



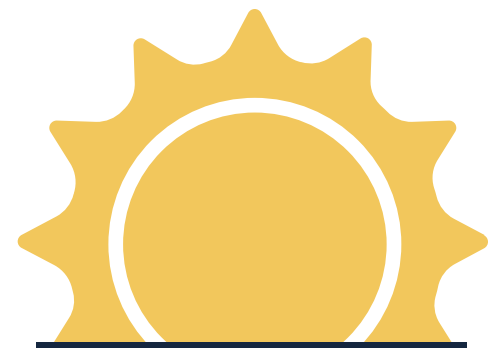
Tell Out My Soul

Every Valley: An Advent Reflection

Each year as the calendar turns to Advent, I find myself thumbing through my music library to pull up The Messiah. Best known for its ending movements and the rousing Hallelujah Chorus, the first movement is my favorite, and the one I begin humming to myself in early December. The prophets tell us of a great power, a person to come, who will level the field and reveal the right path. “Every valley shall be exalted,” the Tenor boldly asserts!

Whether it is the Tenor stepping forward for the first solo aria, or visions of a prophet standing in a rocky, winding landscape, the effect is the same: a great work starts with a promise, with a proud proclamation, with someone to point the way. The prophet has something exciting to share with us, something so important that the barriers that stand in the way of hearing and acting on their words will melt away. There is an exchange happening here: the prophet has something to share, and we, who hear the message, have something to receive. When we do, the shock waves of those words will batter down mountains and smooth the rough edges within us.

This same transformation happens when we share our gifts with the church. Our investments of time, talent, and treasure are the natural response to having heard the words of the prophet and having been changed by their message. However you respond to the prophet, the world around you is being made ready to receive what you will share with it. And in every direction, as the chorus answers the Tenor, “The Glory of the Lord will be revealed.” tens.org



Questions for Reflection:

As you ease into Advent this year, pay attention to the tug of the prophet – what is it that you are hearing? How does it cause you to act? Does it fill you with the urge to share that good news and goodness with others?



Cn. J. Davey Gerhard serves as Executive Director of TENS: The Episcopal Network for Stewardship, and works diligently each year to make space for Advent amidst the busy December hustle.



THE EPISCOPAL
NETWORK FOR
STEWARDSHIP