

COMMUNION SERVICE

Northampton Presbyterian Church

*First Sunday in Advent
"Commitment Sunday"*

*December 3, 2023
10:00 AM*

PRELUDE


Advent Medley

arr. Marilyn Ham

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Hanging of the Greens, today following the worship service.
- Missions Committee, Wednesday (12/6) at 9:30 AM.

CALL TO WORSHIP AND ADVENT CANDLE LIGHTING: THE CANDLE OF HOPE



(Cathy Cocchia & Geri Broaddus)

SINGERS: *Creator of the stars of night,
Your people's everlasting light,
O Christ, Redeemer of us all,
We pray you hear us when we call.*

(HYMN #84: Creator of the Stars of Night)

READER 1: In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth, and set lights in the sky — sun and moon and stars. By these stars, our ancestors charted their journeys. By these stars, they knew God was with them.

READER 2: Today we light one candle to bring the fire of the stars down from heaven to earth, to nestle among the greens. We name this candle Hope. (The candle is lit).

ALL: We too are on a journey, and we do not always know the way. But we chart our path by the star of hope. Even when better days seem very far away and the weight of the world seems to crush your promises, we set our face steadily towards the light.

READER 1: Listen now to the prayer of an ancient poet: “For God alone my soul waits in silence, for my hope is from him. God alone is my rock and my salvation, my fortress; I shall not be shaken. On God rests my deliverance and my honor; my mighty rock, my refuge is in God. Trust in him at all times, O people; pour out your heart before him; God is a refuge for us.” (Psalm 67:5-8).


READER 2: Lord Jesus, as we search for signs of hope this week, help us to become the signs of hope for which others are searching. As these candles are but a glimpse of the light of the heavens, help us to be a glimpse of heaven’s hope. Amen.

HYMN

Watchman, Tell Us of the Night

**Watchman, tell us of the night,
What its signs of promise are.
Traveler, o'er yon mountain's height,
See that glory beaming star.
Watchman, does its beauteous ray
Aught of joy or hope foretell?
Traveler, yes; it brings the day,
Promised day of Israel.**

ST GEORGE'S, WINDSOR

A decorative graphic in the top right corner consisting of several white stars of varying sizes hanging from thin white vertical lines against a light beige background.

**Watchman, tell us of the night;
Higher yet that star ascends.
Traveler, blessedness and light,
Peace and truth its course portends.
Watchman, will its beams alone
Gild the spot that gave them birth?
Traveler, ages are its own;
See, it bursts o'er all the earth.**



