

+ Those who are able are invited to stand.
You are invited to respond with the **Bold** responses.

MOMENTS OF CENTERING

Through every age and in every place, the Christ in whose name we gather calls disciples with a simple invitation, words of challenge: “Come follow me.”

And where is it that we go with Christ?

-Christ leads us among enemies and strangers, causing us to regard all persons as potential friends.

-Christ leads us into uncharted places of spiritual wilderness where the Word and will of God are the only reliable guides.

-Christ leads us to lose ourselves just so we might be found, just so grace might become real.

-And Christ leads us to the apparent dead-end of a cross to reveal a highway to new life.

We gather to worship the Christ who leads.

May we gain the wisdom and the courage to follow.

Good Morning! Welcome to Worship!

THE CHURCH FAMILY GATHERS TO CELEBRATE

PRE-SERVICE MUSIC

Renee Warner

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND HOSPITALITY

PRELUDE

Dan Martin

SERVICE OF LIGHT

The Acolytes

Jesus said, “I am the Light of the world.”

+CHORAL CALL TO WORSHIP

UMH 349

Turn Your Eyes upon Jesus

Turn your eyes upon Jesus, look full in his wonderful face, and the things of earth will grow strangely dim in the light of his glory and grace.

+CALL TO WORSHIP

Responsively

Come joyfully before the Lord!

God knows us and loves us!

Come prayerfully before the Lord!

God sees our concerns, our fears, our sins!

Come hopefully before the Lord!

Christ proclaimed God’s love and forgiveness for all God’s people!

Know throughout all of your being, that God absolutely loves you!

How precious and powerful that knowledge is! Thanks be to God!

+INVOCATION

Unison

Loving God, you know us better than we know ourselves. Our prayers are in your heart even before they are on our lips. And yet we must utter our prayers. We must proclaim our praise of you and all your wondrous creation. Your love surrounds us, and you have promised to be with us always. You know our hearts’ desire to serve you. We pray that you will keep us true to that desire. And so, we utter our prayer, in Jesus’ name. Amen.

+ HYMN OF PRAISE

UMH 451

Be Thou My Vision

THE CHURCH CELEBRATES ITS FAITH

PSALTER

Psalms 139:1-6, 13-18

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

Unison

An Affirmation of God’s Freeing Love

God’s love frees me to be the person I am without having to become more attractive, more intelligent, more popular.

God’s love frees me to live in confidence, not needing to be self-absorbed, but ready to listen and to hear the stories of others.

God’s love frees me to take risks, to surprise even myself with courage, sometimes to fall flat on my face—but always to move onward with the knowledge that God is encouraging me.

God’s love frees me to view the world not from the standpoint of wealth gained or ambition achieved, but from the perspective of relationships lived and human love shared.

God’s love frees me to put my sins behind me, to know that no sin is too great or too small to be left open and healed by God’s gentle touch.

Thanks be to God! Amen.

RESPONSE

My Tribute

UMH 99

To God be the glory, to God be the glory, to God be the glory for the things he has done. With his blood he has saved me; with his power he has raised me; to God be the glory for the things he has done.

THE CHURCH FAMILY RESPONDS WITH GIFTS

OFFERTORY INVITATION and PRAYER

OFFERTORY

+DOXOLOGY

UMH 94

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow; praise God, all creatures here below; Alleluia! Alleluia! Praise God, the source of all our gifts! Praise Jesus Christ, whose power up-lifts! Praise the Spirit, Holy Spirit! Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

THE CHURCH FAMILY LISTENS FOR THE WORD
+THE WORD

CALL TO WIGGLETIME *FWS 2030*
The First Song of Isaiah

Surely, it is God who saves me; I will trust in him and not be afraid. For the Lord is my stronghold and my sure defense, and he will be my Savior.

WIGGLETIME

CHORAL CALL TO PRAYER *FWS 2202*
Come Away with Me, v. 1

Come away with me to a quiet place, apart from the world with its frantic pace, to pray, reflect, and seek God’s grace, Come away with me. Come away.

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION *Responsively*

By the power of your Spirit you claim us, strengthen us, and prepare us to live with you in glory. In sure and certain hope, we pray for your world, that we may live into your coming reign of justice and peace.

For the church, wherever it thrives and wherever it struggles—keep us faithful to your gospel,
Eternal God, **hear our prayer.**

For those who govern—grant them wisdom and a commitment to justice,
Eternal God, **hear our prayer.**

For planet Earth—heal its wounds and make us better stewards of its wonders and gifts,
Eternal God, **hear our prayer.**

For those who are dying—calm all fears and welcome them into your peace,
Eternal God, **hear our prayer.**

For those who suffer from anxieties and ills—give them relief,
Eternal God, **hear our prayer.**

For those who endure the days and nights without food or shelter—feed and protect them,
Eternal God, **hear our prayer.**

For those who suffer in silence—comfort those who carry secret sorrows,
Eternal God, **hear our prayer.**

For all who seek your face,
Eternal God, **hear our prayer.**

With thanks that you hear our prayers, spoken and unspoken, we entrust all of life to you, gracious God, our Alpha and Omega, our only hope in life and in death; through Jesus Christ we pray.

THE LORD’S PRAYER *Unison*
Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

ANTHEM *Chancel Choir*

SERMON *Rev. Steven Meadows*

**THE CHURCH FAMILY SCATTERS TO
SHARE GOOD NEWS**

+HYMN OF DEDICATION *UMH 98*
To God Be the Glory

+SERVICE OF LIGHT *The Acolytes*
Jesus said, “You are the light of the world.”


+BENEDICTION AND BLESSING

+POSTLUDE *Dan Martin*

...and the worship continues.

*Come Away to a
Quiet Place to Seek
God's Grace*

2nd Sunday after Epiphany
14 January 2024
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