



ST. PAUL'S
LUTHERAN CHURCH

Second Sunday Of Advent



What do
you fear?

WHEN YOU'RE AFRAID,
GIVE ME YOUR HAND

GATHERING

PRELUDE

*CALL TO WORSHIP

P: Here in worship—

C: we pray together,

P: we stand together,

C: we sing together,

P: we listen together.

C: Here in worship— we are not alone.

P: So when life gives you reason to grieve, to fear, or to worry,
remember this moment.

C: We are not alone.

P: Let us worship our with-us God.

*PROCESSIONAL HYMN

O COME, O COME, EMMANUEL
NEXT PAGE

ELW 257

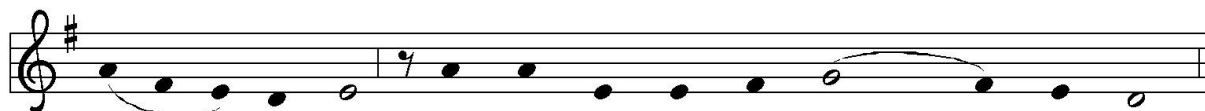


*STAND AS YOU ARE ABLE

O Come, O Come, Emmanuel



- 1 O come, O come, Em - man - u - el, and ran - som cap - tive
 2 O come, O Wis - dom from on high, em - brac - ing all things
 3 O come, O come, O Lord of might, as to your tribes on
 4 O come, O Branch of Jes - se, free your own from Sa - tan's



Is - ra - el, that mourns in lone - ly ex - ile here
 far and nigh: in strength and beau - ty come and stay;
 Si - nai's height in an - cient times you gave the law
 tyr - an - ny; from depths of hell your peo - ple save,



un - til the Son of God ap - pear.
 teach us your will and guide our way. Re-joyce! Re-joyce!
 in cloud, and maj - es - ty, and awe.
 and give them vic - t'ry o'er the grave.



Em - man - u - el shall come to you, O Is - ra - el.

- 5 O come, O Key of David, come,
 and open wide our heav'nly home;
 make safe the way that leads on high,
 and close the path to misery. *Refrain*
- 6 O come, O Dayspring, come and cheer;
 O Sun of justice, now draw near.
 Disperse the gloomy clouds of night,
 and death's dark shadow put to flight. *Refrain*
- 7 O come, O King of nations, come,
 O Cornerstone that binds in one:
 refresh the hearts that long for you;
 restore the broken, make us new. *Refrain*
- 8 O come, O come, Emmanuel,
 and ransom captive Israel,
 that mourns in lonely exile here
 until the Son of God appear. *Refrain*

***CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS**

P: Friends, every day we are given choices— the choice to be a friend, to be an ally, to extend a welcoming hand. Some days we choose wisely, but from time to time, we inevitably get it wrong.

That is one of the many reasons we need the Prayer of Confession. In this moment of prayer, we are able to practice the art of forgiveness. So, join me in this transformative moment. Join me in God's receiving grace. Let us pray.

C: Ever-present God, when our neighbor was afraid, did we stay by your side? Did we offer our hands, or did we leave them alone? When the stranger was afraid, did we choose solidarity? Did we see their fear? Or did we only see ours?

P: Friends, none of us are perfect. We all make mistakes. Fortunately, God offers grace, and I do too. So take a deep breath, and let's start again.

C: Thank you. Your mercy is a gift. We accept your grace, O God, and would love to start again. May it be so, with God's help. Alleluia, Amen.

***CANDLE LIGHTING**

P: In a world full of fear, where do you see love?

C: We see love all around us. We see love when people hold open the door. We see love in a warm embrace, a homemade casserole, a phone call after a long day. We see love in random acts of kindness and intentional acts of empathy. We see love all around us.

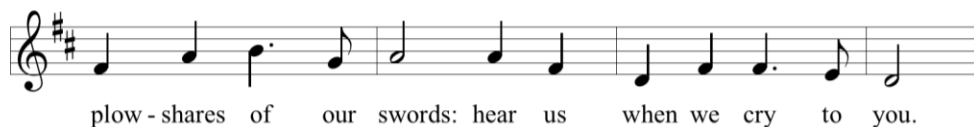
P: You are right. Even in a fearful world, love is all around us. Today we light the candle of love as a reminder of this good news. May this flicker of light help us remember that even in a fearful world, love is here. Love is world-changing. Love is shining bright. We only have to look for it.