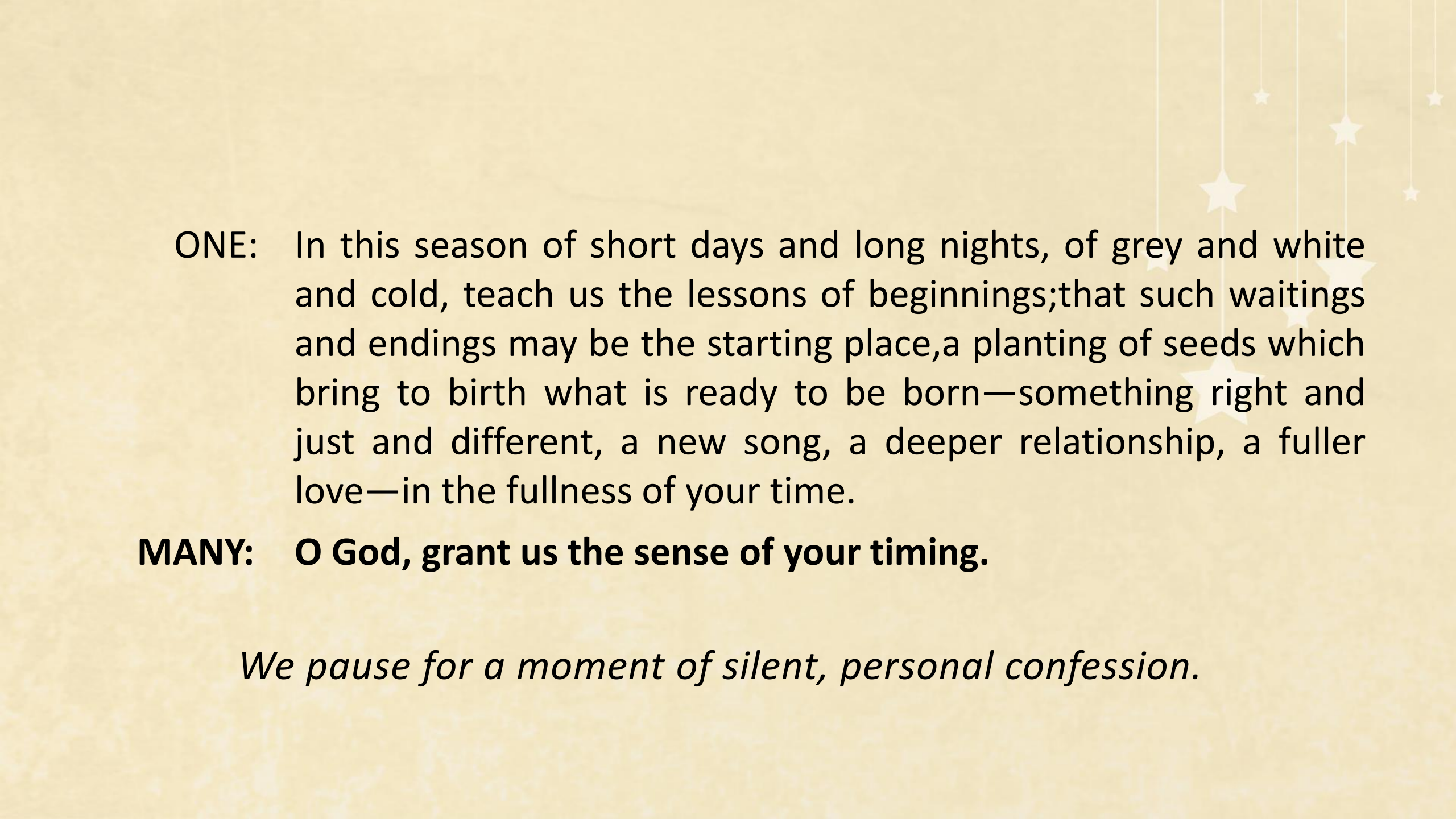
**Watchman, tell us of the night,
For the morning seems to dawn.
Traveler, darkness takes its flight,
Doubt and terror are withdrawn.
Watchman, let thy wanderings cease;
Hie thee to thy quiet home.
Traveler, lo! the Prince of Peace,
Lo! the Son of God is come!**



RESPONSIVE PRAYER OF CONFESSION

ONE: O God of all seasons and senses, when we find ourselves running out of patience in this season of the year, grant us the sense of your timing to submit gracefully and rejoice quietly in the turn of the seasons.

MANY: In this season of short days and long nights, of grey and white and cold, of want and need and barely enough, teach us the lessons of endings: children growing, friends leaving, loved ones dying, grieving over, grudges over, blaming over, excuses over. O God, grant us a sense of your timing.



ONE: In this season of short days and long nights, of grey and white and cold, teach us the lessons of beginnings; that such waitings and endings 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.

MANY: O God, grant us the sense of your timing.

We pause for a moment of silent, personal confession.

RESPONSIVE ASSURANCE OF PARDON

ONE: Even now, God approaches us, mercy transcending anger, hope overcoming despair, life triumphing over death. This is good news, my friends; this is news of great joy for each of us.

MANY: Enriched in every grace, blessed with joy and hope, transformed by love, we will live as people of Advent. Thanks be to God. Amen.

HYMN

Glory to God, Whose Goodness Shines on Me

GLORY TO GOD

**Glory to God, whose goodness shines on me,
And to the Son, whose grace has pardoned me,
And to the Spirit, whose love has set me free.**

As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be. Amen.

World without end, without end. Amen.

World without end, without end. Amen

World without end, without end. Amen.

As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be. Amen.

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

OLD TESTAMENT READING

Isaiah 64:1-9

NEW TESTAMENT READING

Mark 13:24-37

SERMON

What's Behind Door #24?

