

**St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, Perth**  
**Sunday, August 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2025**  
**Rev. Gerry Gallant**

**God's Love**  
**Proper 11**  
**John 11:1-16**

**Welcome**

**Announcements**

**Call to Worship**

All who thirst, come to the water.  
Come, all who are weary;  
come, all who yearn for forgiveness.  
The Holy Spirit through Jesus Christ has washed over us,  
and our gracious and holy God beckons and blesses us.  
Drink deeply of these living waters.  
**Glory to you, O Lord, glory to you.**

**Prayer of Adoration and Invocation**

O God, you are infinite,  
eternal and unchangeable,  
glorious in holiness,  
full of love and compassion,  
abundant in grace and truth.  
Your works everywhere praise you,  
and your glory is revealed  
in Jesus Christ our Savior.  
Therefore we gather today to worship you and praise you,  
blessed and holy Trinity,  
The One True Living God, forever and ever.  
**Amen.**

**Children's Hymn: "The B-I-B-L-E"**

The B-I-B-L-E,  
Yes, that's the book for me,  
I stand alone on the Word of God,  
The B-I-B-L-E.

The B-I-B-L-E,  
 Yes, that's the book for me,  
 I stand alone,  
 The B-I-B-L-E.

### **Call to Confession**

Prepare the way of the Lord!  
 Let us make our confession to God.

### **Prayer of Confession**

**Eternal God,  
 in whom we live and move and have our being,  
 whose face is hidden from us by our sins,  
 and whose mercy we forget in the blindness of our hearts:  
 Cleanse us from all our offenses,  
 and deliver us from proud thoughts and vain desires,  
 that with reverent and humble hearts  
 we may draw near to you,  
 confessing our faults,  
 confiding in your grace,  
 and finding in you our refuge and our strength;  
 through Jesus Christ your Son we pray. Amen.**

### **Assurance of Pardon**

Comfort, comfort my people, says your God.  
 Your sins are pardoned.  
 The penalty is paid.  
 Thanks be to God.

### **The Lord's Prayer**

**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 debts, as we forgive our debtors.  
 And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the Evil One.  
 For Thine is the Kingdom, the power, and the glory,  
 Forever and ever. Amen.**

**Hymn: "He Will Hold Me Fast"**

When I fear my faith will fail  
 Christ will hold me fast  
 When the tempter would prevail  
 He will hold me fast  
 I could never keep my hold  
 Through life's fearful path  
 For my love is often cold  
 He must hold me fast.

[Chorus]

He will hold me fast  
 He will hold me fast  
 For my Savior loves me so  
 He will hold me fast.

Those He saves are His delight  
 Christ will hold me fast  
 Precious in His holy sight  
 He will hold me fast  
 He'll not let my soul be lost  
 His promises shall last  
 Bought by Him at such a cost  
 He will hold me fast.

For my life He bled and died  
 Christ will hold me fast  
 Justice has been satisfied  
 He will hold me fast  
 Raised with Him to endless life  
 He will hold me fast  
 'Til our faith is turned to sight  
 When He comes at last.

**Responsive Reading****Isaiah 55:2-5**

2 Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth;  
 for the LORD has spoken:  
 "Children have I reared and brought up,  
 but they have rebelled against me.

**3 The ox knows its owner,  
 and the donkey its master's crib,  
 but Israel does not know,**

**my people do not understand.”**

4 Ah, sinful nation,  
a people laden with iniquity,  
offspring of evildoers,  
children who deal corruptly!  
They have forsaken the LORD,  
they have despised the Holy One of Israel,  
they are utterly estranged.

