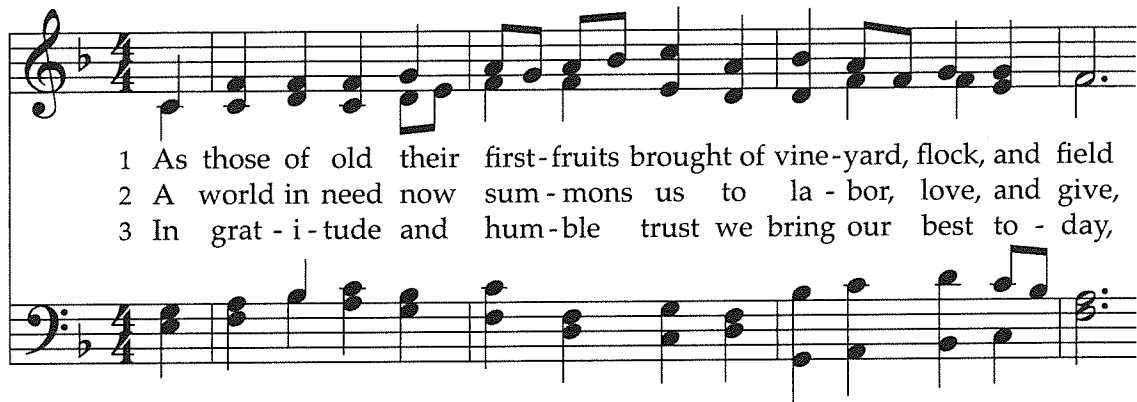
1 We give thee but thine own, what - e'er the gift may be;
 2 May we thy boun-ties thus as stew-ards true re - ceive,
 3 The cap-tive to re - lease, to God the lost to bring,
 4 And we be - lieve thy word, though dim our faith may be;



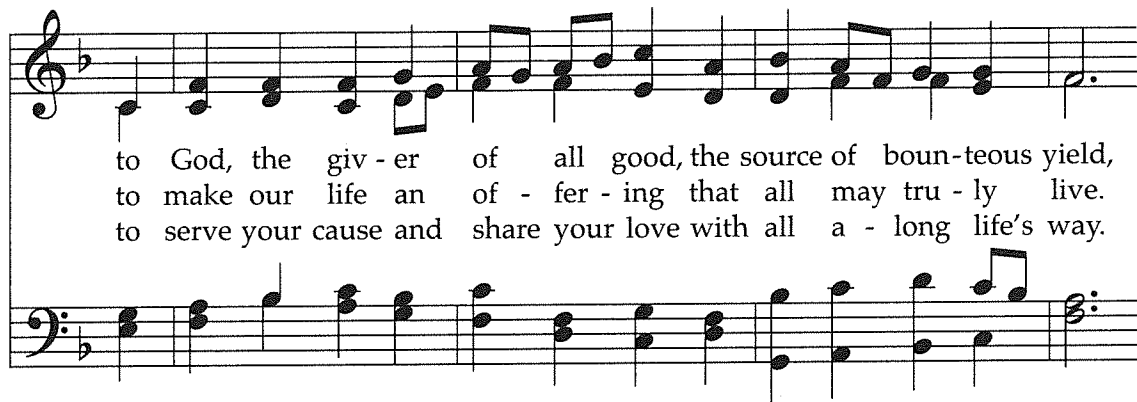
all that we have is thine a - lone, a trust, O Lord, from thee.
 and glad - ly, as thou bless - est us, to thee our first - fruits give.
 to teach the way of life and peace: it is a Christ - like thing.
 what - e'er we do for thine, O Lord, we do it un - to thee.

Each successive stanza here expands the implications of the familiar affirmation of the first one. Much more than a concern with money, stewardship shapes our relationship with God and with other people. Despite this tune's name, no source has been found in Schumann's works.