Rev. Judith A. Dwyer



INVITATION TO GENEROSITY

Gerri Broaddus

OFFERING AND PRESENTATION OF OUR PLEDGES FOR 2024

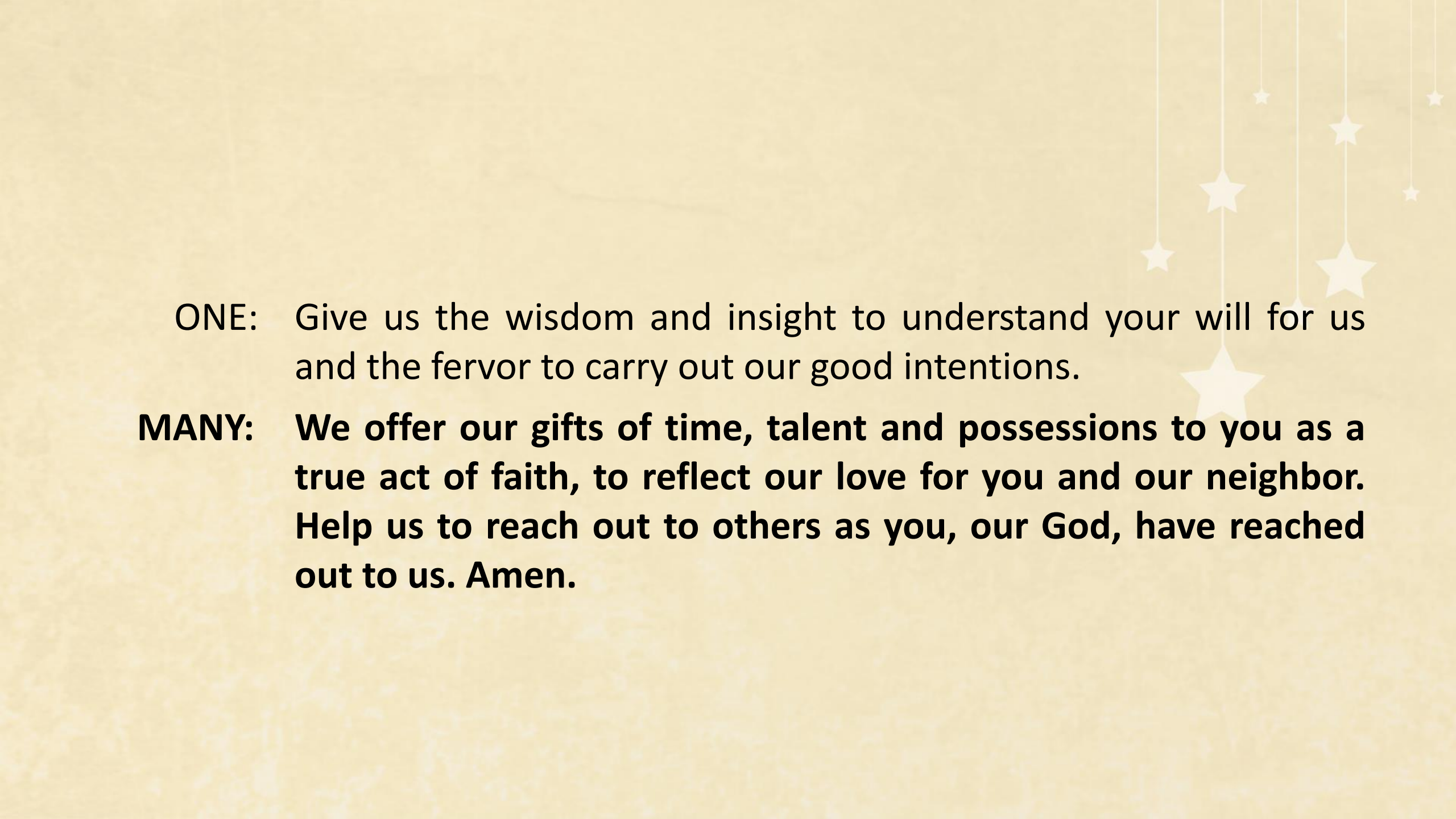
Today we dedicate our pledges for the coming year. You are invited to come forward and place your pledge card and today's offering in the bowl provided.

*"Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver,"
2 Corinthians 9:7.*

RESPONSIVE PRAYER OF COMMITMENT AND DEDICATION

ONE: Loving God, we come to you in thanksgiving, knowing that all we are and all we have is a gift from you. In faith and love, help us to do your will. We are listening, Lord God. Speak your words into the depths of our souls, that we may hear you clearly.

