

God of great compassion, and love, listen to the prayers of these your people. Grant to all the blessings we ask in the name of Christ who taught us to pray together saying:

**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.**

*You are invited to kneel at the chancel rail, light a candle, or remain seated during this time of prayer.*

Music During Time of Prayer

“To a Wild Rose” Mac Dowell, Nile Sickles, piano

*Prayer for New Beginnings*

God of all seasons and senses, grant us a sense of your time.  
In this season, teach us the lessons of beginnings;  
That such waiting and ending may be the starting place,  
A planting of seeds which bring to birth what is ready to be born-  
Something right and just and different,  
A new song, a deeper relationship, a fuller love in the fullness of your time.  
O God, grant us the sense of your time. **Amen.**

\*Hymn #707            **Hymn of Promise**

\*Benediction

*\*Those who are able, please stand.*



Gathering Music

Greeting and Prayer

\*Hymn # 196    **Come Thou Long Expected Jesus**

Come, thou long expected Jesus, born to set thy people free.  
From our fears and sins release us, let us find our rest in thee.  
Israel's strength and consolation, hope of all the earth thou art;  
Dear desire of every nation, joy of every longing heart.

Born thy people to deliver, born a child and yet a King,  
born to reign in us forever, now thy gracious kingdom, bring.  
By thine own eternal spirit rule in all our hearts alone;  
by thine all sufficient merit, raise us to thy glorious throne.

*Reading of Scripture*

Isaiah 40:1-5 selected

**Moment of silence**

*Responsive Reading*      *Luke 1: 68-79*

Leader: Praise be to the Lord, the God of Israel, because he has come and has redeemed his people.

**All: He has raised up a horn of salvation for us in the house of his servant David (as he said through his holy prophets of long ago),**

Leader: salvation from our enemies and from the hand of all who hate us—to show mercy to our fathers and to remember his holy covenant, the oath he swore to our father Abraham:

**All: to rescue us from the hand of our enemies, and to enable us to serve him without fear in holiness and righteousness before him all our days.**

Leader: And you, my child, will be called a prophet of the Most High; for you will go on before the Lord to prepare the way for him, to give his people the knowledge of salvation through the forgiveness of their sins,

**All: because of the tender mercy of our God, by which the rising sun will come to us from heaven to shine on those living in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the path of peace.”**

### Moment of silence

*Reading of Scriptures*

Matthew 1: 18-21

Luke 2: 4-14

Matthew 2:1-2, 7-15

John 1:1-5

*Prayer of Remembrance*

This first candle we light to remember  
those whom we have loved and lost.

This second candle we light to remember  
the loss of relationships, jobs, health, and all that affect our  
wellbeing.

This third candle we light is to remember  
ourselves this Christmas time.

This fourth candle we light to remember  
our faith and the gift of hope which the Christmas story  
offers to us.

We pause to gather up the pain of the past, asking that from God's hands we receive the gift of peace. Let us remember the one who shows the way, and who bears the light. Refresh, restore, renew us O God, and lead us into your future. **Amen**

*Musical Gift*      “Of the Father's Love Begotten”

*Time of Prayer and Intercessions*

As we pray, we invite you to respond to God in your goodness”  
with **“Hear our prayer.”**

God in your goodness: **Hear our prayer.**

Spirit of the Living Christ, We thirst for your presence;  
The searching of our mind, the longings of our hearts, truly our  
souls are restless. Yet you are our healer, enlarging our vision  
even when we cry in pain, calming our hearts with your gift of  
inner peace. God in your goodness: **Hear our prayer.**

God, we pray for those who are grieving over what might have  
been. In this Christmas season, we may find ourselves adrift,  
alone, and lost. Help us to remember we are not alone. God in  
your goodness: **Hear our prayer.**

God, you came to us as a child. You understand our joys and  
sorrows. Be near us this night and in the days ahead. God in your  
goodness: **Hear our prayer.**