

Lutheran Church of the Covenant
Maple Heights, OH

Second Sunday of Advent

The Lutheran Church of the Covenant welcomes you to worship!
Here are a few notes to make you feel more at home as we praise
the God of new life together!

Bulletins and are available to be picked up at the back of the sanctuary.

We encourage you to participate throughout worship by speaking the **bold** print and singing along with the hymns!

Portions marked with * are when we invite you to stand as you are able to do so. There will not be a separate time for an offering, so a basket is placed in the back for those who wish to support our local ministry as well as the wider church.

Our Worship Leaders & Staff

Presiding Minister	Rev. Andrea McDonough
Organist	Gerry Mass
Lector	Allan Treichel
Parish Administrator	Jennifer Lasher-Dobush
Custodian	Vince Besednjak

Second Sunday of Advent
9:00 a.m. December 8th, 2024

Prelude

Welcome and Announcements

***Confession and Forgiveness**

Family of faith, one of the beautiful things about the prayer of confession is it is often a prayer we say together. So as a community, please join me in speaking the truth of our lives. Join me in practicing grace.

I have tried to make my own way. I have tried to lace my own shoes, to build my own house, to kindle my own faith. I have said a thousand times, "turn back," as if I am fine on my own. But the days are long and I am forgetful. I need your help. Can you remind me?

We will remind you of this everlasting truth: You are not alone.

Where you go, God goes. You are held in grace.

Trust in this good news.

Thanks be to God! I remember. I believe.

Now we need your help. We, too, have tried to make our own way. We have tried to lace our own shoes, to build our own houses, to kindle our own faiths. We have said a thousand times, “turn back,” as if we are fine on our own. But the days are long and we are forgetful. We need your help. Can you remind us?

I will remind you of this everlasting truth: You are not alone. Where you go, God goes. You are held in grace. Trust in this good news. **Thanks be to God! We remember. We believe. Alleluia!**
Amen.

***Call to Worship**

In a world that is lonely,
we will save a seat for you.

In a world that is anxious,
we will light candles against the gloom.

In a world that is weary,
we will sing songs of joy and truth.

I am not alone.

We are not alone.

For here in this place, God is weaving us together.

Light the candles! Sing with joy!

We are a three-cord strand, not easily broken.

Dismissal

Advent invites us to start with love and begin again.

In the name of Christ, our new beginning, go in peace. **Thanks be to God.**

Postlude

Praying Together

... for those who are homebound, ill, hospitalized or recuperating:

Gayle Agg, Nora Beach, Joan Clarke, Bruce Constant, Olive Evanofski, Barbara Fossa, Ken Frajter, Donna Franz, Barb Gaglione, Michelle Garnett, Rosa Garnett, Jane Gradert, Dorrie Kearns, Dylan King, Elaine Knerem, Jason Lanese, Nel Lanese, Barbara Mingee, Matthew Morrissey, Phyllis Nemeth, Dick Ptak, Madeline Ptak, Jean Rusher, Barb Toth, Maud Wright, Wilma Dancy, Bill Helmick, Nancy Helmick, Robert Lambrecht, Laura Mele, Judy Morgan, Kris Sandor, Bill Wilkens, Lois Williams, Eugene Winfrey, the Copeland/Lane Family.

Last Week

General Fund receipts for week ending 11/24/2024 \$385.00

General Fund receipts for week ending 12/1/2024 \$2030.00



1 Love di - vine, all loves ex - cel - ling, Joy of heav'n, to
 2 Breathe, oh, breathe thy lov - ing Spir - it in - to ev - 'ry
 3 Come, Al - might - y, to de - liv - er; let us all thy
 4 Fin - ish then thy new cre - a - tion, pure and spot - less



earth come down! Fix in us thy hum - ble dwell - ing, all thy
 trou - bled breast; let us all in thee in - her - it; let us
 life re - ceive; sud - den - ly re - turn, and nev - er, nev - er -
 let us be; let us see thy great sal - va - tion per - fect -



faith - ful mer - cies crown. Je - sus, thou art all com - pas - sion,
 find thy prom - ised rest. Take a - way the love of sin - ning;
 more thy tem - ples leave. Thee we would be al - ways bless - ing,
 ly re - stored in thee! Changed from glo - ry in - to glo - ry,



pure, un - bound - ed love thou art; vis - it us with
 Al - pha and O - me - ga be; end of faith, as
 serve thee as thy hosts a - bove, pray, and praise thee
 till in heav'n we take our place, till we cast our



thy sal - va - tion, en - ter ev - 'ry trem - bling heart.
 its be - gin - ning, set our hearts at lib - er - ty.
 with - out ceas - ing, glo - ry in thy per - fect love.
 crowns be - fore thee, lost in won - der, love, and praise!