MANY: **We offer to you this day all the facets of our lives, whether it be at home, at work, or at school – to be patient, to be merciful, to be generous, to be holy.**



ONE: Give us the wisdom and insight to understand your will for us and the fervor to carry out our good intentions.

MANY: We offer our gifts of time, talent and possessions to you as a true act of faith, to reflect our love for you and our neighbor. Help us to reach out to others as you, our God, have reached out to us. Amen.

CALL FOR THE OFFERING

(Scan the QR Code to give online →)

OFFERTORY ANTHEM

In Silence We Wait



Larson

COMMUNION

The Invitation:

HYMN - While We Are Waiting, Come

**While we are waiting, come;
While we are waiting, come;
Jesus, our Lord, Emmanuel,
While we are waiting, come.**



WAITING

Sharing the Bread and Cup

Responsive Pastoral Prayer

ONE: In the promise which is everywhere about us:

MANY: Hold us, God.

ONE: In the longing for a new world and new living:

MANY: Cradle us, God.

ONE: In the need to see advent's revelation in our world:

MANY: Direct us, God.

ONE: In the silence of memories that haunt us:

MANY: Comfort us, God.



ONE: In the hunger for justice that aches in us:

MANY: Feed us, God.

ONE: In the yearning for love in each of our days:

MANY: Reassure us, God.

ONE: In the setting out of truth in our political world:

MANY: Aid us, God.

ONE: In the call for peace in our warring world:

MANY: Hear us, God.



ONE: In the search for healing in our broken world:

MANY: Find us, God.

ONE: In the gathering round the table:

MANY: Gather with us, God.

ONE: In the breaking of bread and spilling of wine:

MANY: Share with us, God.

ONE: In the community of faith:

MANY: Reveal yourself, O God. Amen.



HYMN

People, Look East

**People, look east. The time is near
Of the crowning of the year.**

**Make your house fair as you are able;
Trim the hearth and set the table.**

**People, look east (and sing today):
Love, the Guest, is on the way.**



BESANCON

**Furrows, be glad. Though earth is bare,
One more seed is planted there.
Give up your strength the seed to nourish,
That in course the flower may flourish.
People, look east (and sing today):
Love, the Rose, is on the way.**



**Birds, though you long have ceased to build,
Guard the nest that must be filled.
Even the hour when wings are frozen
God for fledging time has chosen.
People, look east (and sing today):
Love, the Bird, is on the way.**



**Stars, keep the watch. When night is dim
One more light the bowl shall brim,
Shining beyond the frosty weather,
Bright as sun and moon together.
People, look east (and sing today):
Love, the Star, is on the way.**



**Angels, announce with shouts of mirth
Christ who brings new life to earth.
Set every peak and valley humming
With the word, the Lord is coming.
People, look east (and sing today):
Love, the Lord, is on the way.**



CHARGE AND BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE *(Jessica Stehr, piano & Trish Conover, organ)*

Gloria in Excelsis Deo


arr. Larson



HYMN

The Lord's Prayer (Sung)

**Our Father, which art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name.
Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done, on earth as in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.
And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil;
For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory,
Forever, Amen.**



نرفض أن نكون أعداء

WE REFUSE
TO BE ENEMIES
WIR WEIGERN UNS
FEINDE ZU SEIN



WORSHIP NOTES:

The **Advent Candle Liturgy** is written by Carol Holbrook Prickett and posted for free use by The Presbyterian Outlook. Rev. Carol Holbrook Prickett joyfully serves the people of Crescent Springs Presbyterian Church in Northern Kentucky and creates fresh resources for worship at deepwellworship.com.

The **Prayer of Confession** is written by Ted Loder, in Guerrillas of Grace.

<http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/B0014ENRR4/ref=dp-kindle-redirect?ie=UTF8&btkr=1>

The **Prayer of Illumination** is adapted from Revised Common Lectionary Prayers copyright © 2002 Consultation on Common Texts admin. Augsburg Fortress. Posted on Thematic, Intercessory and Scripture Prayers for the RCL, Vanderbilt Divinity Library.

The **Prayer of Commitment and Dedication** is posted on the Generous Giving website.

www.generousgiving.org

The **Pastoral Prayer** is from the archives of the Church of Scotland's excellent Starters for Sunday website. Visit that site for many other excellent worship resources.

The **Charge and Benediction** are written by Ruth Patterson, posted on the Ministry Matters website.

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