Light candle

C: Thanks be to God for a love like that! Amen.

KYRIE

Cantor



Assembly



Cantor



Assembly



Cantor



Assembly



*STAND AS



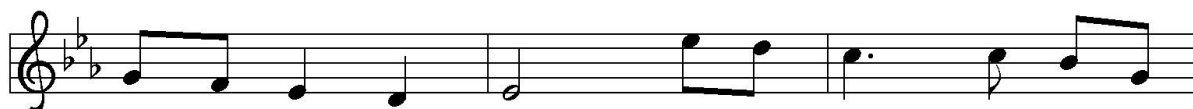
JOYOUS LIGHT OF HEAVENLY GLORY



f heav'n-ly glo - ry, lov-ing glow of God's own
 2 In the stars that grace the dark - ness, in the blaz - ing sun of
 3 You who made the heav-en's splen - dor, ev - 'ry danc - ing star of



face, you who sing cre - a - tion's sto - ry, shine on
 dawn, in the light of peace and wis - dom, we can
 night, make us shine with gen - tle jus - tice, let us



ev - 'ry land and race. Now as eve - ning falls a -
 hear your qui - et song. Love that fills the night with
 each re - flect your light. Might - y God of all cre -



round us, we shall raise our songs to you. God of day - break,
 won - der, love that warms the wea - ry soul, love that bursts all
 a - tion, gen - tle Christ who lights our way, lov - ing Spir - it



God of shad - ows, come and light our hearts a - new.
 chains a - sun - der, set us free and make us whole.
 of sal - va - tion, lead us on to end - less day.

* GREETING AND PRAYER OF THE DAY

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.**

P: Immanuel, we turned off alarm clocks. We poured cups of coffee. We slipped shoes onto our feet and combed back fly-away hairs. We traveled to this room and settled into this space, all in hopes of drawing closer to you. So as we hear your Word read aloud, help us to feel your presence in our midst. For we are reaching out our hands. We are reaching out our hearts. Speak to us now. With hope we pray,

C: **Amen.**

ANTHEM

WORD

FIRST READING: Isaiah 43:1-21

See, I am doing a new thing! Now it springs up; do you not perceive it? I am making a way in the wilderness and streams in the wasteland. The wild animals honor me, the jackals and the owls, because I provide water in the wilderness and streams in the wasteland, to give drink to my people, my chosen, the people I formed for myself that they may proclaim my praise.

A: Word of God, Word of Life.

C: Thanks be to God.

Psalm 130

Refrain

*GRADUAL HYMN

All (melody)
(harmony)

With all my be - ing I wait for
you, O God, and in your word I place my
hope, and in your word I place my hope.

unis. *To Verses* *Last time*

Verses

Leader or Assistant

1. Out of the depths I cry to you, O God: O
2. If you, O God, should mark our sins, O
3. I wait for God, with all my heart I wait. In God's
God, hear my voice. Let your ears be o - pen to the
God, who could stand? But in you is for-give-ness, so that
word is my hope. My soul is wait - ing more than
sound of my cries for mer - cy.
we can, with rev - 'rence, serve you.
those who watch for morn - ing.

D.C.

***GOSPEL**

P: The Holy Gospel, according to St. Matthew, the 1st chapter beginning with the 18th verse.

C: **Glory to you, O Lord.**

Now the birth of Jesus the Messiah took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been engaged to Joseph, but before they lived together, she was found to be pregnant from the Holy Spirit. Her husband Joseph, being a righteous man and unwilling to expose her to public disgrace, planned to divorce her quietly. But just when he had resolved to do this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, "Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife, for the child conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will bear a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins." All this took place to fulfill what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet:

"Look, the virgin shall become pregnant and give birth to a son,
and they shall name him Emmanuel,"

which means, "God is with us." When Joseph awoke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him; he took her as his wife but had no marital relations with her until she had given birth to a son, and he named him Jesus.

