



**Remember and Celebrate**  
**IAN SOWTON**  
**1929-2021**

**Poems & Hymns from the Service**

**February 20, 2021 2PM**  
**Online**

**Hosted by the Church of the Holy Trinity, Toronto**

## **Song of Passage**

As it rejoins the primal surge  
Of forever dancing elements  
My body shall learn the steps  
For meadow grass and flowers  
under sun and gracious showers.

My soul, that spark of living light  
from Life of life's creating forge,  
shall glint in children's children,  
stir in hopeful urgent loins  
where mortal with immortal joins.

Bless the friends on pilgrim paths!  
Bless roads not taken on my way!  
Bless that legion whose labours  
Answered to my various needs!  
Bless each soul that cradles seeds!

Ian Sowton  
Walking in Harbour One Day, 2020

## Listen Up

If you listen carefully enough words will  
canter for you as you ride an idea.

If you listen carefully, sometimes  
you can hear them jostling –  
usually discretely— to be rhymed.

You can hear them smack their lips  
at the prospect of a *tintinnabulation*  
or a *chirring*; or rise to the gymnastics  
of rhyming (sort of) *lozenge* with *orange*.

If you listen carefully you'll hear them  
whispering that dictionaries are only  
half the story.

And it's well known  
that in the barn dance of the brain  
words can go to it with the best to  
the call of a billion electric guitars;  
but that there's always that one  
who won't take the floor with you,  
who plays the wall-flower, being coy.

So: you can abandon her to  
her game and proposition another word,  
or: If you're patient and listen  
carefully the right one might come round  
and take your hand – so that beneath the  
calling beat of a billion electric guitars  
you will hear the chime of a YES chord.

Ian Sowton  
Walking in Harbour One Day, 2020

# 3 Wisdom Led the New Stars Burning

Ian Sowton, 1991

Wisdom (Sandra Sears, 1991)

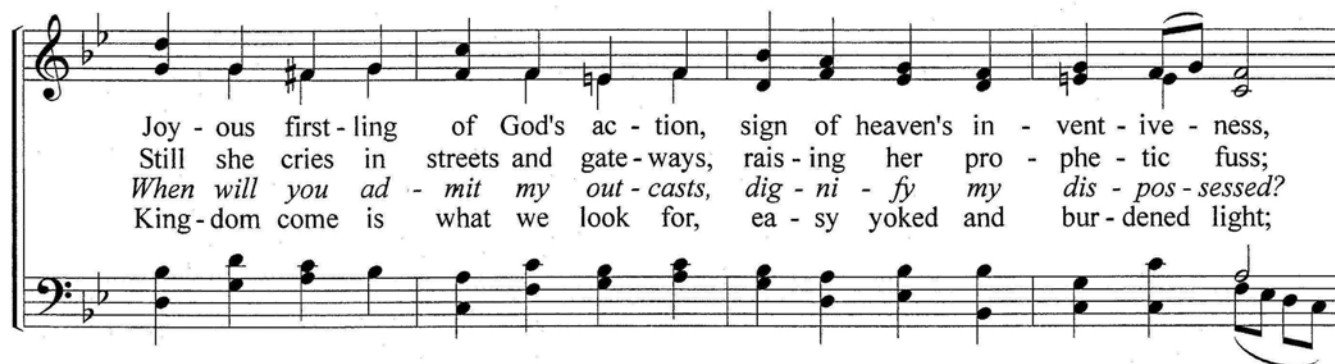
alt tune: Beecher



Wis - dom led the new stars burn - ing in the first steps of their dance,  
 Cher - ished dar - ling of God's bos - om, bright So - phi - a pleads our case;  
 Those who join the Je - sus move - ment hear in Christ So - phi - a's call:  
 From the breast of Christ - So - phi - a milk of jus - tice kind - ly flows,



and she smiled to see earth blush - ing at the sun's warm pri - mal glance.  
 we are crea - tures she de - lights in, Wis - dom will not leave our race.  
*"I de - cline your rit - ual offer - ings, give me e - qui - ty for all.*  
 feeds our will to love cre - a - tion, grace to live in hope bes - tows.



Joy - ous first - ling of God's ac - tion, sign of heaven's in - vent - ive - ness,  
 Still she cries in streets and gate - ways, rais - ing her pro - phe - tic fuss;  
*When will you ad - mit my out - casts, dig - ni - fy my dis - pos - sessed?*  
 King - dom come is what we look for, ea - sy yoked and bur - dened light;



Wis - dom plays with clear - est plea - sure in cre - a - tion's lav - ish - ness.  
 though we snub her she re - fu - ses ev - er to de - spair of us.  
*Ne - ver mind your sol - emn gather - ings: do the gos - pel you've pro - fessed."*  
 one day all shall join with Wis - dom care - free, play - ing in de - light.

# 10 The Midwife's Carol

Ian Sowton, 1994

Midwife's Carol  
(Becca Whitla, 1994)



1. The birth it-self was not too hard, good pres - en - ta - tion, fine strong mum.



But my dear it was a cir - cus, I thought that half the town had come.



Wash him clean, wipe him dry. Hush you, shush you rock-a-bye, rock - a-bye.