Text: Charles Wesley, 1707-1788
 Music: HYFRYDOL, Rowland H. Prichard, 1811-1887

Gathering Hymn: On Jordan's Bank the Baptist Cry Verses 1-3, 5 ELW #249

1 On Jor - dan's bank the Bap - tist's cry an - nounc - es
 2 Then cleansed be ev - 'ry life from sin; make straight the
 3 We hail you as our Sav - ior, Lord, our ref - uge
 4 Stretch forth your hand, our health re - store, and make us
 5 All praise to you, e - ter - nal Son, whose ad - vent

that the Lord is nigh; a - wake and hear - en,
 way for God with - in, and let us all our
 and our great re - ward; with - out your grace we
 rise to fall no more; oh, let your face up -
 has our free - dom won, whom with the Fa - ther

for he brings glad tid - ings of the King of kings!
 hearts pre - pare for Christ to come and en - ter there.
 waste a - way like flow'rs that with - er and de - cay.
 on us shine and fill the world with love di - vine.
 we a - dore, and Ho - ly Spir - it, ev - er - more.

*Greeting

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the com -
 munion of the Holy Spirit be with you all. **And also with you.**

***Lighting of the Advent Wreath –Candle of Peace**

In a weary and worn world,
how do we begin again?
Where do we start?

Let us begin together.

Let us begin arm in arm.

**Let us begin by holding each other up,
instead of tearing each other down.**

Let us begin with words of peace.

Yes, let us begin with peace. Today we
light the candles of hope and peace.

**May these lights remind us of what
could be.**

May these lights mark a new beginning.

**May peace flow like a river, and may it
start with us.**

Arm in arm, hand in hand, side by side.

May we begin again. **Amen.**

Post-Communion Prayer

Nourishing god, when we come to this table we get a glimpse of your kingdom. We come to this table and all are seen, all are welcomed, all are fed. Thank you for the gift of this fresh start. Thank you for meeting us in the ordinary things to remind us that we build your kingdom here. We are so grateful. **Amen**

Benediction

As you leave this place,

May you have the wisdom to lean on one another.

May you have the courage to hold onto hope,

The compassion to do the good that is yours to do,

And the confidence to trust that God sees you as a blessing. **Amen**

Sending Hymn Love Divine, All Loves Excelling

ELW#631

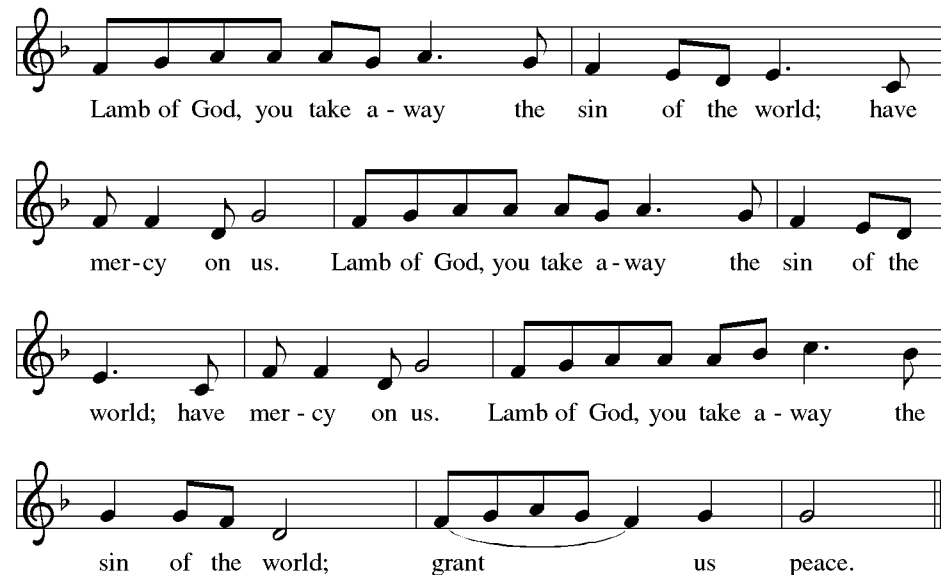
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For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours,
now and forever. Amen.