P: This is the Gospel of the Lord.

C: **Praise to you, O Christ**

SERMON

HYMN OF THE DAY

**PRECIOUS LORD, TAKE MY HAND
(NEXT PAGE)**

ELW 773

Precious Lord, Take My Hand

773

1 Pre - cious Lord, take my hand, lead me on, let me stand,
2 When my way grows . . drear, pre-cious Lord, lin - ger near,
3 When the dark - ness ap - pears and the night draws . . near,

I am tired, I am weak, I am worn.
when my life is . . . al - most . . gone,
and the day is . . . past and . . . gone,

Through the storm, through the night, lead me on to the light.
hear my cry, hear my call, hold my hand lest I fall.
at the riv - er I stand, guide my feet, hold my hand.

Take my hand, pre-cious Lord, lead me home.

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Text: Thomas A. Dorsey, 1899-1993

Music: George N. Allen, 1812-1877, adapt. Thomas A. Dorsey

***APOSTLES CREED**

P: Let us now confess our faith using the words of the Apostles' Creed:

C: **I believe in God, the Father almighty, Creator of heaven and earth. I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died and was buried; he descended to the dead; on the third day he rose again; he ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of the Father, and he will come 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 life everlasting. Amen.**

***PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION**

A: Ever-reaching, with-us God, we don't always know the words to pray. We stumble over our words. We meander in our thoughts. We fail to be eloquent when we try. But no matter our words, we know that you are listening.

So today, holy God, we want to say thank you for the "reachers." Thank you for the people in our life who have reached for us when we have needed it most.

Thank you for friends and family, for Sunday school teachers and confirmation mentors, for therapists and school chaplains, for neighbors and attentive strangers. Thank you for the people, who like Joseph, chose to reach for us and stay by our side when we needed it most.

We pause to remember their names and faces now, and to silently lift these individuals to you in gratitude.

Moment of silence.

Holy One, while we count our blessings, we also pray for those who face their fear alone. We pray for those who do not have a Joseph in their life.

In particular, we remember those in isolation jail cells, and for those in medical quarantine. We pray for single parents, and for widows and widowers. We pray for immigrants and foreign exchange students, who so often feel alone in a new country. We pray for those who feel isolated by their grief, their addiction, or their mental health.

Show us how to reach across dividing lines. Show us how to walk with each other, on the good days and the bad. Show us how to see each other. Show us how to reach for each other. As you do, like Joseph, we will do our best to walk each other home. We commend these and all our prayers to you, O God, trusting that you are always with us; in the name of Jesus Christ, our risen Savior.

C: **Amen.**

*STAND AS YOU ARE ABLE

PEACE

P: The Peace of Christ be with you always.

C: **And also, with you.**

P: Let us share God's peace with each other now.

MEAL

OFFERING AND SETTING THE TABLE

*OFFERTORY ANTHEM



1 Ac - cept, O Lord, the gifts we bring to
2 The vines were plant - ed, seeds were sown. They
3 Our hopes and dreams, our toils and cares we



place up - on your ta - ble. We do not wor - ship
grew in your good plea - sure. What once was com - mon,
lift in prayer be - fore you. Lord, by your grace now



as we ought but on - ly as we're a - ble.
dai - ly food be - comes a ho - ly trea - sure.
come to us, as hum - bly we a - dore you.

*OFFERING PRAYER

A: Let us pray.

C: **Nourishing God, you are water in the wilderness and streams in the desert. Through this meal, satisfy our parched places, that we may rejoice and be for the world signs of your kingdom come.**

*GREAT THANKSGIVING

P: The Lord be with you.

C: **And also with you.**

P: Lift up your hearts.

