

SONGS FOR THE GREAT VIGIL OF EASTER

Over the last few years I've been working along on a project of preparing songs responding to the readings from the Hebrew scriptures that are read at the Vigil of Easter in Episcopal, Lutheran, and other liturgical churches.

Generally I've started with a text from the eighteenth century and reworked the text to reflect my take on the reading. You'll find in my final texts a preference for inclusive language and progressive theology, as well as considerable respect for the stories themselves.

I've set these texts to folk tunes or to tunes from the Sacred Harp tradition, because these are familiar tunes that can be sung with a melody-only accompaniment such as might be provided by a flute or violin. Most of the tunes are in the current Episcopal or ELCA Lutheran hymnals if a full score is wanted.

If you use one of these as part of your Vigil, I'd be thrilled to hear about it - you can always reach me at the email address below. I'm glad to help with formatting and image management.

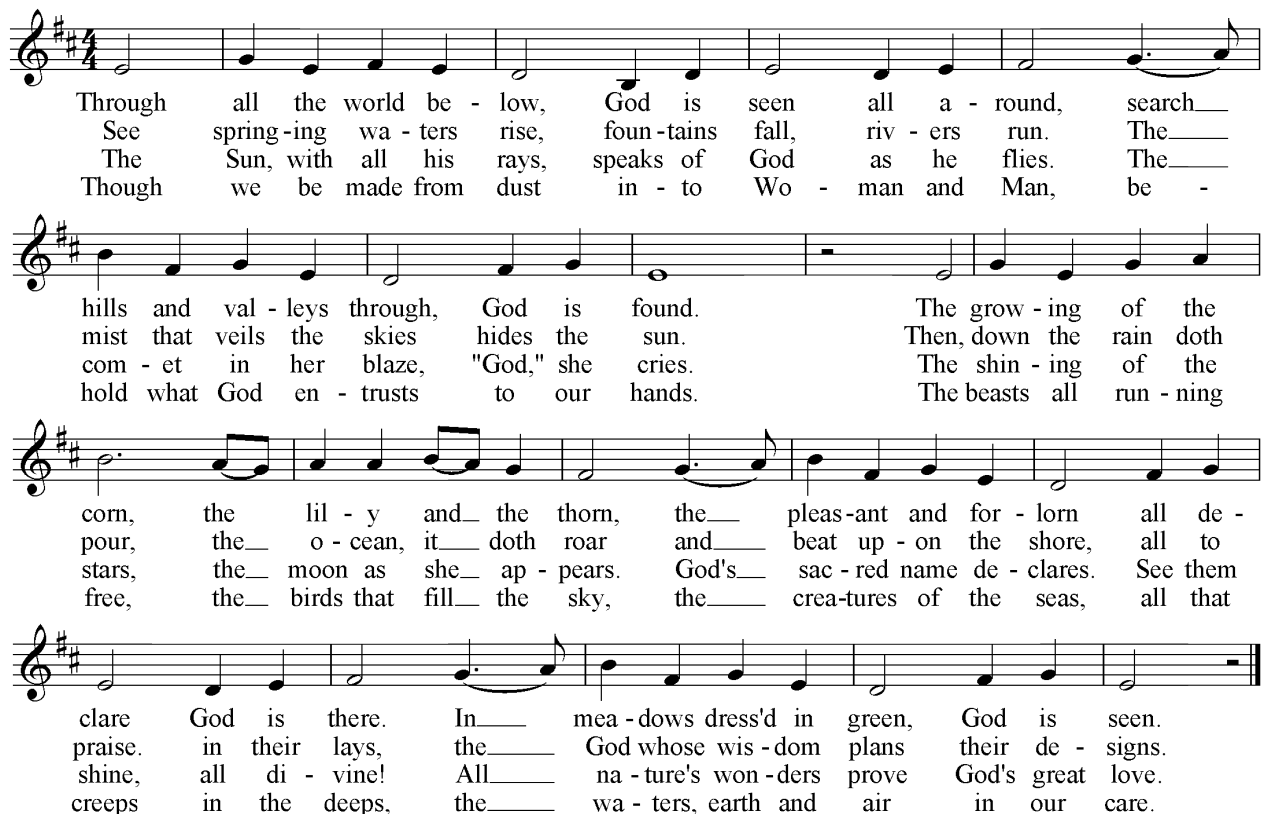
May you keep the Feast with joy –

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A song to follow the Creation reading – because this is not a Hymnal tune, a full score is on the next page.



Through all the world be - low, God is seen all a - round, search
See spring - ing wa - ters rise, foun - tains fall, riv - ers run. The
The Sun, with all his rays, speaks of God as he flies. The
Though we be made from dust in - to Wo - man and Man, be -

hills and val - leys through, God is found. The grow - ing of the
mist that veils the skies hides the sun. Then, down the rain doth
com - et in her blaze, "God," she cries. The shin - ing of the
hold what God en - trusts to our hands. The beasts all run - ning

corn, the lil - y and the thorn, the pleas - ant and for - lorn all de -
pour, the o - cean, it doth roar and beat up - on the shore, all to
stars, the moon as she ap - pears. God's sac - red name de - clares. See them
free, the birds that fill the sky, the crea - tures of the seas, all that

clare God is there. In me - a - dows dress'd in green, God is seen.
praise. in their lays, the God whose wis - dom plans their de - signs.
shine, all di - vine! All na - ture's won - ders prove God's great love.
creeps in the deeps, the wa - ters, earth and air in our care.