**5 Why will you still be struck down?**

**Why will you continue to rebel?**

**The whole head is sick,  
and the whole heart faint.**

**Prayer for illumination**  
**(Congregant Prepared)**

**Scripture**

**John 11:1-16**

**11 Now a certain man was ill, Lazarus of Bethany, the village of Mary and her sister Martha. <sup>2</sup> It was Mary who anointed the Lord with ointment and wiped his feet with her hair, whose brother Lazarus was ill. <sup>3</sup> So the sisters sent to him, saying, “Lord, he whom you love is ill.” <sup>4</sup> But when Jesus heard it he said, “This illness does not lead to death. It is for the glory of God, so that the Son of God may be glorified through it.” <sup>5</sup> Now Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus. <sup>6</sup> So, when he heard that Lazarus was ill, he stayed two days longer in the place where he was. <sup>7</sup> Then after this he said to the disciples, “Let us go to Judea again.” <sup>8</sup> The disciples said to him, “Rabbi, the Jews were just now seeking to stone you, and are you going there again?” <sup>9</sup> Jesus answered, “Are there not twelve hours in the day? If anyone walks in the day, he does not stumble, because he sees the light of this world. <sup>10</sup> But if anyone walks in the night, he stumbles, because the light is not in him.” <sup>11</sup> After saying these things, he said to them, “Our friend Lazarus has fallen asleep, but I go to awaken him.” <sup>12</sup> The disciples said to him, “Lord, if he has fallen asleep, he will recover.” <sup>13</sup> Now Jesus had spoken of his death, but they thought that he meant taking rest in sleep. <sup>14</sup> Then Jesus told them plainly, “Lazarus has died, <sup>15</sup> and for your sake I am glad that I was not there, so that you may believe. But let us go to him.” <sup>16</sup> So Thomas, called the Twin, said to his fellow disciples, “Let us also go, that we may die with him.”**

**Sermon**

Today, we start into chapter 11 of the book of John, which includes the seventh sign, the last miracle that is recorded by John.

If you recall John stated in Chapter 20

**John 20:30-31**

**<sup>30</sup> Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book; <sup>31</sup> but these are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.**

Jesus has performed many miracles up to this point, it started with the turning of water into wine, the healing of the official's son, the healing of the man at the pool of Bethesda, the feeding of the five thousand, and the healing of the blind man.

Each one of these miracles pointing to the truth that He is the Son of God. His teachings and his actions perfectly aligned with the Scriptures of the Old Testament, and yet the religious leaders of the day still refuse to acknowledge that Jesus is God, because to do so would require them to change.

The last miracle he had preformed the healing of the man born blind, had thrown Him into direct confrontation with the religious leaders in the temple of Jerusalem. They had picked up stones to stone him to death, accusing him of blasphemy, after he confronted them about their own false sense of faith, calling them the sons of Satan, and pointing out quite clearly what it takes to be one of his sheep. After which he had retreated into the area around the Jordan where John the Baptist had done his ministry.

Which brings us to the seventh and the last sign which we will study over the next few weeks, the raising of Lazarus from the dead. Of all the seven signs this one is the most irrefutable, the most definitive, in proving that Jesus was indeed the Christ, the divine Son of God.

During his ministry we see Jesus raise three people from death. The first was widow of Nain's son, who had been dead for only a few hours. The second was the daughter of Jarius, who was likely dead only a few minutes.

Then there is Lazarus, who was dead and buried for four days.

In the raising of the widow's son and Jarius's daughter people could claim that they were in a coma, or some other medical distress. That Jesus had simple woken them up from that state they were not really dead. However, in the case of Lazarus there is no doubt in the minds of anyone that he was indeed dead and decaying by the time Jesus arrived in Bethany.

Lazarus was a hopeless case. However, this miracle shows us that Jesus is the Lord of Life, and he can do things that are beyond man. Lazarus coming back from the dead was impossible, but Jesus can do the impossible, and for all of the faithful sheep in this world, that should give us hope.

**John 11:1-2**

**11 Now a certain man was ill, Lazarus of Bethany, the village of Mary and her sister Martha. <sup>2</sup> It was Mary who anointed the Lord with ointment and wiped his feet with her hair, whose brother Lazarus was ill.**

This is the setting for the last sign recorded in the book of John, and many people read through this quickly, skipping over all the applications for the faithful which are recorded in this Scripture.

The chapter begins by introducing us to the family of Martha, Mary and Lazarus who live together in the town of Bethany, roughly two miles east outside of Jerusalem.

This family is mentioned three times in the Gospel's, in Luke chapter 10, and in John chapter 11 and 12. So they are significant in the life of Jesus, and this speaks to the humanity of Jesus. Jesus liked people, he was God in the flesh, the all-knowing, all-powerful God and he lived in direct relationship with his people.

He was God but he was also a real man and loved to spend time with his disciples and with his friends. Our God is a God who wants to live in relationship with his people.

Later when we look at the second time Jesus visits Martha, Mary and Lazarus, Mary will anoint Jesus's feet with nard and we will see Martha complain to Jesus that Mary is busy sitting at his feet, rather than in the kitchen helping her serve.

And Jesus reminds her that the most important thing is to have your eyes on Jesus in all that you do.