Invitation to Communion

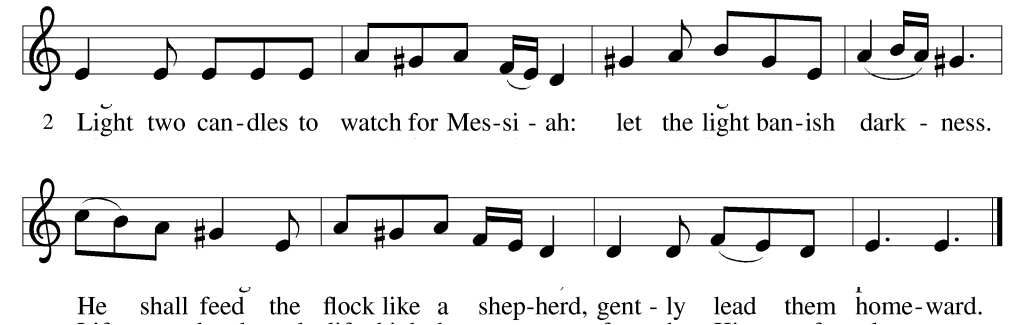
When we come to this table, for just a moment, we get a glimpse of God's promised day. We get a glimpse of a world where all are fed and all are welcomes. For just a moment, Mary's words—words of justice and hope. Words like, "the hungry have been filled" and "the humble have been lifted." This is what it 's all about. God is all around us. So come. This good news is for you. All are welcome here.

Communion Hymn



Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the world; have
mer-cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the
world; have mer - cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a - way the
sin of the world; grant us peace.

Song Light One Candle to Watch for Messiah ELW #257



2 Light two can-dles to watch for Mes-si - ah: let the light ban-ish dark - ness.
He shall feed the flock like a shep-herd, gent - ly lead them home-ward.

*Prayer of the Day

Holy God, The words of this world whip around us like a mighty wind. But here on this bright morning we remember: you too are speaking. Still the voices around us. Calm our minds and center our hearts so that we can hear your words above the wind. We are leaning closer. We are at the edge of our chairs. We are beginning again. Speak to us, as only you can. **Amen.**

Children's Moment

First Reading Ecclesiastes 4:8-12

8 There was a man all alone, he had neither son nor brother. There was no end to his toil, yet his eyes were not content with is wealth. "For whom am I toiling," he asked, " and why am I depriving myself of enjoyment?" This too is meaningless a miserable business! 9 Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their labor: 10 If either of them falls down, one can help the other up. But pity an-

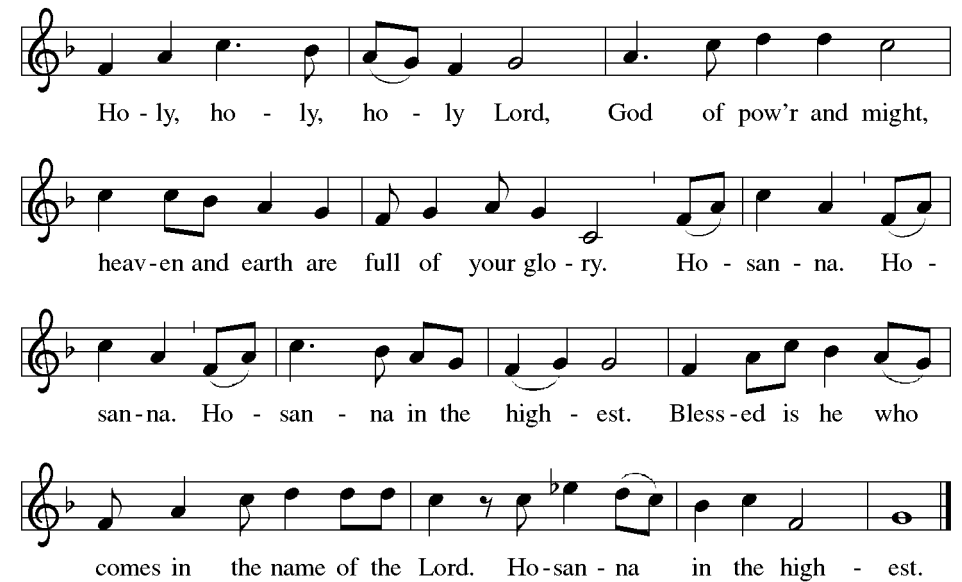
yone who falls and has no one to help them up. ¹¹ Also, if two lie down together, they will keep warm. But how can one keep warm alone? ¹² Though one may be overpowered, two can defend themselves. A cord of three strands is not quickly broken.