2. There were these shep - herds who burst in, my dear they said a talk - ing



light told them to come and pay res-pects, kneel - ing they were to that wee mite.



Wash him clean, wipe him dry. Hush you, shush you rock-a-bye, rock - a-bye.

3. He's breathing well, the cord's tied off,  
her afterbirth's come free my dear  
when three fine scholar blokes squeeze in  
saying a star has brought them here.

Wash him...

4. "You selling tickets then?" I said,  
"Buzz off you lot and let her rest."  
And they did too, leaving presents,  
rich stuff my dear, the very best.

Wash him...

5. All that public to and fro-ing,  
she watches as it comes and goes,  
with him tucked, dear, in a manger  
pulled from under the donkey's nose.

Wash him...

6. Winter solstice 'twas my dear,  
shivery damp and animal stink,  
Worship, palaver, gifts and all -  
what was going on do you think?

Wash him...

# 42 Deep Life All Abounding (melody)

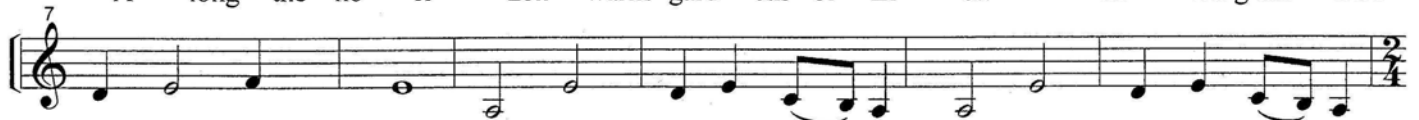
Ian Sowton, 1985

Deep Life (Sandra Sear, 1993)

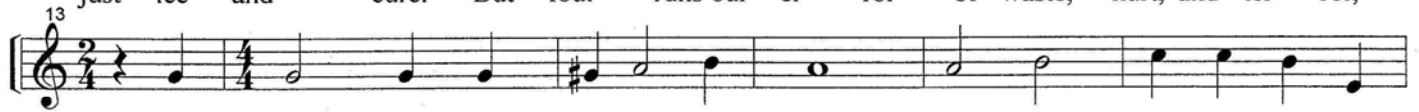
alt tune: Olwen



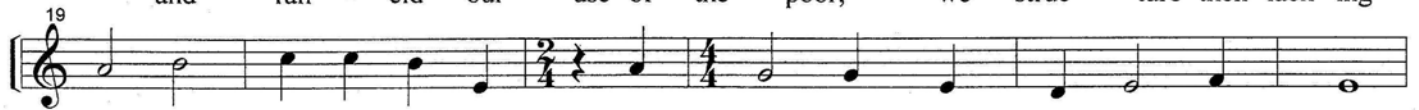
Deep life all a - bound - ing whose voice goes on sound - ing the word of cre -  
A - long the ho - ri - zon warm gard - ens of Zi - on lie fra-grant with



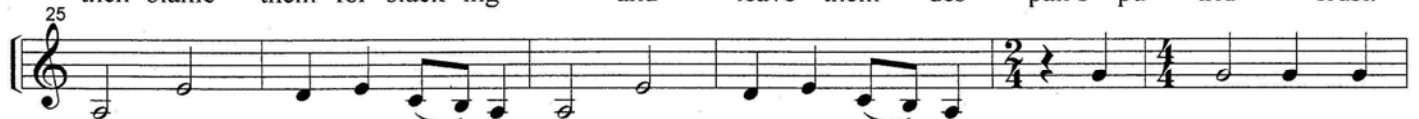
a - tion through space; Your love still is school - ing prime stars in their mov - ing,  
just - ice and cure. But foul runs our er - ror of waste, hurt, and ter - ror,



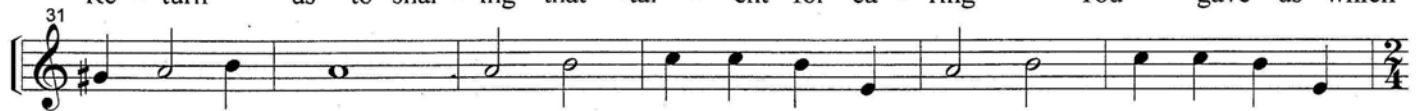
and new worlds un - furl in Your grace. We hear tell the sto - ry  
and ran - cid our use of the poor; we struc - ture their lack - ing



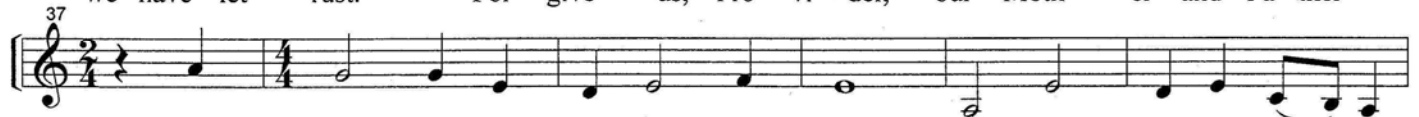
of Your am - ple glo - ry from crea - tures that roll off Your tongue:  
then blame them for slack - ing and leave them des - pair's pu - trid crust.



