# **GRACE LUTHERAN CHURCH**

1200 River Road, Teaneck, NJ 07666 (201) 836-0994 THE REV. MARGARET NIEDERER – PASTOR (201) 403-4341 + pegniederer@gmail.com CAROL WEBER – CANTOR

# THE TWENTY-FIFTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

NOVEMBER 19, 2023 10 AM



Our readings during November speak of the end times. Zephaniah proclaims that the coming day of the LORD will be filled with wrath and distress. Paul says it will come like a thief in the night and urges us to be awake and sober. Jesus tells the parable of the talents, calling us to use our gifts, while we still have time, for the greater and common good. In a world filled with violence and despair, we gather around signs of hope—word, water, bread, and wine—eager to welcome the good news of Christ's coming among us.

**VISIT US AT:** 

WWW.GRACELUTHERANTEANECK.ORG and ON FACEBOOK

# Welcome to worship!

# Masking is optional but recommended while indoors.

**PRELUDE** O God, Our Help in Ages Past

Paul Manz

#### **CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS**

Please stand to face the baptismal font.

All may make the sign of the cross as Pastor begins:

P. Blessed be God.

the one who forms us.

+ Jesus who bears the cross.

the Spirit who makes our joy complete.

- C. Amen.
- P. Let us bow before God in humility, confessing our sin.

# Silence is kept for reflection.

- P. Steadfast and faithful God.
- C. you have revealed the ways of justice,

vet justice does not always prevail.

We are overwhelmed by the world's violence and suffering.

Sometimes we are afraid to risk what we have

for the sake of others.

For the harm we have caused,

known and unknown, forgive us.

For the unjust demands we place on others

and your creation, forgive us.

For the ways we turn away

from you and our neighbor, forgive us.

Lead us back to you

and set us on the right path;

in the name of Jesus Christ, our Savior.

Amen.

P. Beloved in Christ,

God's justice stretches beyond all understanding.

God's compassion is beyond compare.

In Jesus, God is always making a new way for us.

In + Christ, you are already and always forgiven.

C. Amen.

# **ENTRANCE HYMN**

# O God, Our Help in Ages Past

LBW 320



- 1 O God, our help in a ges past, our hope for years to come,
- 2 Un der the shad-ow of your throne your saints have dwelt se cure;
- 3 Be fore the hills in or der stood or earth re ceived its frame,
- 4 A thou-sand a ges in your sight are like an eve-ning gone,



shel - ter from the storm-y blast, and our e - ter - nal home: suf - fi - cient is your arm a - lone, and our de-fense is sure. from ev - er - last - ing you are God, to end - less years the same. short as the watch that ends the night be - fore the ris - ing sun.

- 5 Time, like an ever-rolling stream, soon bears us all away; we fly forgotten, as a dream dies at the op'ning day.
- 6 O God, our help in ages past, our hope for years to come, still be our guard while troubles last and our eternal home!

Text: Isaac Watts, 1674–1748, alt. Music: ST. ANNE, William Croft, 1678–1727

# **GREETING**

- P. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.
- C. And also with you.



# **KYRIE**



In peace, let us pray to the Lord.





For the peace from above, and for our salvation, let us pray to the Lord.

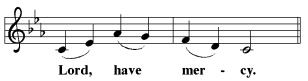


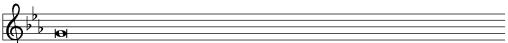


For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the church of God,



and for the unity of all, let us pray to the Lord.