The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

Psalm Luke 1:68-79

In the tender compassion of our God the dawn from on high shall break upon us. (Lk. 1:78)

⁶⁸ Blessed are you, Lord, the | God of Israel,
you have come to your people and | set them free.
⁶⁹ **You have raised up for us a | mighty Savior,**
born of the house of your | servant David.
⁷⁰ Through your holy prophets, you promised of old to save
us | from our enemies,
⁷¹ from the hands of | all who hate us,
⁷² **to show mercy | to our forebears,**
and to remember your | holy covenant.
⁷³ This was the oath you swore to our | father Abraham:
⁷⁴ to set us free from the hands of our | enemies,
free to worship you | without fear,
⁷⁵ **holy and righteous before you, all the days | of our life.**
⁷⁶ And you, child, shall be called the prophet of | the Most High,
for you will go before the Lord to pre- | pare the way,
⁷⁷ **to give God's people knowledge | of salvation**
by the forgiveness | of their sins.
⁷⁸ In the tender compassion | of our God
the dawn from on high shall | break upon us,



Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow'r and might,
heav-en and earth are full of your glo - ry. Ho - san - na. Ho -
san-na. Ho - san - na in the high - est. Bless-ed is he who
comes in the name of the Lord. Ho-san - na in the high - est.

With joy and hope, we weave our voices together
To pray the words your Son taught us to pray saying...

***Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come, your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.**

Give us today our daily bread.

**Forgive us our sins as we forgive those
who sin against us.**

**Save us from the time of trial
and deliver us from evil.**

*Great Thanksgiving

The Lord be with you. **And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts. **We lift them to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God. **It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

Loving God,

We give you thanks and praise for the love you show us at this table.

We come to this table today longing for a new beginning. In a world that so often feels like it's ending, we crave the hope of a new beginning. We long to heal from the endings and crash landings of our hurting world and start again, rooted in your good news. So week by week, bit by bit, we return to your Word. Week by week, bit by bit, we return to each other. Week by week, and bit by bit, we repeat the truths that we so often need to hear, trusting that by your grace, it is never too late to start again. So in this spirit of beginnings, we again join our voices with the church on earth, and all of heaven, by singing our praise to you:

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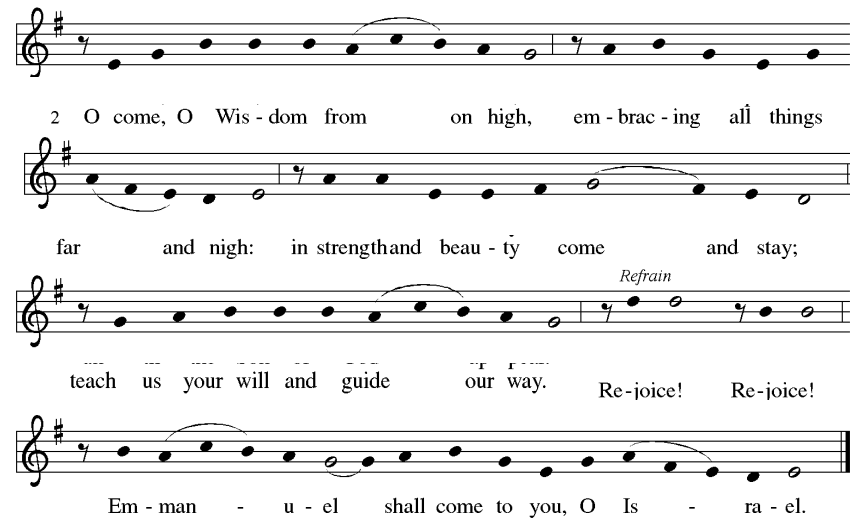
⁷⁹ to shine on those who dwell in darkness and in the shadow of death, and to guide our feet into the way of peace.

