



First Sunday in Lent

Open and Affirming Covenant

Payson Park Church

We are Growing with God, for the Good of the World

Sunday, March 9, 2025 10:30am

Congregational - United Church of Christ

365 Belmont Street, Belmont, Massachusetts 02478

www.paysonpark.org 617/484-1542

Serving Watertown, Waltham, Belmont, Arlington, Cambridge, and beyond

Gathering for Worship

*We are a Community of
DOUBTERS, SEEKERS, & BELIEVERS
Pursuing HOPE in our world.*

Prepare for Worship

Zoom participants - as you check in, practice using your Mute Button, and finding your Chat Box.

Prelude

“Passacaille”

J.F.K. Fischer (1656-1746)

Greeting

Welcome to all listening in or watching, whether near or far away.

We are growing with God. **For the Good of the World.**
For the Good of the World. **We are growing with God.**

Hymn

“My Faith it is an Oaken Staff”
Music and Words printed below

led by our choir

Call to Worship

led by Jeff Cronin

Leader: Our Refuge calls to us, to seek shelter and safety in God.

People: **We are safe in the arms of the Lord.**

Leader: God has guided our steps to this moment, over ankle-breaking stones and poisonous asps.

People: **The Lord has protected and delivered us.**

Leader: Let us come together now as a people, joining our hearts to the God of the Long Journey, who walks with us.

People: **Lord, give us the spiritual food that we need, and quench our hearts for the road ahead. Amen.**

Confession and Silent Prayer

based on the Daily Examen

led by Rachel Steely

In the company of each other and in the presence of God, we now take a moment together as a community, to open up ourselves to change, renewal, and preparation:

- We start with acknowledging the grace that enfolds our lives, and giving thanks for it. *(pause)*
- We then reflect upon our lives this past week, and consider: What is it that we are holding back? Holding onto? Resisting? What are we distracting or protecting ourselves from? Where might fear or anger be impacting our decisions? What or who are we avoiding? With whom do we need to make things right? *(pause)*
- Each of us now are invited to ask God for the courage to face ourselves, and to ask for something that we need to live more fully into God’s Reign. *(silent prayer)*

Assurance of Grace

led by Josh Lunde-Whitler, YCOM

Leader: Receive now God’s unyielding, relentless love for you, by which “all manner of things shall be well” (Julian of Norwich). We cannot avoid the sorrows, fears, and pains of life, and trying to avoid them often leads to greater pain. But God walks with us, guiding us through flames that can also refine and temper us in ways we cannot even foresee – revealing our inner strength, and increasing our awareness that we are, in fact, not God – and this is indeed Good News.

People: **Spirit of Renewal, guide our steps, and open our hearts during this Lenten season, to be fashioned into your people of peace and hope. Amen.**

Receiving God's Word

Scripture

Luke 4: 1-13 NRSV

read by David Courchene

Message

“The Story of the Three Trials”

given by Josh Lunde-Whitler

Youth & Community Outreach Minister

Prayers of the People

led by the Rev. Bill Ragan, Ministerial Associate

People will be invited to say a one sentence prayer if you desire.

If in-person, please raise your hand. If on Zoom, please raise your hand or type in the Chat box.

Candles Prayer

People will be invited to come forward and light a candle, and speak a name, a prayer request, or be in silence. We will also light a candle for each prayer offered online.

The Lord's Prayer

Leader: God, our Creator Parent, Loving Father, Caring Mother, we pray to you, saying-

People: **Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come; thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever. Amen.**

Peace

May the peace of Christ be with you. **And also with you.**

Announcements

Open and Affirming Covenant

Payson Park Church, United Church of Christ

Belmont, Massachusetts

adopted March 6, 2022

All are invited to read the covenant in unison:

"God is love, and those who abide in love abide in God, and God abides in them." (1 John 4:16)

Responding faithfully and joyfully to God's unconditional love made known to us in Jesus Christ, we at Payson Park Church, United Church of Christ, actively commit ourselves to be an Open and Affirming community.

God calls us to a ministry of reconciliation and love, especially with those who have known the pain of discrimination. We therefore welcome and affirm people of every race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, age, faith background, ability, and economic circumstance to join us in our faith journey. We celebrate God's creativity and the diversity of our gifts. Following Jesus' example, who turned no one away, we pledge ourselves to the ongoing work for justice and inclusion in our congregation and in the world.

