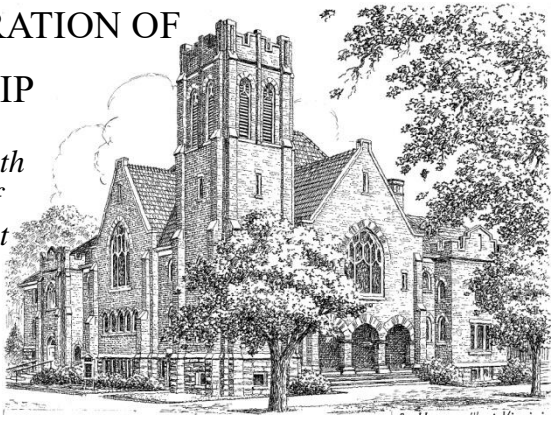


CELEBRATION OF WORSHIP

*To shine with
the Light of
Jesus Christ
so that
others will
know and
love him.*



+ Those who are able are invited to stand.

You are invited to respond with the **Bold** responses.

MOMENTS OF CENTERING

Dear Mother, I want you to know that I am constantly thinking of you and Father every day, and that I thank God for all that you are to me and the whole family. I know you've always lived for us and haven't lived a life of your own.... Thank you for all the love that has come to me in my cell from you during the past year, and has made every day easier for me. I think these hard years have brought us closer together than ever we were before. My wish for you and Father...and for us all is that the New Year may bring us at least an occasional glimmer of light, and that we may once more have the opportunity of being together.

May God keep you both well.

*-Birthday letter to Dietrich Bonhoeffer's mother from
prison, 1944*

Good Morning! Welcome to Worship!

PRE-SERVICE MUSIC

Carolyn Brown

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 174

His Name Is Wonderful

His name is wonderful, his name is wonderful, his name is wonderful, Jesus, my Lord. He is the mighty King, Master of everything; his name is wonderful, Jesus, my Lord. He's the great Shepherd, the Rock of all ages, almighty God is he; bow down before him, love and adore him, his name is wonderful, Jesus, my Lord.

+CALL TO WORSHIP

Responsively

The God of day and darkness moves among us...

We are the people of Living Water.

The God of hope and promise lives among us...

We are the people of Living Water.

The God of the lost and lonely calls us by name...

We are the people bathed in the Living Water of Creation, God's kin, traveling toward home and a love that will not let us go.

+INVOCATION

Unison

Holy One of every morning, we gather to remember who we are and whose we are. Open our hearts to the nudging of your Spirit that moves among us, empowering us to listen, to nurture, and to love one another as you love us. Give us eyes to see when you break into our lives through all you have made and wash us once again in your life-giving waters. Amen.

+HYMN OF PRAISE

UMH 250

Once In Royal David's City

THE CHURCH AND THE CHRISTIAN HOME

THE PSALTER

Psalms 23

LITANY & PRAYER FOR FAMILIES *Responsively*

Gracious God, you created us to dwell in community. We thank you for the witness of families in the scripture who help us know we do not have to be perfect to receive your love.

Help us remember the witness of the scripture, O God.

You created us to follow your vision. We thank you for the vision of your kingdom, where all are included and all needs are met.

Help us recall your words of justice, O God.

You gave us Jesus to teach us ways to live in community with one another, not with violence nor with hatred, but with equality and love.

Help us follow the path that Jesus has shown, O God.

You created us to act in ways that help those around us know the true meaning of following Jesus.

Help us act upon your ways that lead to a Christ-shaped, resurrection-shaped life, O God.

For all families, bless us in our lifelong quest to be faithful followers of Jesus Christ.

O God, through Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior, hear us as we pray.

Gracious God, who created all of humankind and showed us the importance of relationships with one another, we commend to your care all the families of this congregation, community, and world.

We pray that each home may be a home where love and grace is practiced. We pray for homes where fairness and mutual care does not exist – where there is danger, violence, insecurities of every kind, and hurtful words.

We pray for families who struggle because of lack of opportunity, lack of jobs, and lack of fair treatment in their daily lives.

We pray for children, youth, and adults, recognizing the importance of and the gift of every age as we grow.

We give you praise and gratitude for your grace that is present for all. Grant us wisdom to embrace God's presence in our homes, communities, and world. Grant us courage to speak out when we see injustice.

Grant us hope for those times when, all around us, we see only hurtful language and deeds.

Remind us, O God, of your caring presence surrounding us and guiding us each day. We pray, always reminded of your love for us through your son, Jesus, who taught us to 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.

THE CHURCH SHARES

OFFERTORY INVITATION

After you ask God for guidance in making your gift, have faith that your gift will make an impact, and let it go. You can't imagine what the results might be—for others or even for you—but God can. Let us make our offering in gratitude of God's ever-abiding presence in our lives.

OFFERTORY PRAYER

Unison

God of love, receive our gifts and send them to places where we never dreamed they would go. Let us follow your heart and give from our hearts. Please bless and multiply these gifts, as symbols of our gratitude for your great love for us and the world. Amen.

OFFERTORY

Dan Martin

+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 uplifts! Praise the Spirit, Holy Spirit! Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

THE CHURCH LISTENS FOR THE WORD

THE WORD

CHORAL CALL TO WIGGLETIME *UMH 191*

Jesus Loves Me

Jesus loves me! This I know, for the Bible tells me so. Little ones to him belong; they are weak, but he is strong. Yes, Jesus loves me! Yes, Jesus loves me! Yes, Jesus loves me! The bible tells me so.

WIGGLETIME

Children's Church

THE WORD IN MUSIC

Chancel Choir

SERMON

Rev. Steven Meadows

THE CHURCH SCATTERS TO SHARE GOOD NEWS

+HYMN OF DEDICATION

UMH 369

Blessed Assurance, Jesus Is Mine

+BENEDICTION

God's hand holds us fast and will never let us go. Let us leave this place in sure and certain faith that we are never separated from the love of God, our Creator, through Jesus Christ, our Lord. **Amen.**

+POSTLUDE

...and the worship continues.



Thanks, Mom!

And the sheep follow him
because they know
his voice.

FIRST
UNITED
METHODIST
CHURCH

Fourth Sunday of Easter
11 May 2025
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