Second Reading Phillipians 1:3-11

³ I thank my God every time I remember you, ⁴ constantly praying with joy in every one of my prayers for all of you, ⁵ because of your sharing in the gospel from the first day until now. ⁶ I am confident of this, that the one who began a good work among you will bring it to completion by the day of Jesus Christ. ⁷ It is right for me to think this way about all of you, because you hold me in your heart, for all of you share in God's grace with me, both in my imprisonment and in the defense and confirmation of the gospel. ⁸ For God is my witness, how I long for all of you with the compassion of Christ Jesus. ⁹ And this is my prayer, that your love may overflow more and more with knowledge and full insight ¹⁰ to help you to determine what is best, so that in the day of Christ you may be pure and blameless, ¹¹ having produced the harvest of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ for the glory and praise of God.

The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

Gospel Acclamation



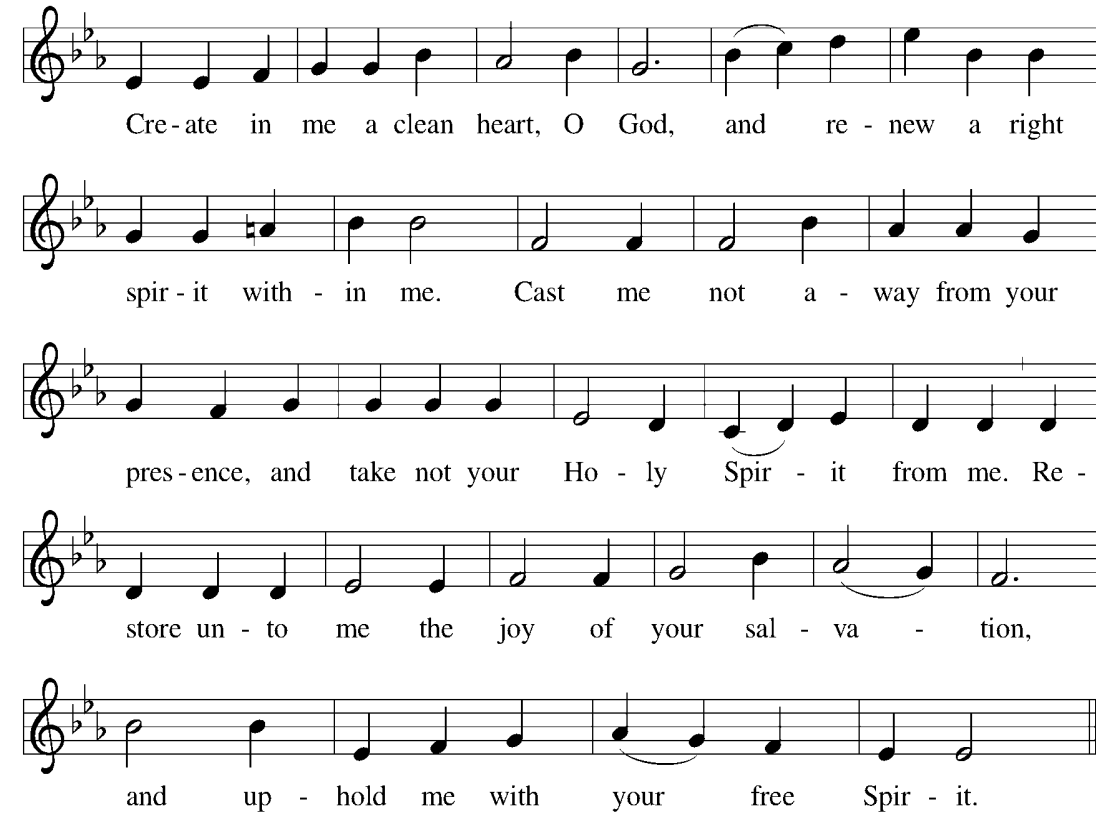
2 O come, O Wis - dom from on high, em - brac - ing all things
far and nigh: in strength and beau - ty come and stay;
teach us your will and guide our way. *Refrain* Re-joice! Re-joice!
Em - man - u - el shall come to you, O Is - ra - el.