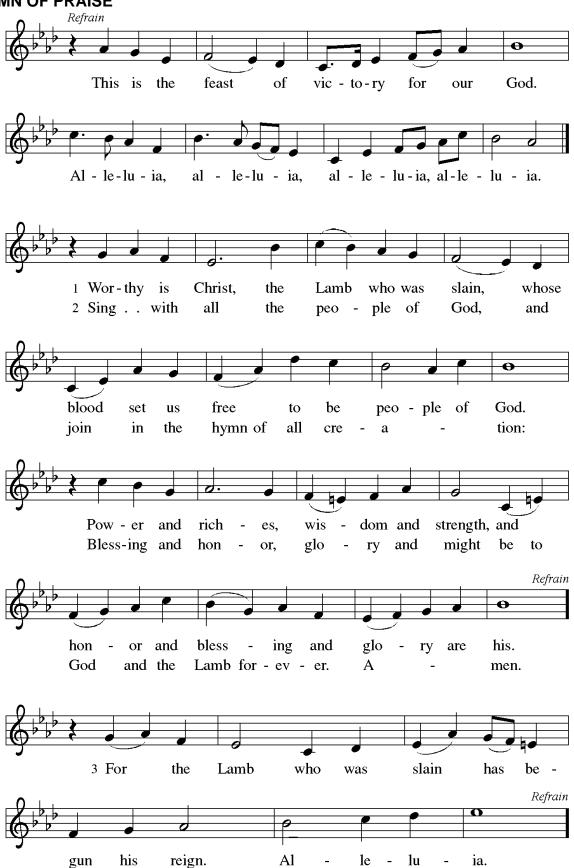
For this holy house, and for all who offer here their worship and praise,



Help, save, comfort, and de - fend us, gra - cious Lord.



# **HYMN OF PRAISE**



#### PRAYER OF THE DAY

- P. The Lord be with you.
- C. And also with you.
- P. Let us pray.

Righteous God, our merciful master, you own the earth and all its peoples, and you give us all that we have. Inspire us to serve you with justice and wisdom, and prepare us for the joy of the day of your coming, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

C. Amen.

### Please be seated.

# FIRST READING Zephaniah 1:7, 12-18

Zephaniah (like the prophet Amos in last week's first reading) presents the day of the LORD as one of judgment and wrath. Descriptions of the last day in the New Testament include details taken from Old Testament accounts of the day of the LORD.

# A. A reading from Zephaniah, chapter 1.

<sup>7</sup>Be silent before the Lord GoD! For the day of the LORD is at hand; the LORD has prepared a sacrifice, he has consecrated his guests.

- <sup>12</sup>At that time I will search Jerusalem with lamps, and I will punish the people who rest complacently on their dregs, those who say in their hearts, "The LORD will not do good, nor will he do harm."
- <sup>13</sup>Their wealth shall be plundered, and their houses laid waste. Though they build houses, they shall not inhabit them; though they plant vineyards, they shall not drink wine from them.
- <sup>14</sup>The great day of the LORD is near, near and hastening fast; the sound of the day of the LORD is bitter, the warrior cries aloud there.
- <sup>15</sup>That day will be a day of wrath, a day of distress and anguish, a day of ruin and devastation, a day of darkness and gloom, a day of clouds and thick darkness,
- 16a day of trumpet blast and battle cry against the fortified cities and against the lofty battlements.
- <sup>17</sup>I will bring such distress upon people that they shall walk like the blind; because they have sinned against the LORD, their blood shall be poured out like dust, and their flesh like dung.
- <sup>18</sup>Neither their silver nor their gold will be able to save them on the day of the LORD's wrath; in the fire of his passion the whole earth shall be consumed; for a full, a terrible end he will make of all the inhabitants of the earth.
- A. The Word of God. The Word of life.
- C. Thanks be to God.

# **PSALM** 90:1-8 [9-11] 12 **READ RESPONSIVELY**

- <sup>1</sup>Lord, you have been our refuge from one generation to another.
- <sup>2</sup>Before the mountains were brought forth, or the land and the earth were born, from age to age you are God.
- <sup>3</sup>You turn us back to the dust and say, "Turn back, O children of earth."
- <sup>4</sup>For a thousand years in your sight are like yesterday when it is past and like a watch in the night;
- <sup>5</sup>you sweep them away like a dream, they fade away suddenly like the grass:
- <sup>6</sup>in the morning it is green and flourishes;
  - in the evening it is dried up and withered.
- <sup>7</sup>For we are consumed by your anger; we are afraid because of your wrath.
- <sup>8</sup>Our iniquities you have set before you,
  - and our secret sins in the light of your countenance.
- [ 9When you are angry, all our days are gone; we bring our years to an end like a sigh.
  - <sup>10</sup>The span of our life is seventy years, perhaps in strength even eighty; yet the sum of them is but labor and sorrow,
    - for they pass away quickly and we are gone.
  - <sup>11</sup>Who regards the power of your wrath? Who rightly fears your indignation?
  - <sup>12</sup>So teach us to number our days that we may apply our hearts to wisdom.

