Evangelical Lutheran Church of Durham

P.O. Box 100, Durham PA, 18039 610- 346-8500 durhamlutheran.org

Reverend James Heckman, Pastor 267-664-3160 / pastor@durhamlutheran.org



December 22, 2024 Fourth Sunday of Advent

Love magnifies the beloved. It notices the unnoticed. It heralds the unheralded. It calls down blessings on what has been ignored and overlooked. Love is a cherishing attention that requires our whole hearts and our whole selves.

You can find the live stream at the following location:

www.youtube.com/@DurhamLutheran

Worship from Sundays and Seasons.com. Copyright 2015 Augsburg Fortress. All rights reserved. Reprinted by permission under Augsburg Fortress Liturgies Annual License #SB170076.

Permission to podcast/stream the music in this service obtained from ONE LICENSE, License # 715933-A. All rights reserved.

Prelude:

GATHERING

P: Greeting to you in the name of the triune God, the one whose word always accomplishes: the Shaper of Life, the Savior of Humanity, the Spirit of Renewal.

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

(Stand if you are able)

P: Today, as we confess our sins, we recognize how easily we overlook the gifts God gives. And we accept the sad truth that our limitations often create the conditions for sin. Let us come in truth before the one who loves us and has freed us from our sin.

(Silence is kept for reflection)

- P: Let us pray,
- C: God, we want a faith that feels like more than words, but we lack your power to embody goodness. We hear your call to serve others yet feel too worn out to make the food. We hunger to taste justice but fear the burning spice of the meal. We want our place at your table but resist sitting beside a stranger. We have lost our appetites for mere thoughts and prayers, but we fail to match our intentions to our actions. Forgive us and restore us with the healing wholeness of your presence. Amen.
- P: My friends, God knows we are imperfect. But God did not invite us here today for what we have done or how we have behaved. God loves us. God always cared much more for us than for our shortcomings. God forgives us all our sins.
- C: We accept God's forgiveness and take our place in God's purpose. Amen.

Gathering Hymn: ELW 266 Verse 1,2,3



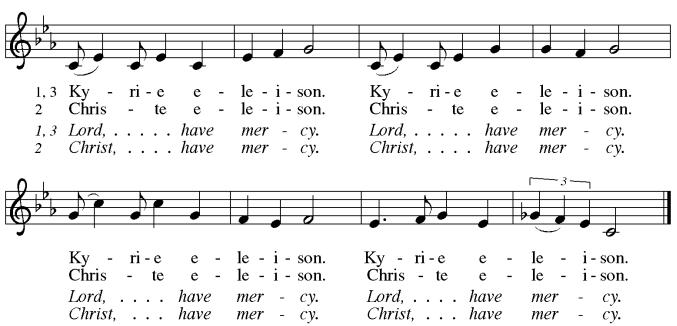
Text: Alberto Taulé, b. 1932; tr. Madeleine Forell Marshall, b. 1946 Music: TODA LA TIERRA, Alberto Taulé Spanish text and tune © 1993 and English text © 1995 Centro de Pastoral Litúrgica, admin. OCP Publications, 5536 NE Hassalo, Portland, OR 97213.

P: The Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Love of God and the community of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

C: And also with you

Kyrie-WOV 601





Music: Dinah Reindorf, b. c. 1927

Music © 1987 Dinah Reindorf, admin. Augsburg Fortress.

Duplication in any form prohibited without permission or valid license from copyright administrator.

Prayer of the Day

L: The Lord be with you.

C: And also with you.

Stir up your power, Lord Christ, and come. With your abundant grace and might, free us from the sin that binds us, that we may receive you in joy and serve you always, for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: Amen.

(Please be Seated)

First Reading-Micah 5:2-5a

The prophet Micah, having pronounced judgment upon Judah, speaks of a future shepherd-king who, like David, will come from the small town of Bethlehem. (Ephrathah refers to the area around Bethlehem.) This king will restore Israel and bring peace. New Testament writers understood this passage to be referring to Jesus.

L: A reading from the 5th chapter of Micah.