Gospel: Luke 3:1-6

¹ In the fifteenth year of the reign of Emperor Tiberius, when Pontius Pilate was governor of Judea, and Herod was ruler of Galilee, and his brother Philip ruler of the region of Ituraea and Trachonitis, and Lysanias ruler of Abilene, ² during the high priesthood of Annas and Caiaphas, the word of God came to John son of Zechariah in the wilderness. ³ He went into all the region around the Jordan, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins, ⁴ as it is written in the book of the words of the prophet Isaiah,

“The voice of one crying out in the wilderness: ‘Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight. ⁵ Every valley shall be filled, and every mountain and hill shall be made low, and the crooked shall be made straight,

The gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, O Christ.**



Cre - ate in me a clean heart, O God, and re - new a right
spir - it with - in me. Cast me not a - way from your
pres - ence, and take not your Ho - ly Spir - it from me. Re -
store un - to me the joy of your sal - va - tion,
and up - hold me with your free Spir - it.

Music: J. A. Freylinghausen, 1670–1739

*Offering Prayer

Creator God, you made the whole world, even the farthest stars,
and you draw near to feed us. Use the gifts we offer to bring your
reign on earth. We praise you for your gifts of bread and wine.
Strengthen us with this food that we may live in expectation
for the advent of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen**

Reassuring God, we remember those who have died and rest in you. Guide us in deep gratitude for their life, and allow us to learn from their faithful witness. Lord, in your mercy, **receive our prayer.**

Savior of the nations, come, and receive these prayers and the pleas of our hearts, in the name of Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

Sharing of the Peace

May the peace of the Lord be with you always. **And also with you.**

Music Interlude

The Offertory Hymn Create in Me a Clean Heart
(next page)

Sermon

Hymn of the Day: Son Of God, Eternal Savior ELW #655

Verses 1-3



- 1 Son of God, e - ter - nal Sav - ior, source of life and truth and grace,
- 2 As you, Lord, have lived for oth - ers, so may we for oth - ers live.
- 3 Come, O Christ, and reign a - mong us, King of love and Prince of peace;
- 4 Son of God, e - ter - nal Sav - ior, source of life and truth and grace,



Word made flesh, whose birth a - mong us hal - lows all our hu - man race,
Free - ly have your gifts been grant - ed; free - ly may your ser - vants give.
hush the storm of strife and pas - sion, bid its cru - el dis - cords cease.
Word made flesh, whose birth a - mong us hal - lows all our hu - man race:



you our head, who, throned in glo - ry, for your own will ev - er plead:
Yours the gold and yours the sil - ver, yours the wealth of land and sea;
By your pa - tient years of toil - ing, by your si - lent hours of pain,
by your pray - ing, by your will - ing that your peo - ple should be one,



fill us with your love and pit - y, heal our wrong, and help our need.
we but stew - ards of your boun - ty held in sol - emn trust will be.
quench our fe - vered thirst of plea - sure, stem our self - ish greed of gain.
grant, oh, grant our hope's fru - i - tion: here on earth your will be done.

*Affirmation of Faith

We believe in a with-us God:

a God who walks with us in the valley,

dances with us on the mountaintop,

sings with us through the night

and rejoices in the morning.

We believe that this with-us God

wired us for relationship,

saying to creation on the very first week,

“Humans should not be alone.”

Therefore, in an effort to be who God called us to be,

we strive to live like the Trinity—

connected, united, and centered.

We believe in the power of community.

We commit to learning each other’s names.

We choose to journey with each other.

And we remember that no one can go through life alone.

Thanks be to God, for lighting our way. Amen.

*Prayers of Intercession

As we prepare for Emmanuel, God-with-us, let us pray for all people and places that long for God’s presence.

A brief silence.

Refining God, move through your church. Root out practices that harm your people, and kindle a fire for sharing the gospel among bishops, pastors, deacons, and all the baptized. Lord, in your mercy, **receive our prayer.**

Renewing God, transform your creation. Steer us from habits that harm what you have made, and guide us in practices that preserve and restore creatures and habitats. Lord, in your mercy, **receive our prayer.**

Ruling God, teach the nations your ways. Strengthen organizations and communities that broker peace and care for refugees, immigrants, and all caught in the center of conflict (*especially*). Lord, in your mercy, **receive our prayer.**

Rescuing God, restore your people who are in any need. Heal all who are suffering (*especially*). Provide comfort and strength, and nurture sustained wholeness for the future. Lord, in your mercy, **receive our prayer.**

Reforming God, fill this congregation with your presence. Enrich our seasonal preparations, and bless the efforts by worship committees, music ensembles, staff, clergy, and lay leaders as they work in the weeks ahead. Lord, in your mercy, **receive our prayer.**