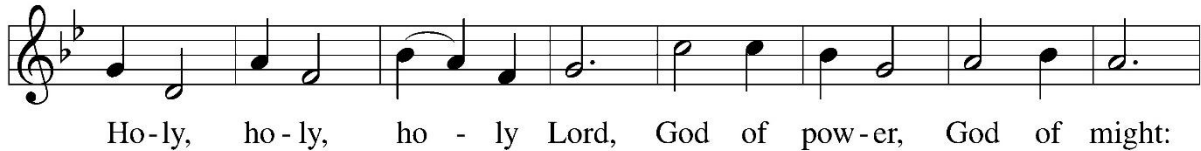
C: **We lift them to the Lord.**

P: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

C: **It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

*THE PROPER 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. You comforted your people with the promise of the Redeemer, through whom you will also make all things new in the day when he comes to judge the world in righteousness. 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:



P: In the night in which he was betrayed, our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks; 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.

And as you do, and as we wait, we will join our voices together to pray the prayer your son taught us to pray, saying. . .

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: There is no need for fear here, for this is a joyful feast. And you are invited. Come. All are welcome.

COMMUNION MUSIC



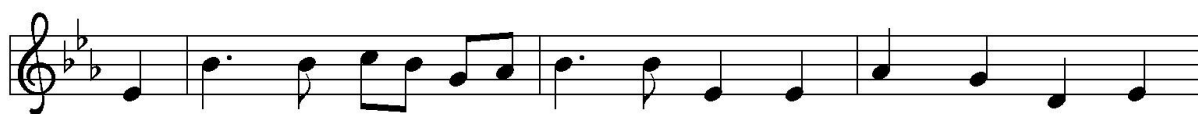
The musical score is written on three staves in G major (one sharp). The first staff contains two parts: Part 1 (1) and Part 2 (2). The lyrics are: 1 O Lamb of God, to earth you came to; 2 O Lamb of God, the on - ly Son, to. The second staff continues the lyrics: save us all from grief and shame. Shorn of your life, up - us show mer - cy, Ho - ly One. You save the world from. The third staff concludes the lyrics: on the tree you hung in deep hu - mil - i - ty. all its sin. Lord, give to us your peace. A - men.

1 O Lamb of God, to earth you came to
2 O Lamb of God, the on - ly Son, to

save us all from grief and shame. Shorn of your life, up -
us show mer - cy, Ho - ly One. You save the world from

on the tree you hung in deep hu - mil - i - ty.
all its sin. Lord, give to us your peace. A - men.

He Comes to Us as One Unknown



1 He comes to us as one un-known, a breath un - seen, un -
 2 He comes when souls in si - lence lie and thoughts of day de -
 3 He comes to us in sound of seas, the o - cean's fume and
 4 He comes in love as once he came by flesh and blood and
 5 He comes in truth when faith is grown; be - lieved, o - beyed, a -



heard; as though with - in a heart of stone, or shriv - eled seed in
 part; half - seen up - on the in - ward eye, a fall - ing star a -
 foam; yet small and still up - on the breeze, a wind that stirs the
 birth; to bear with - in our mor - tal frame a life, a death, a
 dored; the Christ in all the scrip - tures shown, as yet un - seen, but



dark - ness sown, a pulse of be - ing stirred, a pulse of be - ing stirred.
 cross the sky of night with - in the heart, of night with - in the heart.
 tops of trees, a voice to call us home, a voice to call us home.
 sav - ing name, for ev - 'ry child of earth, for ev - 'ry child of earth.
 not un - known, our Sav - ior and our Lord, our Sav - ior and our Lord.

Text: Timothy Dudley-Smith, b. 1926

Music: REPTON, C. Hubert H. Parry, 1848–1918

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*PRAYERS AFTER COMMUNION

P: And now may this, the body and blood of Jesus Christ, strengthen and keep you in his grace forever.

C: **Amen.**

A: Loving God, In a world racked with fear, you gather us together. You set the table. You meet us here. You nourish our bodies as you nourish our spirits. You remind us that this is a joyful feast, and that fear cannot win every time. So with renewed courage, with renewed hope, with renewed conviction, send us out into the world. Help us to feed others as you have fed us. With gratitude we pray,

C: **Amen.**

*STAND AS YOU ARE ABLE

SENDING

***BLESSING**

P: In a fearful world, may you look for God's spirit. May you reach for each other's hands. May you choose courage whenever you can. And in all things, may you remember that good news is louder than fear. In the name of the one who calls, the one who sends, and the one who journeys with— go in peace and be not afraid.