² But you, O Bethlehem of Ephrathah, who are one of the little clans of Judah, from you shall come forth for me one who is to rule in Israel, whose origin is from of old, from ancient days. ³ Therefore he shall give them up until the time when she who is in labor has brought

forth; then the rest of his kindred shall return to the people of Israel. ⁴ And he shall stand and feed his flock in the strength of the Lord, in the majesty of the name of the Lord his God. And they shall live secure, for now he shall be great to the ends of the earth; ^{5a} and he shall be the one of peace.

L: The Word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.



- P: Each of our Advent candles represents God's generous goodness, the advent of Jesus, God's greatest gift, the Spirit's fluttering flicker of joy. As we light each candle, we recognize the gifts God has given us this week. Together, we pray:
- P: God, you shield us like tender flames;
- C: your care enables us to burn brighter.
- P: God, we pool our faith like candlelight;
- C: through you we reveal hidden goodness.
- P: God, your justice upends this broken world.
- C: Use your mercy to transform everything that harms.
- P: God, we reach for unreasonable hope;
- C: and you prepare an incomparable future.
- P: God, we breathe in your peaceful refuge,
- C: for you have made a place where we can safely rest.
- P: Joy ebbs and flows each day, holy God.
- C: so we pray to you in honesty.
- P: Your love grows unseen, holy God;
- C: we prepare for you everyday.
- P: Now that the warmth of God's presence fills this place, we pray that the Spirit will illuminate our lives through the words we hear, the songs we sing, and the pathways of prayer engraved on our hearts. We Pray:

Lighting the Candles of the Advent Wreath

Blessing Prayer

O'Brien Family: Jesus, you shape the world around us, even when you remain just out of sight. As we listen today, help us prepare our lives for you with loving anticipation.

Place figures in Manger

Candle lighting hymn ELW 240 Verse 4

Light One Candle to Watch for Messiah



- 1 Light one can-dle to watch for Mes-si ah: let the light ban-ish dark ness.
- 2 Light two can-dles to watch for Mes-si ah: let the light ban-ish dark ness.
- 3 Light three can-dles to watch for Mes-si ah: let the light ban-ish dark ness.
- 4 Light four can-dles to watch for Mes-si ah: let the light ban-ish dark ness.



He shall bring sal - va - tion to Is - ra-el, God ful - fills the prom - ise. shall feed the flock like a shep-herd, gent - ly He lead them home-ward. lift high the gate-way for Lift your heads and the King of glo - ry. com - ing, tell the glad tid - ings. Let your lights shin - ing! He be

Text: Wayne L. Wold, b. 1954 Music: TIF IN VELDELE, Yiddish folk tune Text © 1984 Fortress Press, admin. Augsburg Fortress.

Duplication in any form prohibited without permission or valid license from copyright administrator.

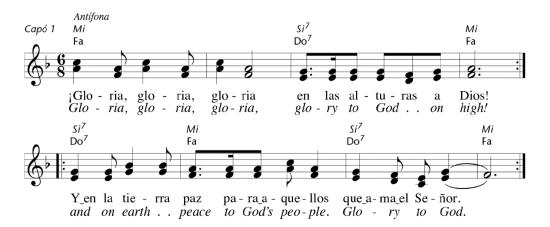
Second Reading - Hebrews 10:5-10

The author of Hebrews uses the image of religious sacrifice to convey the significance of Christ's coming. Through obedient acceptance of God's will, Christ allows his own body to become the greatest sacrifice of all, one through which we are made a holy people.

- L: A reading from the 10th chapter of Hebrews.
 - ⁵ Consequently, when Christ came into the world, he said, "Sacrifices and offerings you have not desired, but a body you have prepared for me; ⁶ in burnt offerings and sin offerings you have taken no pleasure. ⁷ Then I said, 'See, God, I have come to do your will, O God' (in the scroll of the book it is written of me)."
 - ⁸When he said above, "You have neither desired nor taken pleasure in sacrifices and offerings and burnt offerings and sin offerings" (these are offered according to the law), ⁹ then he added, "See, I have come to do your will." He abolishes the first in order to establish the second. ¹⁰ And it is by God's will that we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.
- L: The Word of the Lord.
- C: Thanks be to God.