## SECOND READING 1 Thessalonians 5:1-11

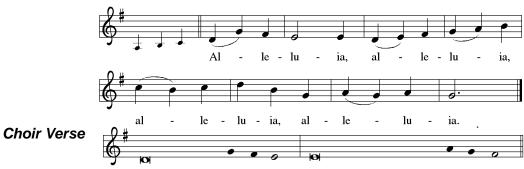
Though we do not know and cannot calculate the day of Christ's return, we live faithfully in the here and now as we anticipate the day when we will be given eternal salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ.

# A. A reading from 1<sup>st</sup> Thessalonians, chapter 5.

¹Now concerning the times and the seasons, brothers and sisters, you do not need to have anything written to you. ²For you yourselves know very well that the day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night. ³When they say, "There is peace and security," then sudden destruction will come upon them, as labor pains come upon a pregnant woman, and there will be no escape! ⁴But you, beloved, are not in darkness, for that day to surprise you like a thief; ⁵for you are all children of light and children of the day; we are not of the night or of darkness. ⁶So then let us not fall asleep as others do, but let us keep awake and be sober; ⁻for those who sleep, sleep at night, and those who are drunk, get drunk at night. ⁶But since we belong to the day, let us be sober, and put on the breastplate of faith and love, and for a helmet the hope of salvation. ⁶For God has destined us not for wrath but for obtaining salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, ¹⁰who died for us, so that whether we are awake or asleep we may live with him. ¹¹Therefore encourage one another and build up each other, as indeed you are doing.

- A. The Word of God. The Word of life.
- C. Thanks be to God.

# **GOSPEL ACCLAMATION**



Abide in me as I a- I bide in you;\*
those who abide in me I bear much fruit. (John 15:4, 5)

### ALL REPEAT THE ALLELUIAS.

#### GOSPEL Matthew 25:14-30

Jesus tells a parable about his second coming, indicating that it is not sufficient merely to maintain things as they are. Those who await his return should make good use of the gifts that God has provided them.

# P. The Holy Gospel According to Matthew, chapter 25. **C. Glory to you, O Lord.**

[Jesus said to the disciples:] 14"For it is as if a man, going on a journey, summoned his slaves and entrusted his property to them; <sup>15</sup>to one he gave five talents, to another two, to another one, to each according to his ability. Then he went away. <sup>16</sup>The one who had received the five talents went off at once and traded with them, and made five more talents. <sup>17</sup>In the same way, the one who had the two talents made two more talents. <sup>18</sup>But the one who had received the one talent went off and dug a hole in the ground and hid his master's money. 19 After a long time the master of those slaves came and settled accounts with them. <sup>20</sup>Then the one who had received the five talents came forward, bringing five more talents, saying, 'Master, you handed over to me five talents; see, I have made five more talents.' 21 His master said to him, 'Well done, good and trustworthy slave; you have been trustworthy in a few things, I will put you in charge of many things; enter into the joy of your master.' 22 And the one with the two talents also came forward, saying, 'Master, you handed over to me two talents; see, I have made two more talents.' <sup>23</sup>His master said to him, 'Well done, good and trustworthy slave; you have been trustworthy in a few things. I will put you in charge of many things; enter into the joy of your master.' 24Then the one who had received the one talent also came forward, saying, 'Master, I knew that you were a harsh man, reaping where you did not sow, and gathering where you did not scatter seed; <sup>25</sup>so I was afraid, and I went and hid your talent in the ground. Here you have what is yours.' <sup>26</sup>But his master replied, 'You wicked and lazy slave! You knew, did you, that I reap where I did not sow, and gather where I did not scatter? <sup>27</sup>Then you ought to have invested my money with the bankers. and on my return I would have received what was my own with interest. <sup>28</sup>So take the talent from him, and give it to the one with the ten talents. <sup>29</sup>For to all those who have, more will be given, and they will have an abundance; but from those who have nothing, even what they have will be taken away. 30 As for this worthless slave, throw him into the outer darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth."