We too often act like Martha, getting caught up in questioning why others do not serve in the same way that we do. SO, this is a reminder for us, that everyone serves in their own way and according to God's will. If you are called to serve God, do it, do it to the best of your ability, and do not get distracted or discouraged by the service of others.

There is a lot more in that interaction that we will go over in much more detail in a few weeks, but as you can see, this is a family which lived in close relationship with Jesus. They were people who Jesus knew and loved.

The Scripture is very clear, Jesus loved them

**John 11:3-6**

**<sup>3</sup> So the sisters sent to him, saying, "Lord, he whom you love is ill." <sup>4</sup> But when Jesus heard it he said, "This illness does not lead to death. It is for the glory of God, so that the Son of God may be glorified through it."**

**<sup>5</sup> Now Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus. <sup>6</sup> So, when he heard that Lazarus was ill, he stayed two days longer in the place where he was.**

You can sense the urgency in the message the sister's sent to Jesus. 'Lord, Lazarus, the one you love is sick, come quickly.'

In the first six lines of this chapter, we are told 4 times that Lazarus is sick at the end of the first verse, at the end of the second verse, at the end of the third verse and midway through the sixth verse. This means that Lazarus was sick.

This is important for us to know, Jesus loved Lazarus, and Lazarus got sick. People who God loves can suffer in this world, they can get sick, they can undergo trials and tribulations.

Also notice that the message from the sisters says, 'he whom you love is ill.', not, 'he who loves you is ill.'

We often pray saying to God, 'Lord, they love you and serve you well, so please heal them, help them.' The sisters did not do that, instead they said the one you love.

What a great reminder for all of us, we are loved by God, at all times and in all situations in our lives.

So here in these first few verses have some important lessons for Christians.

We get sick, the very same way that non-Christians get sick. Jesus loved Lazarus and it did not prevent him from getting sick and did not protect him from trials, troubles and tribulations in this world.

We live in a fallen world, and just because God loves us it does not mean that we will not have loss, trials, illness or persecution in this world. This world is still under the curse and power of Satan, and he is doing everything he can in this world to attack and cause strife in the lives of the faithful, and he will work through any person and power he can to do so.

We live in a fallen world, one in which Satan and his minions are at work, so there is sickness, there is disease, there is loss, there is crime, there is tragedy.

However, as a Christian we need to know that even though these things happen we have God with us. He is there to comfort us in these times, to give us the peace we need to get through these times, and ultimately if we truly are his sheep, even if the worst was to happen, we have eternal life in his presence.

This Scripture also teaches us that when we face these things we should turn to Jesus. We should turn to God and pray even as we carry on in this world.

What a great reminder for all of us, that regardless of what is going on in our lives, God loves us, and we should be turning to him and praying to him, because he loves us.

And for many people it takes sorrow and suffering in their life for them to even begin to seek a relationship with the Lord.

So, we need to know that even when God allows these things to happen in our life and in the lives of those around us, He has a purpose and a plan. So, when we face trials, tribulations, troubles, temptations, tragedies, sickness, disease, disappointment, persecution and all the other difficult parts of this life, we need to know that God has allowed it to occur for a reason, the same way that he did in the life of Job.

Just look at the Scripture today. Jesus is told that the one he loves is sick, and what does he do?

Does he run to Bethany as fast as he can? No. He is the Son of God, he is not in a hurry to get to Bethany, because he already knows what is happening there.

God knows what is happening in the life of Lazarus, the same way that he knows what is happening in your life. When we pray, we are not giving new information to God, he is all-knowing and all-seeing, when we pray, we are living in relationship with God, he wants to hear our voices, even though he already knows everything that is happening in our lives.

Jesus hears that Lazarus is sick, and he delays two days before he sets off to Bethany.

Another lesson for us. God is never in a hurry; God works according to God's schedule not ours. We often pray with a sense of immediacy, God we need this right now, right this minute, and when God does not respond we become frustrated.

God is not in a hurry; God's timing is perfect. Jesus delayed not because he did not love Lazarus. Not because he did not care, but because everything had to happen according to God's plans.

When we pray, we need to remember this, God's delays are not God's denials. God's timing is perfect, we do not get to dictate a timeline or way for God to answer our prayers, we need to pray and trust in God to answer those prayers according to his plan for us in this world. That is what it means to have faith, praying and trusting in God's response.