Trusting in God's grace and seeking guidance from the Holy Spirit, we continue to deepen in faith, worship, service, and love, growing with God for the good of the world. We invite into the full life, ministry, and sacraments of the church all those whom God sends us.

"Love always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres. Love never fails."

(1 Corinthians 13:7-8)

Responding to God's Grace

Call to Generosity & Prayer

led by the Rev. Bill Ragan, Ministerial Associate

- www.PaysonPark.org to support the ministry of Payson Park Church
- Deacon's Fund, an emergency fund to help those in need
- Belmont-Watertown Welcome Circle – help resettle Ukrainian refugees locally
- Monika Foundation - help resettle Haitian refugees
- UCC Global H.O.P.E. - (Disaster Response to California Wildfires)

Choir Anthem

“A Lenten Walk”

trad. Spiritual, arr. by Hal Hopson (1933-)

Doxology

**Praise God from whom all blessings flow;
Praise God all creatures here below.
Praise God above, ye heavenly host;
Creator, Christ and Holy Ghost.**

Sending

Hymn

“Guide My Feet”

led by our choir

Music & Words printed below

Benediction

Postlude

“Take Five”

P. Desmond (1924-1977)



Fellowship after Worship

Jane Marshall and Rob Baxter

We thank our hosts this Sunday. Please check the schedule posted in the Kitchen & outside the Office. Please look for your spot. Let Lynda know at Office@PaysonPark.org if you need to update your assigned Fellowship Hosting date. Thank you!

Payson Park Church – Congregational - United Church of Christ –

365 Belmont Street

Office@paysonpark.org

Leah Kosch, Music Director

Pei-Chun Lin, Community Music Dir:

Lynda Johnson, PPC Office Manager:

Josh Lunde-Whitler, YCOM:

Rev. Bill Ragan, Ministerial Associate:

Pastor Eric Wefald:

AMusicDirector@paysonpark.org

CommunityMusicDir@PaysonPark.org

Office@paysonpark.org

YCOM@paysonpark.org

MinAssoc@paysonpark.org

PastorEric@paysonpark.org



**We Welcome back
Megan Henderson
as our guest
Adult Music Director!**

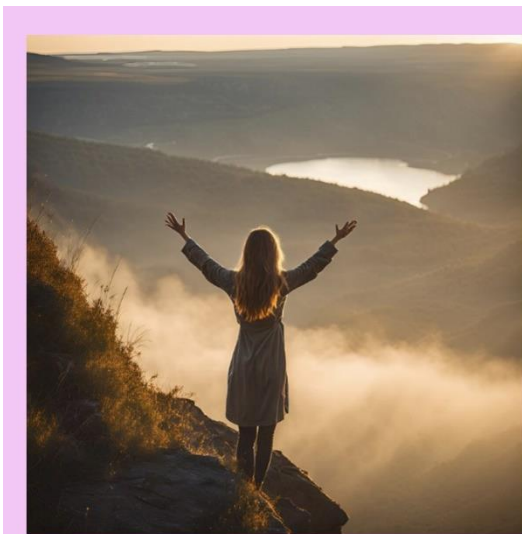
Maundy Thursday
7:30pm
April 17th at
Plymouth

Good Friday
7:30pm
April 18th
Payson Park



Upcoming Dates

- Fri Mar 7 5:00 pm Children’s Choir – *Each Week*
- 6pm *First Friday*. 30 min service with Children’s Choir. 6:30pm Pizza dinner for all.
- Sun Mar 9 9am TLC – Theology, Literature, & Coffee
- Thu Mar 13 10am Morning Bible Study – *We take a break. Resumes March 20th*
- Fri Mar 14 5:00 pm Children’s Choir – *Each Week*
- Sat Mar 15 Backyard Youth Theatre presents “*Nursery Crimes*” 10am and 3pm
- Sat Mar 15 Every two weeks we make sandwiches for The Outdoor Church.
Please contact [Pam Curtis](mailto:pambcurtis@gmail.com) if you can help. pambcurtis@gmail.com
- Sun Mar 16 Rev Bill Ragan Ministerial Associate preaching
- Tue Mar 25 We prepare home-cooked meals for the hungry of Bristol Lodge, Waltham.
Please contact [Cynthia Lasker](mailto:laskercynthia@gmail.com) if you can help. laskercynthia@gmail.com
- Fri-Sat Apr 11-12 Cityreach Youth Retreat at common cathedral
- Sun April 13 Palm Sunday – Dramatic Reading of the Passion
- Thu April 17 7:30 pm Maundy Thursday – We will join at Plymouth Congregational Church.
- Fri April 18 7:30 pm Good Friday – Plymouth joins us here at PPC.
- Sun April 20 6:00 am Service Highland Meadow cemetery, combined with Plymouth.
- Sun April 20 10:30am Easter Service. EGGstravaganza for children following worship.