# P. The Gospel of the Lord. ALL REPEAT THE ALLELUIAS.

#### **SERMON Pastor Niederer**

#### Silence for Meditation

### Please stand.



Text: Howell E. Lewis, 1860-1953, alt.

Music: ABBOT'S LEIGH, Cyril V. Taylor, 1907-1991

Text © Union of Welsh Independents

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# **NICENE CREED**

A. Let us confess our faith with Christians throughout the world by using the Nicene Creed.

We believe in one God. the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen. We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God. begotten, not made, of one Being with the Father; through him all things were made. For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven, was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary and became truly human. For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;

he suffered death and was buried.
On the third day he rose again
in accordance with the scriptures;
he ascended into heaven
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,
and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son,\* who with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified, who has spoken through the prophets.

We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic church.

We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.

We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.

# PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

# Julie Buckingham

Let us turn our hearts to God, our breath and life, as we pray for the church, the world, and all who are in need.

#### A brief silence.

Gracious God, you give talents and gifts to all your people, and you equip the church to serve. Turn us from fear and self-serving ways, that we use our talents to glorify you and encourage our neighbor.

Hear us, O God. Your mercy is great.

We pray for our partners in ministry here in Teaneck, in the Meadowlands Cluster, the Northern Mission District, the New Jersey Synod, Lutheran Social Ministries of New Jersey, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, the wider Christian Community, our friends from Light and Peace Mission in Haiti, and people of faith everywhere, as they live out their calling to serve.

Hear us, O God. Your mercy is great.

You have been our dwelling place from one generation to another. Sustain the life of the planet; protect farmlands and harvests. Direct all people in wise stewardship of all the earth's resources.

Hear us, O God. Your mercy is great.

You call us to honesty and integrity. Instill these values in the hearts of all nations and their leaders, especially in Russia, Ukraine, Israel, Gaza, and the United States. Free any who are oppressed, expose all corruption, and bring redemption to victims of injustice.

Hear us, O God. Your mercy is great.

You teach us to count our days that we may gain a wise heart. Where there is sickness or sorrow, bring healing, and where there is loneliness, reveal your love in community. We remember before you (pause as names are said).

Hear us, O God. Your mercy is great.

We pray for the faith formation ministries of our church. Give to all children, youth, and adults who study your word the breastplate of faith and love. Shape us by your love and show us how to encourage one another.

Hear us, O God. Your mercy is great.

Gracious God, you are faithful in all generations. For the promise of life and rest and for the witness of those who have died in faith we praise your goodness.

Hear us, O God. Your mercy is great.

- P. We offer our spoken prayers and those held in our hearts trusting in your mercy; through Jesus Christ our Savior and Lord.
- C. Amen. 10 -

# PEACE Please stay at your seat as you share a sign of peace.

- P. The peace of the Lord be with you always.
- C. And also with you.

## **OFFERING**

Please place your offering in the plate located on the table at the back of the sanctuary before or after Worship.

Please be seated.

# **CONSECRATION & BLESSING OF 2024 ESTIMATE OF GIVING**

# OFFERTORY HYMN Let Us Talents and Tongues Employ **WOV 754** us tal - ents and tongues em - ploy, shout of joy: reach-ing out with a 2 Christ is a - ble to make us the ta - ble he sets the tone, one, at 3 Je - sus calls us in, sends us out bear-ing fruit in a world of doubt,

bread is bro-ken, the wine is poured, Christ is spo-ken and seen and heard. teach-ing peo-ple to live to bless, gives us love to tell, bread to share: God (Im-man-u-el) ev-'ry-where!



Je - sus lives a-gain, earth can breathe a-gain, pass the Word a-round: loaves a - bound!

Text: Fred Kaan, b. 1929

Music: LINSTEAD, Jamaican folk tune; adapt. Doreen Potter, 1925-1980

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#### Please stand.