**John 11:7-10**

**<sup>7</sup> Then after this he said to the disciples, "Let us go to Judea again." <sup>8</sup> The disciples said to him, "Rabbi, the Jews were just now seeking to stone you, and are you going there again?" <sup>9</sup> Jesus answered, "Are there not twelve hours in the day? If anyone walks in the day, he does not stumble, because he sees the light of this world. <sup>10</sup> But if anyone walks in the night, he stumbles, because the light is not in him."**

When Jesus decides to go back towards Jerusalem, the disciples express their concern. The disciples try to remind Jesus that the religious leaders are seeking to kill him.

Jesus knew that, in fact he knew that this would be his last visit with Martha, Mary and Lazarus.

Jesus knew what he was walking into, the disciples did not need to remind him of this.

We need to make note of this, God knows, we do not need to tell him. Instead, we need to be more like Martha and Mary.

Look at their message to him, 'Lord, he whom you love is ill.' That is faith, that is trust. They simply said Lazarus is sick, and they trusted in Jesus to do what he was going to do. They did demand that he come immediately, or that he cure him from a distance. They simply stated their situation and trusted in Jesus to do what he would do.

Trust in the Lord, and that is essentially what Jesus tells the disciples in verses 9 and 10.

He reminds them that when you walk in the light, when you walk in the ways of the Lord, God is with you. When you are doing the will of God in your life, you are walking in the light. When you are one of his sheep, following his voice and obeying his Word, he will protect you.

This does not mean that things will not happen to you, this does not mean you will not suffer, it means that you can trust that those things are happening to you because they have passed through the hand of God and are happening for his purpose and plan in your life and the lives of those around you.

For Christians this is the peace of the Lord we have in our lives. When we are doing what God calls for us to do in our lives, we know that even when our lives are in peril, even when we face death, that God is with us, and we have no need of fear or worry, because we have eternal life.

What a great reminder that this is our daylight, our time on this planet, and we should always be walking in the daylight, trusting in God and living our lives according to his will. And that if God should choose to allow us to get sick, to suffer, or even to die; we can find peace in knowing that we are one of his sheep, a loved member of his flock, and we will have an eternal life in his presence.

Look at what Paul said:

**1 Philippians 1: 20-24**

**<sup>21</sup> For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain. <sup>22</sup> If I am to live in the flesh, that means fruitful labor for me. Yet which I shall choose I cannot tell. <sup>23</sup> I am hard pressed between the two. My desire is to depart and be with Christ, for that is far better.**

**<sup>24</sup> But to remain in the flesh is more necessary on your account.**

If I die, I am with God, and that is a wonderful thing, however as long as I am alive, I will walk with the Lord and serve the Lord according to His will.

We all need to live our lives like this, knowing that when we die we will have eternal life, however in our day, in our life we need to be walking in the light doing the will of God, glorifying Him, praising Him, and sharing His Word with the people around us through the way we think, act and speak.

Which brings us to the purpose:

**John 11:11-16**

**<sup>11</sup> After saying these things, he said to them, "Our friend Lazarus has fallen asleep, but I go to awaken him." <sup>12</sup> The disciples said to him, "Lord, if he has fallen asleep, he will recover." <sup>13</sup> Now Jesus had spoken of his death, but they thought that he meant taking rest in sleep. <sup>14</sup> Then Jesus told them plainly, "Lazarus has died, <sup>15</sup> and for your sake I am glad that I was not there, so that you may believe. But let us go to him." <sup>16</sup> So Thomas, called the Twin, said to his fellow disciples, "Let us also go, that we may die with him."**

The disciples are a little slow. When Jesus says to them that Lazarus sleeps, they think he is resting and getting better. So, Jesus says it plainly, clearly and directly, Lazarus is dead.

Jesus uses the term sleeps to refer to Lazarus's death, and this is important, because this is what happens when the faithful die. Their body dies, but their soul goes to be with God, waiting for the Day of Resurrection.

This concept of death being sleep is for the believer, and it makes a direct reference to the day of resurrection, when we will all be given a new glorified body to live in for all of eternity in God's kingdom.

What Jesus is saying is that when a Christian dies they are in the presence of God instantly, and their body sleeps.

Remember that sleep is a temporary state. When you go to sleep at night you do not say your forever goodbyes to those around you. You say, see you in the morning, when we all get up again to spend the day together.

Death is just sleep for the faithful. There will be a day when we all get up and spend the day together for all of eternity in God's kingdom.