C: **Amen.**

***SENDING HYMN**

PREPARE THE ROYAL HIGHWAY
NEXT PAGE

ELW 264

DISMISSAL

A: Go in peace. Show Christ love to the world.

C: **Thanks be to God.**

POSTLUDE



Prepare the Royal Highway



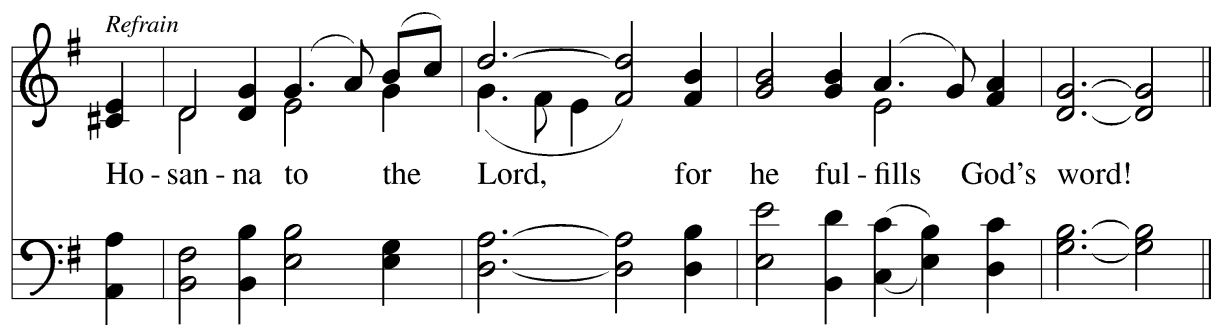
1 Pre - pare the roy - al high - way; the King of kings is near!
2 God's peo - ple, see him com - ing: your own e - ter - nal king!
3 Then fling the gates wide o - pen to greet your prom - ised king!
4 His is no earth - ly king - dom; it comes from heav'n a - bove.



Let ev - 'ry hill and val - ley a lev - el road ap - pear!
Palm branch - es strew be - fore him! Spread gar - ments! Shout and sing!
Your king, yet ev - 'ry na - tion its trib - ute too may bring.
His rule is peace and free - dom and jus - tice, truth, and love.



Then greet the King of glo - ry, fore - told in sa - cred sto - ry:
God's prom - ise will not fail you! No more shall doubt as - sail you!
All lands will bow be - fore him; their voic - es join your sing - ing:
So let your praise be sound - ing for kind - ness so a - bound - ing:



Refrain
Ho - san - na to the Lord, for he ful - fills God's word!

Announcements

WE PRAY FOR...

- Rosemary Rizzo - Tony Rizzo - Erin Jankowski -
- Dee Marinov - Diane Busdiecker - Elaine Wolffer -
- Brian Freeburg - Maryann and Chip Orlando -

George Troester - Son of Maureen Sieteski
Maya Chakraborty
Katherine Sikorski
Brooke - Great-niece of Annette Berg
Angela Roeser
Emily - Niece of Patty Walker
Frank Senn - Brother of Nancy Noble
Janice Darveau - Friend of Kathy Busdiecker
David Jinks - Sarah Kuehfus' Father
Pete & Gayle Ciraolo - Vince Ciraolo's cousin

UPCOMING EVENTS:

Caroling: Dec, 12th, 6:00 PM

Children's Pageant: Dec. 14th

Lessons & Carols: Dec. 21st

Blue Christmas Worship:
Dec. 21st 6:30 PM

Christmas by Candlelight:
Wednesday, December 24, 2025
6:00 PM & 11:00 PM

Christmas Worship & Brunch:
Thursday, December 25, 2025
11:00 AM

ANGEL TREE:

Our Angel Tree project this year will once again be collecting school supplies as well as hats, mittens, and scarves for the children at School #74 in Buffalo. If you are able to donate school supplies, suggestions include (but are not limited to) pencils, pens, crayons, markers, erasers, pencil sharpeners, glue sticks, children's scissors, and notebooks. If donating hats, scarves, or mittens, keep in mind the children range from ages 4-13 years. Please DO NOT GIFT WRAP your donations. Donations can be placed in the labeled boxes in the foyer outside the church office