### OFFERTORY PRAYER

# A. Let us pray.

God of all goodness, generations have turned to you, gathered around your table, and shared your abundant blessings. Number us among them that, as we gather these gifts from your abundance, and give thanks for your rich blessings as we care for all that you have made, through Jesus Christ, our Sovereign Savior and Lord. **C. Amen.** 

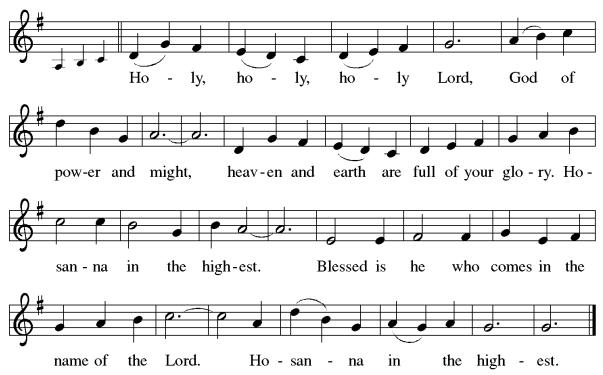
### THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

- P. The Lord be with you.
- C. And also with you.
- P. Lift up your hearts.
- C. We lift them to the Lord.
- P. Let us give thanks to the Lord.
- C. It is right to give our thanks and praise.

### THE PREFACE

P. It is indeed right, our duty and our joy, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God, through our Savior Jesus Christ; who on this day overcame death and the grave, and by his glorious resurrection opened to us the way of everlasting life. And so, with all the choirs of angels, with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

# **SANCTUS**



#### Please kneel or be seated.

#### THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE

P. Holy, mighty, and merciful Lord, heaven and earth are full of your glory. In great love you sent to us Jesus, your Son, who reached out to heal the sick and suffering, who preached good news to the poor, and who, on the cross, opened his arms to all.

In the night in which he was betrayed, our Lord Jesus took bread, Blessed and broke it and gave it to his disciples, saying: Take and eat. This is my body given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks, And gave it for all to drink, saying: This cup is the new covenant in my blood, Shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin. Do this for the remembrance of me.

Remembering, therefore, his death, resurrection, and ascension, we await his coming in glory. For as often as we eat of this bread and drink from this cup we proclaim the mystery of faith;

# C. Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.

P. Pour out upon us and this bread and cup the Spirit of your love, O Lord, and unite the wills of all who share this heavenly food, the body and blood of Jesus, who is the Christ, our Lord; to whom with you and the Holy Spirit, be all honor and glory now and forever.

C. Amen.

# LORDS PRAYER

- P. Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, we say the prayer Jesus has taught us:
- C. Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name,

Your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is 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.

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

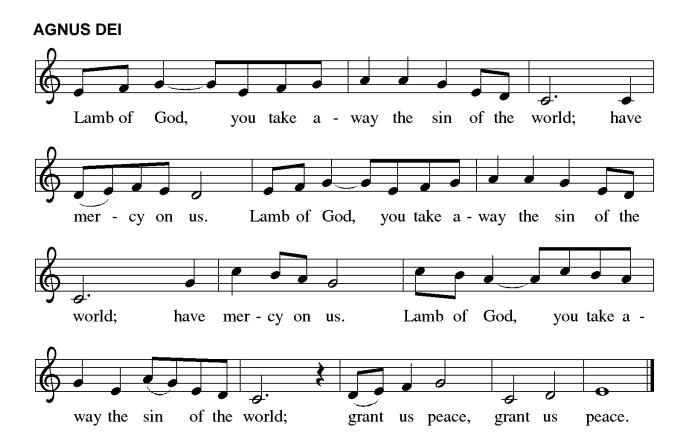
# **INVITATION TO COMMUNION**

P. There is a place for you at the banquet.

Come and feast at Jesus' table.

Come to the table where all are welcome.







## **CONTINUOUS COMMUNION**

Please come forward for Communion following the Cantor/Choir, beginning with those in the back pews, from alternating sides, leaving adequate space between you and the person in front of you.

Masking is optional but recommended as you come forward to receive the wafer & cup until you step away from the communion tray.

A tray with individual cups is located in front of each pew section.

The center contains purple grape juice.

White wine is in the remainder of the tray.

After use, please deposit cup in receptacle at the end of pew section.