Gospel Acclamation:

Gloria



Texto: Gloria in excelsis Deo; texto in inglés English Language Liturgical Consultation Música: Pablo Sosa, antifona; Libro de Liturgia y Cántico, entonaciones Música de la antifona © 1990 Pablo Sosa; música de las entonaciones © 1998 Augsburg Fortress

Duplication in any form prohibited without securing permission from copyright administrator or reporting usage under valid license

The Gospel: Luke 1:39-55

Elizabeth, John's mother, and Mary, the mother of Jesus, are two women filled with the Holy Spirit and with faith. In Elizabeth's inspired greeting and Mary's song of praise we hear of a saving God who remembers, scatters, lifts up, and fulfills all things.

P: The holy gospel according to Luke, the first chapter.

C: Glory to you, O Lord.

P: ³⁹ In those days Mary set out and went with haste to a Judean town in the hill country, ⁴⁰ where she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth. ⁴¹ When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the child leaped in her womb. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit ⁴² and exclaimed with a loud cry, "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb. ⁴³ And why has this happened to me, that the mother of my Lord comes to me? ⁴⁴ For as soon as I heard the sound of your greeting, the child in my womb leaped for joy. ⁴⁵ And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfillment of what was spoken to her by the Lord."

⁴⁶ And Mary said, "My soul magnifies the Lord, ⁴⁷ and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior, ⁴⁸ for he has looked with favor on the lowliness of his servant. Surely, from now on all generations will call me blessed; ⁴⁹ for the Mighty One has done great things for me, and holy is his name. ⁵⁰ His mercy is for those who fear him from generation to generation. ⁵¹ He has shown strength with his arm; he has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts. ⁵² He has brought down the powerful from their thrones, and lifted up the lowly; ⁵³ he has filled the hungry with good things, and sent the rich away empty. ⁵⁴ He has helped his servant Israel, in remembrance of his mercy, ⁵⁵ according to the promise he made to our ancestors, to Abraham and to his descendants forever."

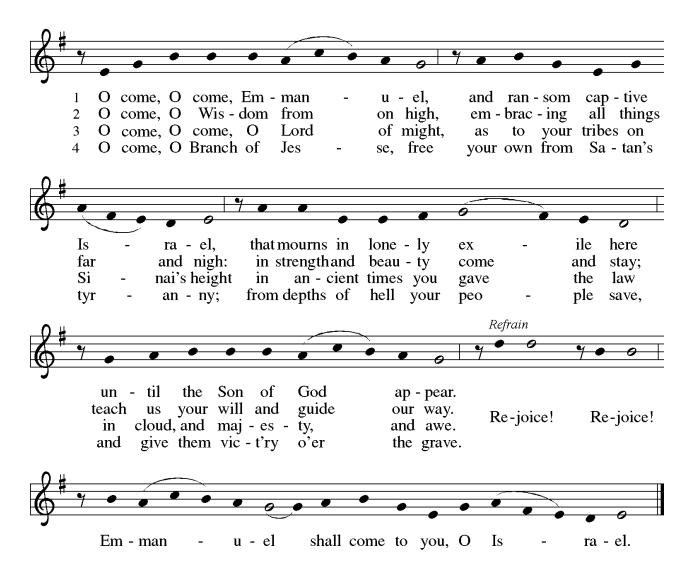
P: The gospel of the Lord.

C: Praise to you, O Christ.

Children's Sermon / Sermon (please be seated)

Hymn of the Day: ELW 257

O Come, O Come, Emmanuel



Text: Psalteriolum Cantionum Catholicarum, Köln, 1710; tr. composite Music: VENI, EMMANUEL, French processional, 15th cent. Text sts. 2, 6, 7 \odot 1997 Augsburg Fortress.

Duplication in any form prohibited without permission or valid license from copyright administrator.

Apostle's Creed

I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord. He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary. He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried. He descended into hell. On the third day he rose again. He ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

The pastor will read the first and last prayer, those in the congregation are invited to read the other prayer aloud as they feel called. The congregation may turn and face the aisle.

P: 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.

God our uniter, increase communication and cooperation in our relationships with those of other traditions and religions. Root your church in the radical message of your incarnation, and enable us to pursue your justice in the world. Lord, in your mercy,

C: Receive our prayer.

God our creator, we praise you for the beauty that surrounds us. Awaken in us a renewed sense of care for the wildlife in our communities. Form us into faithful stewards of what you have made. Lord, in your mercy,

C: Receive our prayer.