We have published our very own

Lent Home Devotions 2025

*written by the people of Payson Park Church
with drawings from youth & children*

“Do Not Be Afraid”

Please pick up your copy soon.

Join us as we walk together the 40 Days of Lent with these personal daily reflections, with Bible readings of God’s words of hope and courage.
Perfect Love casts out fear.



He Is Not There, by He Qi, used by permission, heqiart.com

Easter

April 20th

10:30 am

Trumpet, Choir, Organ, Easter Flowers

Christ is risen! Alleluia!

All are welcome!

p.s. 6:00 am Easter Sunrise service at Highland Meadows cemetery, with Plymouth Church

Easter Eggstravaganza

April 20th (Following Easter Services) 11:30 - noon

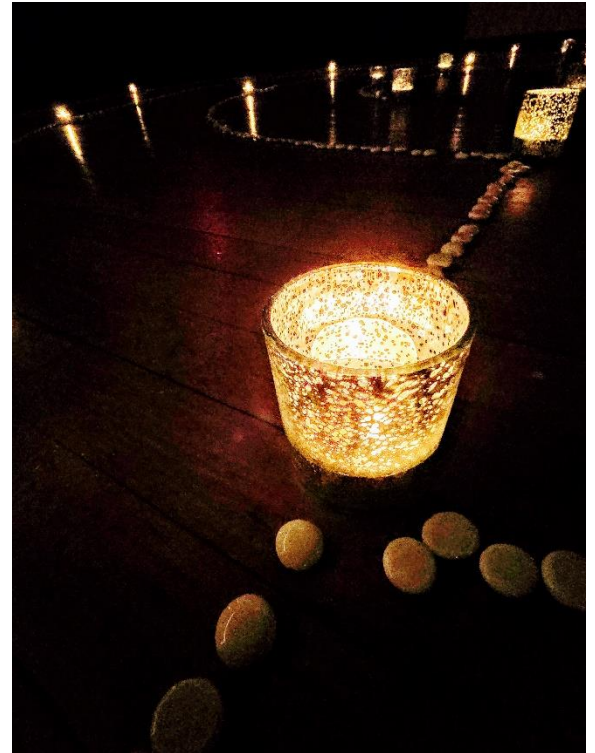
- Egg Hunt
- Food and fun
- Slime and crafts
- Scavenger Hunt
- Support Immigrants
- Chocolate

Ash Wednesday

March 5, 2025

Beginning with Mardi Gras Pancake supper.
Ashes, Communion, Candlelight Labyrinth, Art Station

Thank you to our awesome master chefs Leah and Madeline!





**We celebrate two new
Eagle Scouts!**

Nolan and Thien, of BSA Troop 304, became Eagle Scouts on 3-2-25. We are honored to sponsor this Scout Troop, with Chip Gaysunas as our COR, Charter Organization Representative to the Scouts.



Children's Choir

February 7, 2025
First Friday



Kids' Night Saturday, February 8th, 2025

*Combined children from Plymouth & Payson Park congregations
Making Valentines for the homebound of their churches, plus the Senior Center*

First Fridays



PAYSON PARK CHURCH

COME AND JOIN US!

365 BELMONT STREET, BELMONT

www.PaysonPark.org



6:00 PM COME-AS-YOU-ARE WORSHIP

6:30 PM DINNER FOR FAMILIES

CHILDREN'S CHOIR SINGS!
FAMILY DINNER IS PROVIDED



upcoming dates. . . .

February 7, 2025

March 7, 2025

April 4, 2025

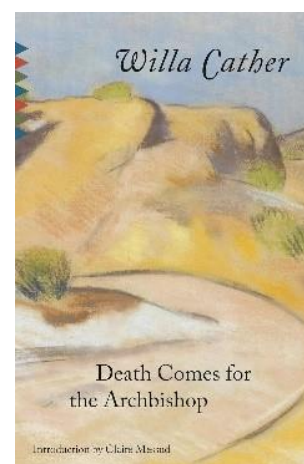
May 2, 2025

June 6, 2025

Theology, Literature and Coffee (TLC) News

TLC continues the discussion of *Death Comes for the Archbishop* by Willa Cather on Sunday, March 9.