Baptized Christians who recognize the presence of Christ in the bread and wine for the forgiveness of sins and eternal life are welcome to receive communion. If you have not yet been baptized or have never before received Holy Communion, you may come forward to receive a blessing. Fold your arms across your chest to let the Pastor know you wish to receive a blessing.

## Please stand.

### **POST-COMMUNION BLESSING:**

- P May the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in his grace.
- C Amen.



Thank-ful hearts and voic - es raise; ev-'ry-one what God has done. tell



Let all who seek the Lord re - joice and bear Christ's ho - ly



Send us with your prom-is - es and lead your peo-ple forth in joy with



Text: John W. Arthur, 1922-1980 Music: Richard W. Hillert, b. 1923 Text and music © 1978, 1995 Augsburg Fortress.

# **POST COMMUNION PRAYER**

# A. Let us pray:

Lord Jesus, in this simple meal you have set a banquet. Sustain us on the journey. Strengthen us to care for the least of your beloved children, and give us glad and generous hearts as we meet you on the way.

C. Amen.

### **BLESSING**

P. May the God of all creation, in whose image we are made, who claims us and calls us beloved, who strengthens us for service, give you reason to rejoice and be glad! The blessing of God, Sovereign, + Savior, and Spirit, be with you today and always.

# C. AMEN.

### Please be seated.

# **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

### Please stand.

#### Lord of Glory, You Have Bought Us SENDING HYMN **ELW 707** Lord of glo have bought us with your life - blood you ry, Grant us hearts, dear Lord, glad - ly, free - ly, to give you hum - blest 3 Won - drous hon giv - en or you have to our bought us with life - blood Lord of glo ry, you have your the price, nev - er grudg-ing for the lost ones that tre as of your own. With the sun - shine of your good-ness melt our sen - tence,"You char - i - ty in your own mys - te - rious have the price, nev - er grudg - ing for the lost ones that tre sac - ri - fice; with free - ly men - dous and that have giv - en thank - less hearts of stone till our cold and self - ish na - tures, me." pris - on, hun - gry done it all to Na - ked, sick, in men - dous faith bold - ly, sac - ri - fice. Give us to trust you bless - ings count - less the un - thank - ful the sand as to warmed by you, at length be - lieve that more hap рy in the least, your face we view, say - ing by your hope, souls you: but. best of to stay our on oh, and the vil with your own un - spar - ing hand. and more bless ed 'tis to give than to re - ceive. poor need 'Give I have giv'n you." and y, as to all your grac with your love our love re - new. es,

Text: Eliza S. Alderson, 1818-1889, alt.

Music: HYFRYDOL, Rowland H. Prichard, 1811-1887

## **DISMISSAL**

- A. Beloved of God, go in peace to love and serve the Lord.
- C. Thanks be to God.

**POSTLUDE** 

Toccata and Fugue in d minor

Johann Ernst Ebelin

# OUR SPECIAL THANKS TODAY TO

Sue Papera, Greeter
Jack Martinez - Crucifer
Julie Buckingham, Liturgical Cantor
Fred Lewis, Liturgist & Reader
Julie Buckingham, Prayers of Intercession
Sue Papera and Janet Thalmann, Altar Care

# NO BIBLE STUDY THIS WEEK THANKSGIVING



# Tuesday, November 21<sup>st</sup> – 7:30 PM In-Person & Live-Streamed

Please bring Non-Perishable Food. Items will be given to Christ Food Pantry for distribution.

Money offerings will be used to provide meals for the children in Haiti.