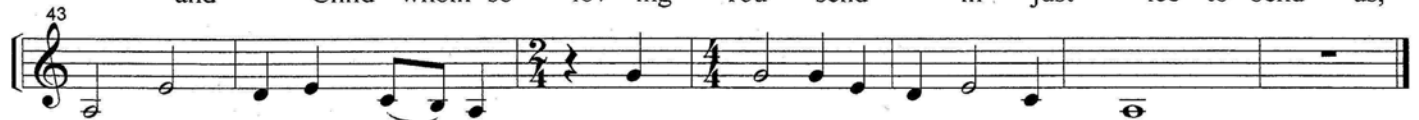
The swim - mers, the fli - ers, all dig - gers and sli - ders, the brood that You  
Re - turn us to shar - ing that tal - ent for ca - ring You gave us which



rear us a - mong. So praise to You, Ma - ker, our Fa - ther and Moth - er  
we have let rust. For - give us, Pro - vi - der, our Moth - er and Fa - ther



and Child whom so lov - ing You send in fond - ness to nurse us,  
and Child whom so lov - ing You send in just - ice to bend us,



in love to im - merse us, al - read - y and al - ways our friend.  
in mer - cy to mend us, al - read - y and al - ways our friend.

# 37 Lovingly Your Stars and Planets

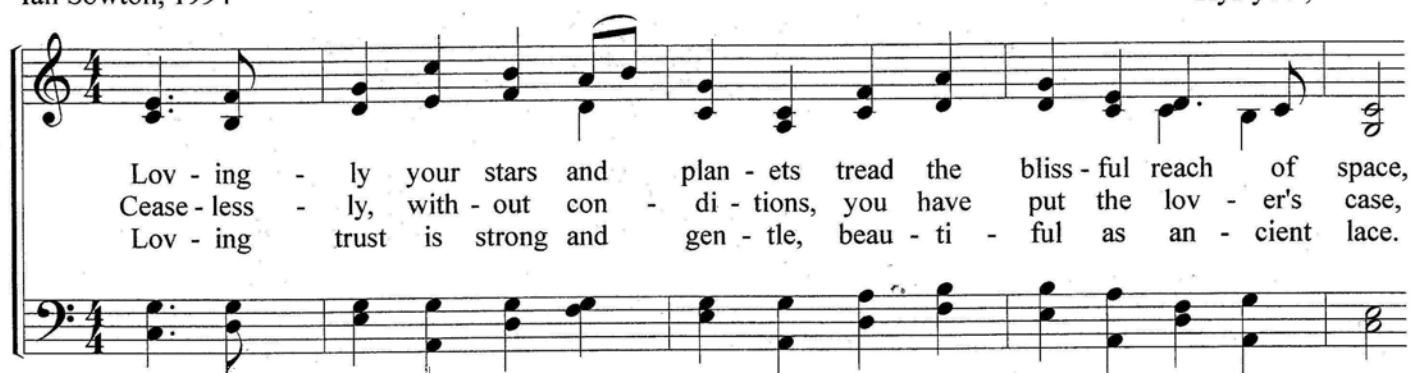
*for Pride Sunday 1994*

Perkins (William Westcott, 1999)

alt tunes: Beecher, Ode to Joy,

Hyfrydol, Austria


Ian Sowton, 1994



Lov - ing - ly your stars and plan - ets tread the bliss - ful reach of space,  
Cease - less - ly, with - out con - di - tions, you have put the lov - er's case,  
Lov - ing trust is strong and gen - tle, beau - ti - ful as an - cient lace.



where in their stu - pen - dous sing - ing they re - turn you grace for grace.  
while we spend our time in - vent - ing lim - its to our love's em - brace.  
In your Christ is beau - ty show - ing that Love has a hu - man face.



Though we are a small cre - a - tion slight jewel in your crown of lights  
From all fraud - u - lent ex - clu - sions save us, teach us neigh - bours' rights:  
Christ a - mong us weaves strong un - ions that out - wear all doubts and slights.



You have made us too for learn - ing Love's de - mands and Love's de - lights.  
lit - ur - gies of hu - man lov - ing have been set to var - ious rites.  
Bless us fra - gile part - ners learn - ing Love's de - mands and Love's de - lights.

# 14 We'll Sing in the Morning

Ian Sowton, 1977

Morning, Noon and Evening (Sandra Sears, 1990)  
alt tune: Bells of St. Mary's, refrain

1

We'll sing in the morn - ing a song of cre - a - tion of  
We'll sing in the noon - time a song of re - demp - tion: How  
We'll sing in the ev' - ning a song of Your pas - tures, of

6

Your breath that stirs up the wa - ters to birth; And here at the  
Naa - man was cleansed in the flow of Your grace; How, when we were  
riv - ers that glad - den the Ci - ty of God; And when we ar -

11

fount of Christ's mer - cy we join You, co - heirs of heaven and  
sick in our sin You re - leased us to laugh in health and and  
rive on the back of our Jor - dan You'll help us through its

16

stew - ards in of love Your gra - cious earth.  
dance in by love Your be - fore Your face.  
cold by love Your saints have trod.