For a while now, I have wanted to read Willa Cather, the 1923 Pulitzer Prize winner. *Death Comes for the Archbishop* (1927) promises to offer us much for theological reflection. The narrative is a stylized re-telling of the lives two historical figures of the late 19th century, Jean-Baptiste Lamy and Joseph Projectus Machebeuf, Roman Catholic clergy in New Mexico. Cather offers a literary example of the notion that religious faith is able to develop and maintain strong social bonds in nascent democratic political orders. Her personal religious realignment at the time allowed her to alter her perspective and develop more positive religious characters.



So, get your copy of *Death Comes for the Archbishop* by Willa Cather, and join us on Sunday, March 9th at 9:00 AM

Please feel free to contact Bill Ragan at minassoc@paysonpark.org or on his cell: 484-860-4108 with any questions about this adult education opportunity.



From Missions & Outreach:

Monika Foundation:

HIGH NEED CURRENTLY! We're continuing to support Dieufils and Kerlande, and others from Haiti who are being supported by the Monika Foundation. **Check out the church's [Giving Page and donate!](#)**

Other Refugee Support:

Update on Call to Action: Thanks to people's phone calls and letters, they are doing regular temp checks at Plymouth now !

Supporting Legal Help Immigrant for Immigrants:		Beyond Bond & Legal Defense Fund (BIJAN)		RIAN Center (Madeline C is On Advisory)
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If you have other suggestions, or want to be a part of a discussion on how we can support our immigrant neighbors, please contact Josh - ycom@paysonpark.org.

Current Donation needs for Homebase:

- Bedding
 - Kitchen Utensils and Cookware
 - NURSERY bedding, clothes, etc.
- Email Josh (ycom@paysonpark.org), or use the sign-up sheet on the blue table in the chapel.



KIDS CLOTHING DRIVE

Donate gently used or new clothing to those in need.

Help us support

Cradles to Crayons
END CLOTHING INSECURITY

We'll Also take ADULT coats, sweaters, etc, for our Cityreach dropoff in April!

Now thru Mar 30

**Prayers are invited for our YCOM Josh Lunde-Whitler
Upon his Ecclesiastical Council
Wednesday, March 19th, 2025**

The purpose of an Ecclesiastical Council is to discern if a person is called to the ordained ministry of Word and Sacrament in and on behalf of the United Church of Christ.

We ask the Holy Spirit to bless the discernment of this Council, as Josh takes these next steps in his calling as God’s faithful servant. May it be so! Amen!



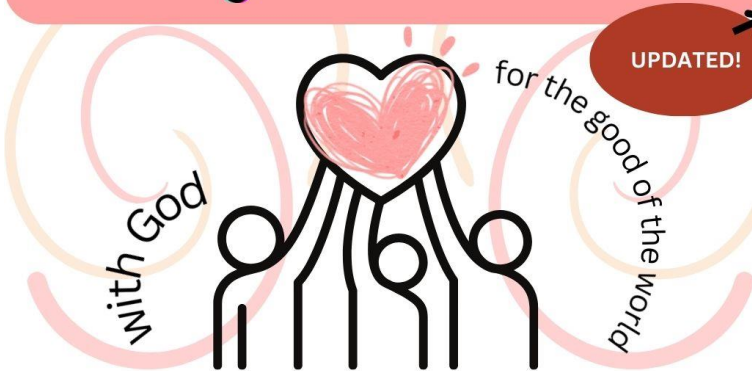
RE-scheduled! →

WINTER 2024 LOCATIONS:

- Feb 16: Lone Tree Hill (off Mill St)
- Mar 2: Habitat Ed Ctr (10 Juniper)
- Apr 6: Rock Meadow (off Mill St)

SEEKING GOD IN CREATION

Family Serve and Grow!