And in Lazarus's resurrection we are given a picture of what will happen on that Day of Resurrection. That is why Jesus say's Lazarus is sleeping; he knows the big picture.

This is the setting for next week's Scripture, when Jesus and the disciples arrive in Bethany, greet Martha and Mary and Lazarus walks out of the Tomb.

Yet, even here in the set up for the greatest miracle we are given some important lessons about our relationship with God.

God's love permits trials, tribulations, temptations and even death in our lives. God's love supersedes whatever is happening in our lives. Even when things are going bad, we need to remember God loves us.

God's love permits delays. God allows some things to happen in our lives so that we can grow in our faith and trust in him, not because he is indifferent or uncaring, but because he loves us and wants a closer relationship with us.

God's love has a purpose in our lives. Our good and His Glory. God does what he does for our good and His purpose.

We are to live our lives walking in the light of the Lord, serving his plan and purpose in our lives. We are called to walk as the Salt and Light of His Word, knowing that he stands alongside us in all things, serving him with our entire being, praising, worshiping and glorifying His name to the very ends of the earth as we walk in the daylight of our lives.

Let us pray,

**You Know Our Needs before We Ask**

Almighty God,  
 you know our needs before we ask,  
 and our ignorance in asking:  
 Set your servants free  
 from all anxious thoughts about the future,  
 give us contentment with your good gifts,  
 and confirm our faith  
 that as we seek your kingdom,  
 you will not let us lack any good thing;  
 through Jesus Christ our Lord.  
 Amen.

*Source: Augustine of Hippo*

**Hymn #537: "Twas On That Night" (V 1,2,3)**

'Twas on that night when doomed to know  
 the eager rage of ev'ry foe,

that night in which he was betrayed,  
the Savior of the world took bread.

And after thanks and glory giv'n  
to him that rules in earth and heav'n,  
that symbol of his flesh he broke,  
and thus to all his foll'wers spoke:

"My broken body thus I give  
for you, for all. Take, eat, and live.  
And oft the sacred rite renew  
that brings my saving love to view."

## Communion

### Invitation to the Table

As we prepare to celebrate holy communion, let us remember that Scripture calls us to examine ourselves before God. We are taught that eating and drinking unworthily brings judgment upon ourselves (1 Cor. 11:28-29). Let us therefore ask God for the proper spirit in which to celebrate the sacrament.

Let us Pray,

Almighty God, before whom can be neither secret thought nor hidden deed,  
grant us your Spirit that we may know our hearts, our lives, and our inmost  
thoughts as you know them.

Grant us your grace that we may repent sincerely of all sin, find peace with you  
through our Lord Jesus Christ, and grow in assurance of salvation in him.

May the celebration of our Savior's infinite love in his redeeming death bring joy  
to us and glory to you. **Amen.**

### The Prayer of Great Thanksgiving

The Lord be with you;  
**And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts;  
**We lift them up to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God;  
**It is right to give God thanks and praise.**

It is truly right to glorify you, Father,  
 and to give you thanks,  
 for you alone are God, living and true,  
 dwelling in light inaccessible from before time and forever.  
 Fountain of all life and source of all goodness,  
 you made all things and fill them with your blessing;  
 you created them to rejoice in the splendor of your radiance.  
 Countless throngs of angels stand before you  
 to serve you night and day,  
 and, beholding the glory of your presence,  
 they offer you unceasing praise.  
 Joining with them,  
 and giving voice to every creature under heaven,  
 we glorify your name  
 and lift our voices in joyful praise

**Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of  
 power and might, heaven and earth are full  
 of your glory. Hosanna in the highest.  
 Blessed is he who comes in the name of the  
 Lord. Hosanna in the highest.**

Heavenly Father, show forth among us  
 the presence of your life-giving Word and Holy Spirit,  
 to sanctify us and your whole church through this sacrament.  
 Grant that all who share the body and blood of our Savior, Jesus Christ,  
 may be one in him and may remain faithful in love and hope.  
 And as this grain has been gathered from many fields into one loaf  
 and these grapes from many hills into one cup,  
 grant, O Lord, that your whole church may soon be gathered  
 from the ends of the earth into your kingdom

Let us together confess the faith of the church at all times and in  
 all places:

**The Apostles Creed**

**I believe in God, the Father almighty,  
 creator of heaven and earth.  
 I believe in Jesus Christ, God's 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,**  
**he is seated at the right hand of the Father,**  
**and 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.**

