The provocative words of “Let’s Build a House”, beckons to Jesus’ followers in this time and place, from its page in the new “Glory to God” hymnal at #301. In both its verse and refrain, this new gem in the PCUSA repertoire reminds us that we are called to be builders of a provisional sign of God’s kingdom of extravagant love and grace in our own corner of the world, until that day when all the kingdoms of this world become the kingdom of our Lord and Christ.

I am moved by the powerful call in all five verses to become more fully “a doer of the word and not merely a hearer who deceives themselves” (James 1:22). Perhaps I am drawn by this hymn and its powerful message because it is so very counter-cultural. Too often, I turn on the news only to hear harsh and unkind voices speaking words of rejection and rebuke that tear others down, and do so in the name of Jesus. In response to this exclusionary version of Christianity, “Let’s Build a House” invites us to refocus in order to get busy doing what God has called us to do; build places and create safe spaces where all are reminded that “in life and in death, we belong to God” (The Brief Statement of Faith).

It makes me want to gather my friends and get busy working as builders of a welcoming community of faith, where: love dwells, where we are marked as being claimed by grace at the font, where all are fed by Christ at the table, where God is worshipped and where peace and justice meet.

So, sing loudly, my friends, and may this song propel us forward as builders of a place where all are welcomed to “glorify God and enjoy God forever” (The Shorter Catechism, 7.001).