- March: Clothing Drive; Donations for Cradles 2 Crayons Seeds of Hope Art Contest
 - April: Cityreach (for Youth); Outdoor Church Visit?
 - May: Blanket Ministry and Mindfulness
 - June: TBA
- Food Pantry Donations Every First Fridays!**

Palanca - A Tradition of Blessing our Youth/Children

Originally a Roman Catholic tradition that was part of confirmation, palanca notes are short words of encouragement and prayer that “lift up” children and youth closer to God (Palanca is Spanish for “lever.”)*

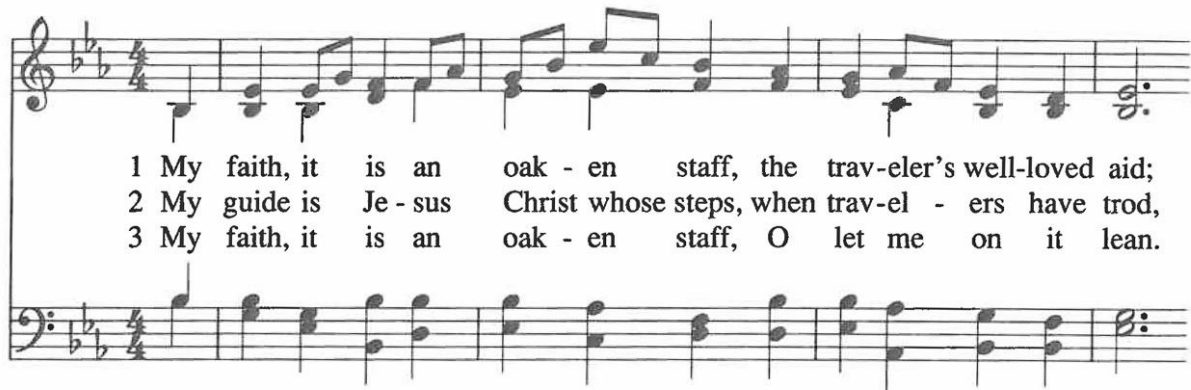
At Payson Park Church, you will notice a “Palanca Board” on Sundays, where everyone can leave notes of encouragement, stickers, birthday wishes, etc., for the children and youth who are a part of our community!



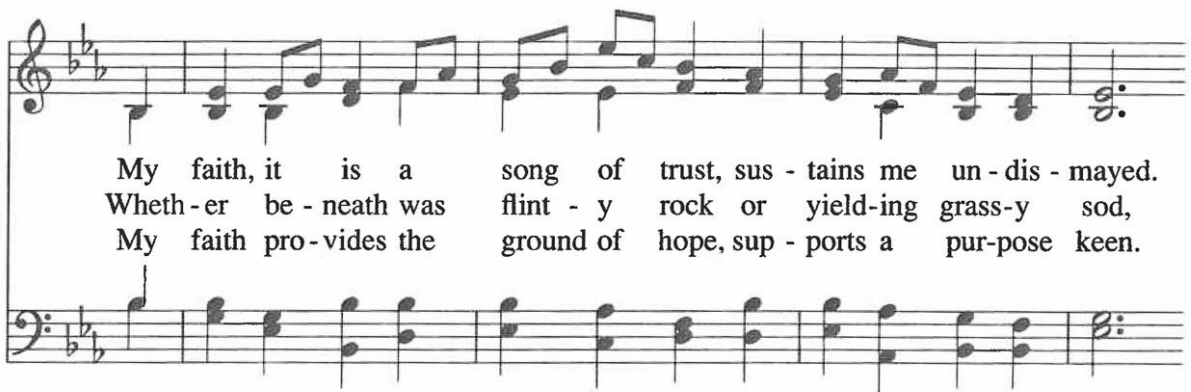
* Elizabeth Corrie, Youth Ministry as Peace Education (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2021), 45-46.

My Faith, It Is an Oaken Staff

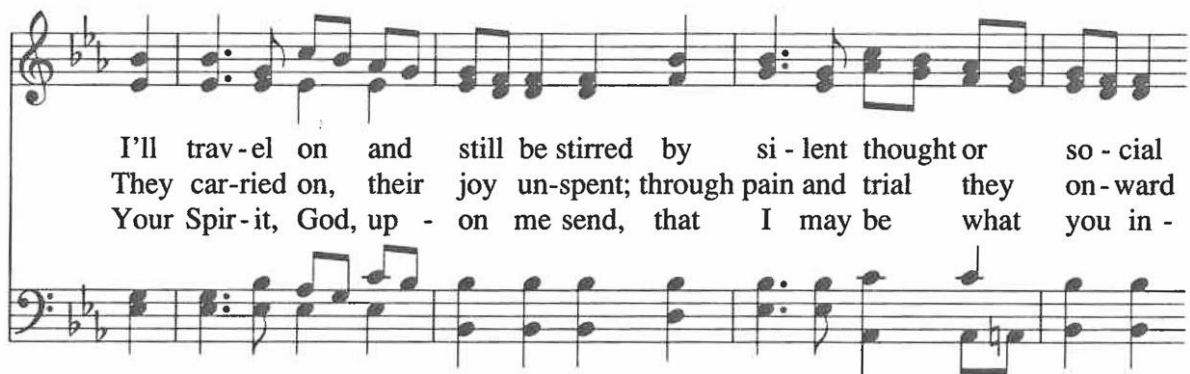
Thomas T. Lynch, 1855; alt.