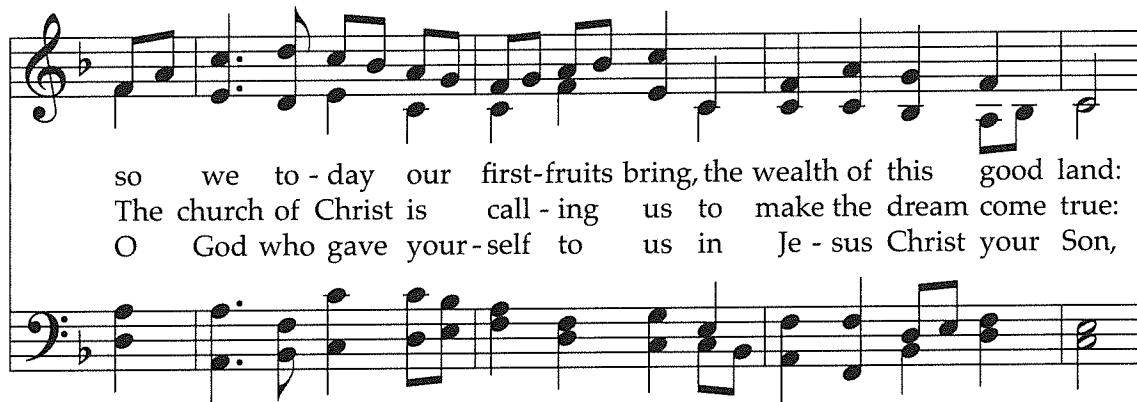
As Those of Old Their Firstfruits Brought 712



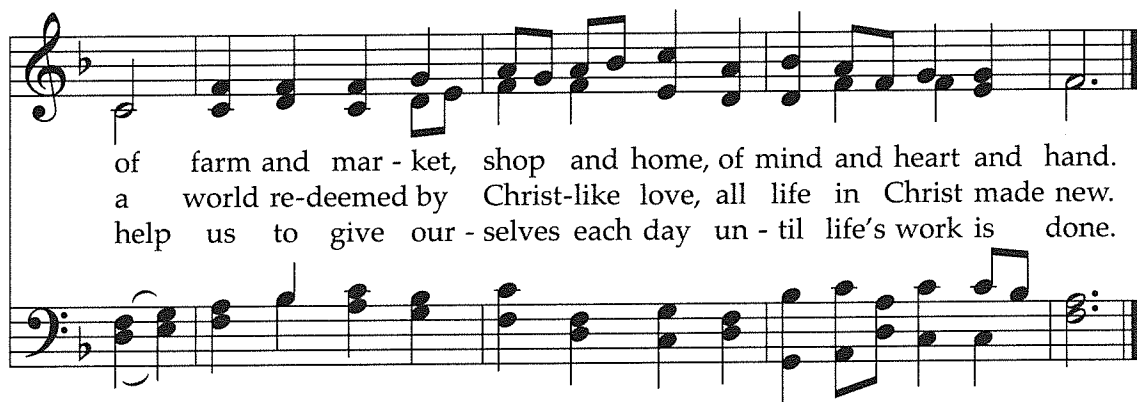
1 As those of old their first-fruits brought of vine-yard, flock, and field
 2 A world in need now sum-mons us to la-bor, love, and give,
 3 In grat-i-tude and hum-ble trust we bring our best to-day,



to God, the giv-er of all good, the source of boun-teous yield,
 to make our life an of-fer-ing that all may tru-ly live.
 to serve your cause and share your love with all a-long life's way.



so we to-day our first-fruits bring, the wealth of this good land:
 The church of Christ is call-ing us to make the dream come true:
 O God who gave your-self to us in Je-sus Christ your Son,



of farm and mar-ket, shop and home, of mind and heart and hand.
 a world re-deemed by Christ-like love, all life in Christ made new.
 help us to give our-selves each day un-til life's work is done.

This text by a Presbyterian pastor in California expresses the conviction that being a good steward is an essential part of the Christian life, for self-giving is God's own nature. The tune is named for the village in Surrey where the arranger collected this tune in 1903.