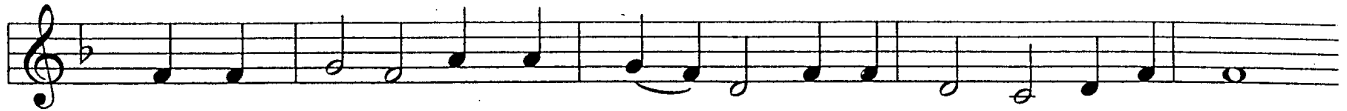


In the Desert Where They'd Wandered

A prize winning hymn in the Macalester Plymouth United Church Hymn Writing Contest, 2002

TUNE: *Beach Spring*, attr. to B. F. White, 1844

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1. In the des - ert where they'd wan - dered with a bil - lion stars in view,
2. *With a maj - es - ty that stunned her as she prayed for grace to share,*
3. In a time of strife and blind - ness to the welt - er of the world
4. *To the bear - er of Christ's mis - sion - "Feed my sheep in ev - 'ry place" -*
5. With a fla - grant faith, im - pas - sioned by a still more no - ble way,



A - bra - ham and Sar - ah pon - dered how the prom - ise could be true.
Came a word on wings of won - der as an ans - wer to her prayer.
Came a man whose God - ly kind - ness bore the pain of curs - es hurled.
Was en - trust - ed a re - vis - ion of the breadth of God's em - brace.
An a - pos - tle's pen re - fash - ioned the de - vo - tion of his day.



Though at first to hope seemed fol - ly, in the night they heard God say,
Ma - ry mag - ni - fied the mes - sage: "Let it be just as you say -
Love un - bowed raised up the love - less, as each one heard Je - sus say,
Though at first such grace seemed reck - less, Pe - ter heard the Spir - it say,
"Hearts of faith con - tain this trea - sure (though it's held in jars of clay):



"Ev - 'ry star's a child of prom - ise I will nev - er turn a - way."
From the birth of Love In - car - nate I will nev - er turn a - way."
"All who come to me be - liev - ing I will nev - er turn a - way."
"Ev - 'ry life made clean by lov - ing I will nev - er turn a - way."
Ev - 'ry soul whose joy is Jes - us He will nev - er turn a - way."

6. To the fragile, fateful beauty
of the fractious human race
Comes a church whose joyful duty
is to wield this word of grace:
Male and female, poor and wealthy,
every color, straight and gay,
All who seek to find this Kingdom
Christ will never turn away!

7. And the gentiles, and the lowly,
those ignored and those in chains,
Those reviled or thought unholy
trust the Love that lives and reigns.
Even now we hear their voices
sighing with us as we pray -
"Jesus, we are those you promised
You would never turn away!"