SCAN HERE FOR ST. PAUL'S DONATION PAGE



ST. PAUL'S
LUTHERAN CHURCH

Acknowledgments

KYRIE

Text: Beth Bergeron Folkemer, based on the Kyrie
Music: African American spiritual
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CANTICLE OF PRAISE

Text: Greek hymn, 3rd cent., para. Marty Haugen, b. 1950

Music: Marty Haugen

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THANKSGIVING AND PRAYER GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Text: Marty Haugen, b. 1950

Music: Marty Haugen

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OFFERING

Text: Beth Bergeron Folkemer

Music: Appalachian traditional; Barb'ry Ellen
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RITE OF MARRIAGE

Music: Mass of Creation, Marty Haugen, b. 1950

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AGNUS DEI

Text: Beth Bergeron Folkemer

Music: Appalachian traditional;

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COVER IMAGE: PAUL OMEN



What do
you fear

INSISTING ON HOPE THIS ADVENT

Stewardship Message 2025

Hi Everyone—

It's your fellow church-member, Tim, just offering you a word about stewardship. Out of respect, custom, or force of habit, many of you call me pastor, but, truth be told, Tim is my baptismal name, the name by which God will recognize me.

And besides, we already have a pastor, Pastor Ashlin.

For twenty years on Sunday mornings I came to St. Paul's to preach. These days, I come to listen. For twenty years on Sunday mornings I came to feed you. These days I come to be fed. For twenty years I met you on Sunday morning in a collar, or wrapped in vestments. These days I dress myself in something clean, Wendy checks me out before I set foot out the door. And I meet you in the pew, where I now belong. I'd been a pastor so long, I had forgotten what it meant to be a church member.

I really enjoy the conversations I have, and, like most of you, I wind up sitting in the same place every Sunday. I so appreciate Pastor Ashlin's sermons, and when David or Karl sub in for her, I find myself amazed at the quality of their words, too. When I come up for Communion, I receive Christ with joy, and always with a smile from our pastor. I love to sing the hymns and listen to Patrick play and sing. When I was on the other side of the altar, I knew we had a great church. But now that I'm sitting among you, I begin to realize just how great.

Every year this time of the season, I used to try to figure out how to pick your pockets of a few extra dollars for your pledge. In my better efforts I tried to inspire you, sometimes I just tried to guilt you into doing it. Our congregation is amazingly generous in our serving those in need. But I've hung around with Wayne and Brian for so long, I know that the regular bills need to be paid. I know our pastor's wage needs to keep up, and that nothing is getting cheaper. So Wendy and I decided we could afford 5 dollars more per week in our pledge this year, and I just wondered what it would be like if many of you could kick in a little bit more. Think about what YOU hear week after week. Think about what YOU are fed week after week. Think about how YOU feel Sunday after Sunday.

Tim





Tethered

When we were children, we fell asleep
with walkie talkies tucked under our pillows.
All that separated us was a bathroom,
a hallway, a few feet of empty space,
but as children, even small distances can feel like miles.

So after the parents whispered prayers over our skinned
knees
and spelling tests, after they kissed our sweaty
foreheads
and tucked us into bed,
we'd pull the walkie talkies out from under our pillows.
We'd roll the dial on the top of the transceiver.
We'd sputter that invisible tether to life.

And with a few crackles in the quiet of the night,
you'd whisper my name.
I'd press down the button.
I'd promise I was close.

As an adult, I don't know what ever happened
to those blue-grey walkie talkies.
But I know,
that even today,
if the monsters in the closet feel too real,
and you whisper my name,
I promise I'll be close.

- Rev. Sarah Speed for *A Sanctified Art*

PASTOR ASHLIN MARCHESI
PREACHER/PRESIDER

PATRICK GARD
ORGANIST

KATHY HABERMEHL
LITURGICAL ASSISTANT

JESSICA MASON
COMMUNION ASSISTANT

GENE EMSER & JOHN HANNON
USHERS

ARLENE BOSSERT
ALTAR GUILD