God our sovereign, Mary proclaims a new way of life that lifts up the lowly and fills the hungry with good things. Nurture in local governments and municipalities a desire to care for all who are overlooked and ignored. Lord, in your mercy,

C: Receive our prayer.

God our beacon, as the northern hemisphere begins its slow turn toward more daylight, remind us that even in the deepest nights, you are there. Comfort the lonely and bereaved. Hold closely the frightened, anxious, depressed, and ill (*especially those we mention now or in the comfort of our hearts*). Lord, in your mercy,

C: Receive our prayer.

God our guide, shepherd the leadership of this congregation. Bless the council and staff in discerning future ministry and open their hearts to the voices of the community. Lord, in your mercy,

C: Receive our prayer.

God our life, you remember the promises you have made to your people. In gratitude for those who have died, we praise you for your faithfulness throughout history. Lord, in your mercy,

C: Receive our prayer.

Here other intercessions may be offered.

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

C: Amen.

Sharing of the Peace

P: The peace of the Lord be with you always.

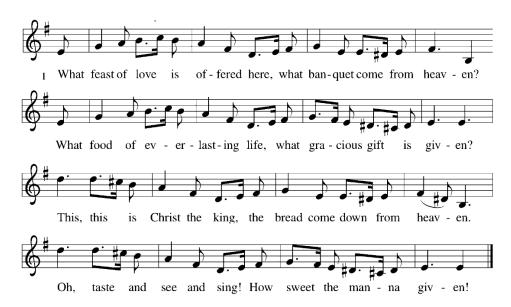
C: And also with you.

OFFERING

Choir Anthem: Come, Thou Long Expected Jesus-Jonathan Campbell

PRESENTATION OF THE GIFTS

What Feast of Love



Text: Delores Dufner, osB, b. 1939

Music: GREENSLEEVES, English ballad, 16th cent.
Text © 1993 Delores Dufner OSB. Published by OCP Publications. All rights reserved.

Duplication in any form prohibited without permission or valid license from copyright administrator.

Offering Prayer

- P: Together we pray. Holy Spirit, please bless these small gifts we give.
- C: You set the table with plenty of love.
- P: Prepare room in your home
- C: for my neighbor and me.
- P: Prepare a place in your vision
- C: for my neighbor and me.
- P: Prepare a seat at your table
- C: for my neighbor and me.
- P: Holy Spirit, you have blessed these gifts we give.
- C: You set the table with plenty of love.

THE HOLY COMMUNION

The Great Thanksgiving

- P: God is with you.
- C: And also with you.
- P: Offer your hearts to God
- C: We do, because we know God cares for us.

P: We give thanks to God.

C: God always deserves our thanks and praise.

PREFACE

P: God, yours was the First Thought; before any human lived or knew your name, you whispered, and creation built itself around your words. Before your ancient people knew the depth of your love, you promised them goodness, and led them to freedom.

C: Your love grows unseen.

P: Before the world knew your face, your own child was born in a quiet stable.

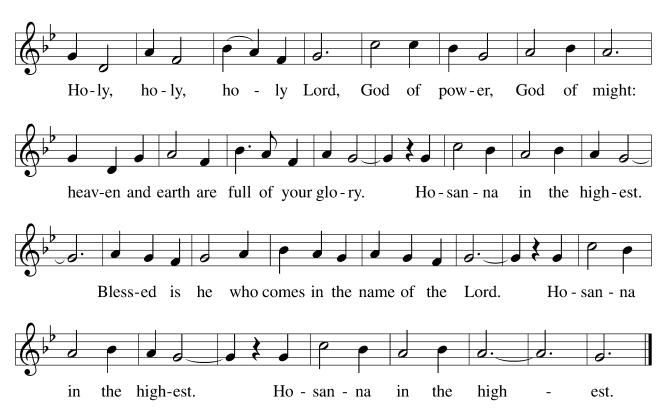
C: Your love blooms in the dark.

P: Before we knew the depth of your love, your child died, crucified, and you forgave, and new life grew in the grave.

C: Your love echoes in the silence.

P: Once you made Mary agelessly blessed. Once you turned turncoat disciples into the family of the forgiven. You wrote the words for their hope, and they sang the song of joy. What you have done for them you have also done for us. So we sing your praise:

Holy, Holy, Holy Lord



Text: "Sanctus," tr. English Language Liturgical Consultation Music: *Mass of Creation*, Marty Haugen, b. 1950 Music © 1984 GIA Publications, Inc., 7404 S. Mason Ave., Chicago, IL 60638. www.giamusic.com 800.442.3358 All rights reserved. Used by permission.