#### **PRAYERS**

Carol Weber; Doris Baumann (Carol's mom); Katie Wolfe with vision issues (Carol's cousin); Donna Roberts (Carol's cousin with pain); Donald Lazlear and his family (Zulema's friends); Katie (Zulema's niece), Surella (Katie's mom); Rose Davis (Surella's friend with cancer); Michael Yaffe (following surgery); Marc Yaffe (Leslyn's and Michael's son); Melanie M. (Julie's friend); The cousin-in-law of Julie's coworker, undergoing rehab for injuries sustained in an automobile accident; Laurie Wahner (Lynn's sister with several health concerns); Susan Bethke (Lynn's cousin undergoing chemo and other treatment for a brain tumor); Marion Soohoo (Will's Mother-in-law recovering from surgery); Chris Trizis with health issues. We also pray for his wife, Marlene. (Lynn's husband's long time friends); Paul Dahlke (Lynn's friend's cousin with cancer); Arlene Rizzo (Sue's friend undergoing cancer treatments) and Arlene's family; Chris Palmer (Sue Papera's friend who has health concerns); Caleb (Sue's friend with mental health issues); Jenny L. (Sue's friend with health issues); Carol Mulvaney (Sue's friend with breast cancer); Edward Foley (back surgery, father of Nancy who does the payroll for Grace); Jason and Paul Thalmann (Janet's nephew and brother); Beverly Philip (a friend of Janet's sister-in-law with severe dementia); Kathy O'Brien (a coworker of Janet Thalmann's sister-in-law); Bert Maltz (a friend of Janet's sister-in-law. Several health concerns); Michele Rusciano (a friend of Janet Thalmann's sister-in-law); Mark Crovatto (Al's son); Susan Beever (Mary Ellen's friend); Dominick Capalba (Mary Ellen's 6 year old friend with brain cancer); Patty Fitzgerald (Mary Ellen's sister with terminal lung cancer); Jessica and Casey O'Neil (Kay Roseen's daughter and son-inlaw) who work for the State Department; Dan and John Steffen (Lorli's brothers with health concerns); Tammy (Lorli's niece who has an immune disorder); James Ilgenfritz (Erika's son); Peter Schelbli (Erika's nephew with cancer); Kevin (a friend of the congregation undergoing treatment for cancer); Chris Niederer (Pastor's son with immune system disorder); Cathyann (Pastor's friend from seminary with pancreatic cancer); Walter Byrne (friend of the congregation with cancer); Doris Feirer (a friend of the congregation); Dennis Keohane (Catherine's uncle); Charlie and Mary Lewis (Fred's brother and sister-in-law with health concerns); Donna Maxwell with health concerns; James Mingo (Donna's grandson with health concerns); Arouss Darpinian (friend of the congregation with health concerns); Hana Kim (health concerns); US citizens imprisoned in Russia: Paul Whelan (in prison for over six years) and Evan Gershkovich (a Wall Street Journalist detained for about 3 or 4 months); Christians under persecution and all experiencing violence: the people of Israel, Palestine, Syria, Lebanon, Ukraine, Russia, Afghanistan; organizations and individuals who are providing resources and care for refugees; front line workers, medical researchers; health experts, national and regional officials; those affected by natural disasters and wildfires.

Let Lynn or Pastor know of any changes needed on the prayer list.



# **COMMEMORATIONS FOR THE WEEK**

# Clement, Bishop of Rome, died around 100 Thursday, November 23, 2023

Clement was the third bishop of Rome. He is best remembered for a letter he wrote to the congregation in Corinth, still struggling with the same problems that led to Paul's letters to them. As did Paul, he focused on the need for love among Christians.

# Miguel Agustín Pro, martyr, died 1927 Thursday, November 23, 2023

Pro grew up in a time when the Mexican revolutionaries accused the church of siding with the wealthy. He became a Jesuit priest, and worked on behalf of the poor and homeless. Falsely accused of throwing a bomb at a government official, he was executed, but not before crying out "Long live Christ the King!"

# Justus Falckner, died 1723; Jehu Jones, died 1852; William Passavant, died 1894; pastors in North America Friday, November 24, 2023

Not only was Falckner the first Lutheran ordained in North America, but he published a catechism which was the first Lutheran book published on the continent. Jones was the Lutheran church's first African American pastor and carried out missionary work in Philadelphia which led to the formation there of the first African American Lutheran congregation (St. Paul's). William Passavant helped to establish hospitals and orphanages in a number of cities and was the first to introduce deaconesses to the work of hospitals in the United States.

# Isaac Watts, hymnwriter, died 1748 Saturday, November 25, 2023

Thought by many to be the greatest hymnwriter in the English language, Watts as a youth was critical of the quality of the metrical psalter of the time. He wrote about 600 hymns—many based on the psalms, but others that are not.

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