WORDS: Verses 1-3 SOUTHERN HARMONY #50, alt. P. G. Smith, Verse 4, P. G. Smith (b. 1948).

May follow the Creation reading at the Great Vigil Of Easter.

TUNE: CAPTAIN KIDD, SOUTHERN HARMONY #50

A song to follow the Creation reading – full score.

Through all the world be - low, God is seen all a - round, search hills and val-leys
See spring-ing wa - ters rise, foun-tains flow, riv - ers run. The__ mist that veils the
The Sun, with all his rays, speaks of God as he flies. The__ com - et in her
Though we be made from dust in - to Wo - man and Man, be - hold what God en -

through, God is found. The grow - ing of the corn, the lil - y and_ the
skies hides the sun. Then, down the rain doth pour, the_ o - cean it__ doth
blaze, "God," she cries. The shin - ing of the stars, the moon as she_ ap -
trusts to our hands. The beasts all run-ning free, the_ birds that fill_ the

thorn, the__ pleas - ant and for - lorn all de - clare God is
roar and__ beat up - on the shore, all to praise in their
pears, God's__ sac - red name de - clare. See them shine, all di -
sky, the__ crea - tures of the seas, all that creeps in the

there. In__ mea - dows dress'd in green, God is seen.
lays the__ God whose wis - dom plans their de - signs.
vine! All__ na - ture's mer - cies prove God's great love.
deeps, the__ wa - ters, earth and air in our care.

WORDS: Verses 1-3 SOUTHERN HARMONY #50, alt. P. G. Smith, Verse 4, P. G. Smith (b. 1948).
May follow the Creation reading at the Great Vigil Of Easter.
TUNE: CAPTAIN KIDD, SOUTHERN HARMONY #50

A song to follow the Noah reading –

God ov - ver wear - y Zi - on's hills the rain - bow sign hath
 "Can kind - ly moth - er e'er for - get the in - fant of her
 "Now lay a - side thy need - less fears, sus - pi - cions and com -

thrown. "With sol - emn oath I bind my love to
 womb, and midst a thou - sand bus - y thoughts, her
 plaints. I am thy God, and I shall not grow

show - er mer - cy down. So let thine in - ward
 nurs - ling find no room? Yet," saith the Lord, "Though
 wear - y of my saints. So let thine in - ward

joys a - rise and burst in - to a song! Let
 Na - ture change, and moth - ers heed - less prove, my
 joys a - rise and burst in - to a song! Let

stead - fast love in - spire thy heart, thanks - giv - ings tune thy tongue."
 peo - ple rest up - on the breast of my e - ter - nal love."
 stead - fast love in - spire thy heart, thanks - giv - ings tune thy tongue."

Words: Isaac Watts (1674-1748), alt. P. G. Smith (b. 1948).
 Music: Forest Green, English melody. An arrangement by Ralph Vaughan Williams for congregational singing may be found in *Hymnal 1982*, # 78.

A song to follow the reading concerning the Testing of Abraham –



Some test that Ab - r'ham had to take? Some point God had to prove?
Wat - er and earth and fire and air, knit up in Sa-ra's womb,



How can this bear the name of grace, or be the work of Love?
greet-ed with joy - ful thanks at birth; what we feel here for him



Stand here__ at Mount Mor-i - ah's feet, with fire - pot and knife.
de - mands for ev' - ry hu-man child our gen - 'rous, lov-ing care.



Look down__ at I - saac's wea - ry__ face.
Un - til__ we share these mer - cies well,



How can we take his life?
the fire and knife are here.

Words: Pamela Grenfell Smith (1948). Copying for local nonprofit use is permitted and encouraged.
Tune: THIRD MODE MELODY, Thomas Tallis (1505-1585)

A song to follow reading concerning the Valley of Dry Bones –



Sin spreads its tro - phies on the ground and
And can these si - lent corp - ses live? And
If your bright Spi - rit sends its breath, life
Yours is the power to raise these bones. Your



scat - ters grief and sor - row round. Now send your peo - ple
can these per - ished bones re - vive? You chal - lenge us to
springs through - out the realms of death, dry bones o - bey your
Word can change our hearts of stone! Yours is the cour - age



here we cry, the grace and strength to pro - phe - sy!
preach, O Lord, and trust the pow - er of your Word.
pow'r - ful voice, they stand, they wak - en, they re - joice.
we must seek to look up - on these wastes and speak.

Words: Philip Doddridge (1702-1751); alt. & verse four Pamela Grenfell Smith (1948).
Copying for local nonprofit use is permitted and encouraged.
Tune: Distress, W. Walker, Southern Harmony, 1835.