Duplication in any form prohibited without permission or valid license from copyright administrator.

THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE (said by Pastor)

On a night of betrayal, Jesus pulled close friends closer to eat with them one last time.

Jesus taught them, Jesus served them, Jesus took bread and said, This is my body, given for you, so you can eat it whenever you are hungry and every time you are hungry you can know my love.

Then Jesus took a cup filled with wine, and said, My forgiveness is more than words. This is my blood, poured out for you, so you can drink it to know that I forgive every sin.

This is the body of Jesus, the blood of Jesus. Jesus, we remember you died.

C: We remember.

P: We remember God's love sparked life in your dead body.

C: We remember.

P: We remember you shall return to empty every grave.

C: We remember.

P: And we remember these gifts as we pray the way Jesus taught us:

C: 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 and ever. Amen.

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

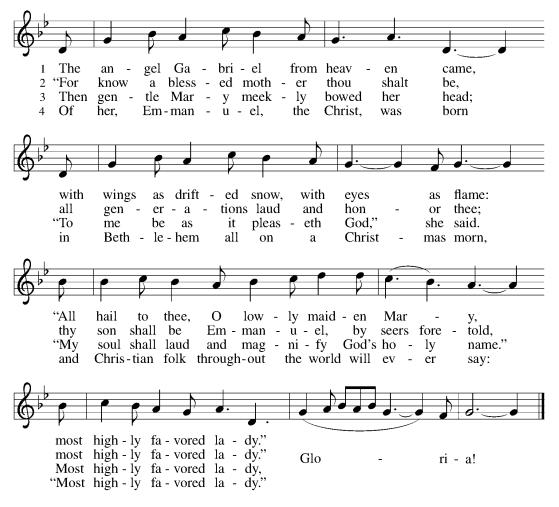
P: Holy Spirit, you are here now in this food, where you embody forgiveness; and in these people, whom you have leavened with grace. People of God, God's love grew unseen, but now you know it; God's love echoes in silence, but you have sung the song. Now come taste the goodness of God's mercy and notice what God has done for you.



Distribution of Bread & Fruits of the Vine (please follow usher)

SONG DURING COMMUNION: ELW 265

The Angel Gabriel from Heaven Came



Text: Basque carol; para. Sabine Baring-Gould, 1834–1924 Music: GABRIEL'S MESSAGE, Basque carol

Prayer after Communion

P: God, what you have planned for us unfolds slowly.

C: Your love is often unrecognizable, unappreciated, gentle and unnoticed.

P: But in this place we have noticed what others do not see.

C: We have tasted your unspoken goodness. And now we will magnify your love.

Announcements

BLESSING

P: Where is the care in this world? Where is the faith we were promised? Where is the hope we desired, when peace moves into our homes, and joy is a constant presence, and justice is for everyone?

C: God, this world waits to know that your love is more than words.

Sending Song: ELW 439

Soon and Very Soon



Text: Andraé Crouch, b. 1945

Music: VERY SOON, Andraé Crouch

Text and music © 1976 Bud John Songs, Inc./Crouch Music, admin. EMI Christian Music Publishing

Duplication in any form prohibited without permission or valid license from copyright administrator.

DISMISSAL

P: People of God, you have already shared the advent of God's goodness. You carry the blessing of God, God, the First Whisper, Jesus, the Living Promise, Spirit, the Speaker of Hearts. Now go into this world expecting God's justice and nurturing God's peace.

C: God, we will magnify your love.

Postlude:



Our Outreach envelopes for December will support AHUB (Advocates for the Homeless in Upper Bucks) as they work to provide Code Blue shelter to the homeless during bad weather.