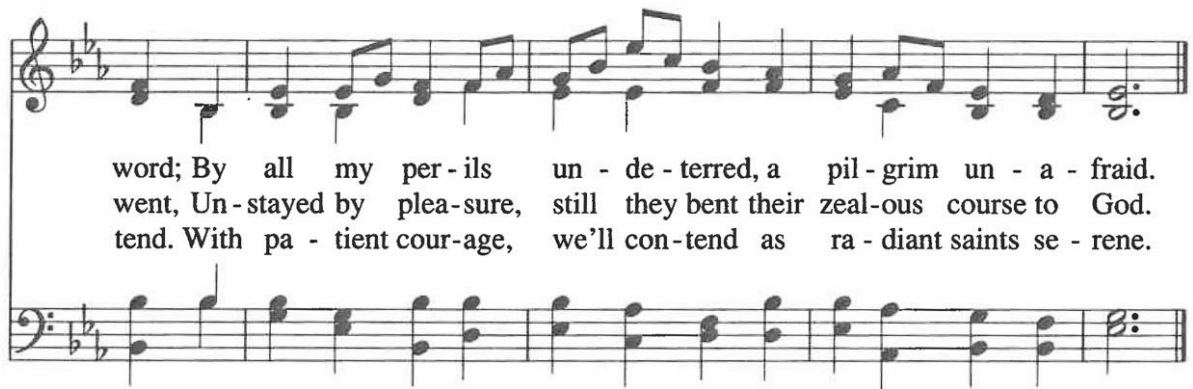
1 My faith, it is an oak - en staff, the trav-eler's well-loved aid;
2 My guide is Je - sus Christ whose steps, when trav-el - ers have trod,
3 My faith, it is an oak - en staff, O let me on it lean.



My faith, it is a song of trust, sus - tains me un - dis - mayed.
Wheth - er be - neath was flint - y rock or yield - ing grass - y sod,
My faith pro - vides the ground of hope, sup - ports a pur - pose keen.



I'll trav - el on and still be stirred by si - lent thought or so - cial
They car - ried on, their joy un - spent; through pain and trial they on - ward
Your Spir - it, God, up - on me send, that I may be what you in -



word; By all my per - ils un - de - terred, a pil - grim un - a - fraid.
went, Un - stayed by plea - sure, still they bent their zeal - ous course to God.
tend. With pa - tient cour - age, we'll con - tend as ra - diant saints se - rene.

A gifted Congregational minister in London, Thomas Toke Lynch was the subject of controversy within the churches upon the publication of his hymn collection, The Rivulet, which received poor reviews. This hymn was labeled Lynch's "best" when it appeared in Congregational Praise (1951).

Tune: THE STAFF OF FAITH 8.6.8.6.8.8.8.6.
Swiss folk melody
Fellowship Hymn Book, 1910

Guide My Feet

African-American traditional; alt.

Heb. 12:1-15

1 Guide my feet while I run this race, guide my feet
2 Hold my hand while I run this race, hold my hand
3 I'm your child while I run this race, I'm your child
4 Stand by me while I run this race, stand by me

Yes, my God.

while I run this race, guide my feet while I run this race,
while I run this race, hold my hand while I run this race,
while I run this race, I'm your child while I run this race,
while I run this race, stand by me while I run this race,

Yes, my God.

For I don't want to run this race in vain.

This stanza may be added following stanza 1:
Wheel with me while I run this race . . .

The words and music of some African-American spirituals have been widely adapted during the twentieth century, especially in the civil rights movement of the 1960s. The alternate words were suggested by a fifth-grade church school class to include those who must "run this race" in a wheelchair.

Tune: GUIDE MY FEET 8.8.8.10.
African-American traditional
Arr. Joyce Finch Johnson, 1992