

**Oh, To See The Dawn
(The Power of the Cross)**
By Keith Getty & Stuart Towend (2005)

See print copy for words to song.

Old Orchard Church
Fifth Sunday in Lent
April 6, 2014—10:15 to 11:50 a.m.

See print copy for artwork.

We celebrate the Lord's Supper weekly—and in a circle, at the end of worship. A word of direction is given, and with this everyone stands and moves to the walls. The cup is passed in two forms: in a chalice and then in small individual cups. You are free to choose.

And as this is the Supper of the Lord Christ, please listen to the instructions we give as to what qualifies a visitor to participate. **But whether you intend to take communion or not, please join us in**

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**God said to Moses,
“I AM WHO I AM ...
Say this to the people of Israel,
‘I AM has sent me to you.’”**

- Exodus 3:14 -

Descent To the Cross: Before Abraham Was, I AM

In the burning bush God revealed himself to us as
I AM WHO I AM.

Almighty, incomprehensible, supreme in majesty,
He who had no beginning is himself the Ground of all being.

But in the fullness of time He reveals himself again;
he comes with a face, with a laugh, with a heart that cries,

“Do not be afraid.
Yes, before Abraham was, I AM.
I am the inscrutable God.
But I am humble in heart, and I am gentle.”

We thought we could make him who Is, to be nothing:
We crucified him, the Lord of glory.
Yet God turned it to our good.
Bless him in the congregation of the forgiven,
the company of all who, through faith, he has made alive!



Today's Scripture Readings

Old Testament Lesson: Exodus 3:1-15

Gospel Reading: John 8:48-59

The Ministry of the Word

Teaching of the People of God:

A Time for Open Praise

Reality Check—2014

All reality hangs on one thing: whatever is self-existent. What exists by its own power is the final backdrop of the Universe; whatever doesn't, lives a borrowed and dependent life. And the Bible's claim is that God is the final backdrop of everything. C. S. Lewis put it well when he said, "God makes, we are made: He is the original, we derivative." And if modern people believe that matter and energy—which is what the universe is made of—is eternal, is itself the final backdrop of everything, they still have the problem of explaining how impersonal matter and energy "became" the personal beings we know ourselves to be. And if they believe the universe just "happened," just popped out of nothing, then they believe in magic after all.

When the Lord commissioned Moses to go tell the Israelites that their God was about to rescue them, Moses asked, more or less, "And who shall I tell them sent me?" God answered Moses, "**I AM WHO I AM. Tell them, 'I AM' sent me to you.**" That's it—just, "I AM." The Self-Existent One.

Nineteen centuries later, in his duel of words with the religious leaders who were resting on the laurels of their Jewish pedigree, Jesus said, "**I tell you the truth, before Abraham was, I AM.**" And everyone got the point: a man, unmistakably human, was claiming to be no less than the God who had revealed himself to Moses as the great I AM. That's when they tried to stone Jesus for blasphemy.

A magazine article just came out in March *chronicling the new effort to "resurrect" extinct animal species with heady "genome editing technology."* It's astounding! But they cannot do this without starting with something already there: the DNA from cells in a specific bird or animal. Nothing in the cosmos comes into existence from unaided nothing; and nothing is sustained by its own will power, though there be billions of galaxies, as some scientists now theorize. Only God has life and being in himself. And the deepest mystery of love is that this uncreated, personal God became one of us at a definite place in history, to reconcile us to himself so that our fragile and borrowed lives might actually be taken up into the eternal divine life without losing their splendid individuality. Christ, the Self-Existent One, came to us that we might live forever, in a renewed world, happily deriving everything from his inexhaustible life.

When we feel "reality" slipping away from us as we sometimes do, our great consolation is that God has it firmly in his grip: there is nothing above, behind, or more basic than God. To know him, through the God-man, Christ, is to be at the Bedrock of what is, and is wonderfully good.

—Ron Lutjens