<u>ANNOUNCEMENTS</u>				
December	BIRTHDAYS	ANNIVERSARIES	BAPTISMS	
23	Scott Gaun, Clayton Helfrich, Porter Genthner	Cheryl & Wayne Mesko (47)		

THIS WEEK'S ACTIVITIES					
Sunday, December 22	9:15 AM	Adult Sunday School in Library			
Fourth Sunday of Advent 9:30 AM		Choir Rehearsal			
	10:00 AM	Communion Worship			
		11:30-1:30 Messy Church			
Monday, December 23	1:00 PM- 3:00 PM	Admin Office Hours			
Tuesday, December 24 5:30 PM		Bishop Bryan Penman Worship-Upper Tinicum			
Nativity of our Lord	7:00 PM	Communion Worship at Durham			
Wednesday, December 25	MERRY CHRISTMAS	No Office Hours			
Thursday, December 26	10:00 AM - 1:00 PM	Admin Office Hours			
UPCOMING ACTIVITIES					
Sunday, December 29	9:15 AM	Adult Sunday school in the library			
Lessons and Carols	10:00 AM	Communion Worship			
Monday, December 30	1:00 PM- 3:00 PM	Admin Office Hours			
Wednesday, January 1	Happy New Year!	No Office Hours			
Thursday, January 2	10:00 AM - 1:00 PM	Office Hours			
	12:00 PM	Chat & Chew with Pr. Jim			
Sunday, January 5	9:15 AM	Adult Sunday school in the library.			
Epiphany	10:00 AM	Communion Worship			
		Undecorating Church			
Monday, January 6	1:00 PM- 3:00 PM	Admin Office Hours			
Tuesday, January 7	7:00 PM	Council Meeting			
Wednesday, January 8	10:00 AM - 2:00 PM	Office Hours			
Thursday, January 9	10:00 AM - 1:00 PM	Office Hours			
	12:00 PM	Chat & Chew with Pr. Jim			
	1:00 - 3:00 PM	Adult Bible Study @ Hlavaty's			
	7:00 PM	PALM Program Planning meeting at Durham			



Today's alter flowers are donated in honor of Clayton Helfrich's 17^{th} Birthday.



For Healing of those in our Congregation:

David Antoni; Joe Hlavaty; George Kreitz; Paul McGinn; Cheryl Mesko; Bethany Michl; Silas Rodenbach; Joanne and Bobby Ziegenfuss.

For Healing of Friends and Family:

Frank Allebach; Phyllis Allebach; Bob Benoure; Jason Bigley; Stephen Bizon; Clay Butler; Doris Calverley; Deb Carmichael; Jane Carr; Peggy Coleman; Stephanie Courtney; David Davis; Nancy Edelen; Carol and Leon Errico; Nora Fallon; Fred Foerster; Gabriella Froehlich; Barbara Foster; Debbie Gardner; Candie Gimbar; Baree Lee Goodman; Jason Gourley; Rev. Bradley Gow; Penni Griffith; Andrew Hales; Krista Heyer; Penny Houck; Bill Hunt; Lois James & family; Martine King; Tim Koplin; Mary Lily; Rev. David Lisner; Jim McAnally; Charleigh McCade; Letitia McCrea; Connor McDevitt; Patrick McNaulty; Nancy Morris; Sue Odor; Lucia Otero; Leslie Patience; Jennifer Phelps; Lisa Ridge; Connie Rugen; Tammy Sassman; Paul Sauter; Ruth Sauter; Bart Shaw; Laurel Sheetz; Donna Storm; Russ Trauger; Joe V.; Kelly Walsh; Jacqueline Ward; Dean Erika Wesch; Henry Wong; Wayne Yeisley; Barbara Yob.

For those who are Homebound:

James Altemose; Cleo Eck; Frank Mammana; Jayne Miller and Ed Xander.

For families and friends grieving the loss of:

Norma Fox and Kenneth Hager

If you want to add or remove someone from the prayer list, please contact Joan Mammana either by phone (610-258-5717 or 610-417-6553) or by email at: joanmammana@icloud.com

Worship Assistants

	•	
Preacher	Rev. James Heckman	
Organist/Choir Director	Carolyn Williams	
Altar Guild	Mark Harwick, Linda Sauter, Suzanne Mauer	
Greeter(s)	Lilly O'Brien	
Acolyte	Tucker Wagner	
Lector	Kris Simmons	
Head / Communion Usher	Mark Harwick	
Council Communion / Counting	Jack Pyne & Ken Anderson	
Technology & Livestreaming	Ken Anderson	
Administrative	Kathryn Wagner	
Custodian	Dianna Streletz	



Please join us downstairs after the service!