### **Communion**

When the hour had come for him to be glorified  
 by you, his heavenly Father,  
 having loved his own who were in the world,  
 he loved them to the end:  
 at supper with them he took bread,  
 and after giving thanks to you,  
 he broke it and gave it to his disciples, saying,  
 "Take, eat. This is my body, which is given for you.  
 Do this for the remembrance of me."  
 After supper he took the cup, saying,  
 "This cup is the new covenant sealed in my blood,  
 shed for you and for all for the forgiveness of sins.  
 Whenever you drink it,  
 do it for the remembrance of me."

Holy God, we now celebrate this memorial of our redemption.  
 Recalling Christ's death and his descent among the dead,  
 proclaiming his resurrection and ascension to your right hand,  
 awaiting his coming in glory,  
 and offering to you, from the gifts you have given us,  
 this bread and this cup,  
 we praise you and we bless you.

### **Taking of the bread**

Take and eat.  
 This is the body of Christ, which is [given] for you.  
 Do this, remembering him.

**Drinking of the cup**

This cup is the new covenant  
 sealed by Christ's blood,  
 which was shed that the sins of many  
 might be forgiven.  
 Drink from it, all of you.

**Prayer after Communion**

Loving, glorious, gracious God,  
 you have fed us at your table.  
 In your mercy you have nourished us,  
 and we are grateful.  
 This day, in this time and place,  
 we connect through the centuries  
 with the church everlasting,  
 those who before us broke bread and took the cup.  
 Help us now, as we leave this place,  
 to continue the work of the holy catholic church,  
 to practice the communion of the saints,  
 and, with hearts and souls refreshed, to seek your will.  
 Help us, now that we have been fed,  
 to feed those who are hungry,  
 invite in the stranger,  
 and visit the imprisoned.  
 You have met us where we are, O Lord,  
 and filled our needs yet again.  
 May we do the same for all of your children;  
 may we leave this place to love abundantly.  
 May we love you with all our hearts.  
 May we love our neighbors as ourselves.  
 In Christ's name we pray. **Amen.**

**Invitation to Offering****Offering****Offertory Prayer**  
**(Congregant Prepared)****Closing Hymn #425: "We Praise You, O God"**

We praise you, O God, our Redeemer, Creator;  
 in grateful devotion our tribute we bring.

We lay it before you; we kneel and adore you;  
we bless your holy name; glad praises we sing.

We worship you; God ever faithful, we bless you;  
through life's storm and tempest our guide you have been.  
When perils o'ertake us, you will not forsake us,  
and with your help, O Lord, life's battles we win.

With voices united our praises we offer,  
and gladly our songs of true worship we raise.  
Our sins now confessing, we pray for your blessing;  
to you, our great Redeemer, forever be praise.

### **Pastoral Prayer**

O God, we give you thanks for your goodness  
in the changing times of our lives.  
For every occasion you have surprised us with a blessing,  
we give you thanks  
in the pressures of this present moment,  
we are grateful for the strength and courage we find,  
knowing you are right beside us.  
Give us wisdom and patience  
to face a future filled with many questions and challenges.  
Help us trust in your goodness  
even when we wrestle with what comes next.

Aware of our own needs and the great need around us,  
we remember Christ's compassion  
and offer our prayers for the world, seeking your guidance  
so that we may do our part to share comfort, healing, and hope.

We pray for those who are hungry or homeless in these challenging times,  
and all those feeling the stress of rising prices.  
Give those with more resources the confidence to share generously.  
We pray for those who have lost everything in wild fire or flooding this year,  
and for growers facing drought, shortage of workers and uncertain markets.  
Guide the leaders in our communities and our nation  
as they face these complicated problems.  
Give them wisdom and courage to work together  
to make decisions for the wellbeing of the most vulnerable.

We pray for all who are sick or in pain, those waiting for diagnosis or treatment,

and all who face chronic health challenges.  
Equip those who offer health care to manage the demands they face  
to provide care in timely ways.  
Bring healing in body, mind, and spirit to all who struggle.

We pray for those who offer hospitality to others this summer  
in their homes and workplaces, in their churches and communities.  
Keep us alert to the needs of visitors and strangers  
and open our hearts so that your goodness will touch those we meet.

Lord Jesus Christ, you walk with us through all the days of challenge and celebration.  
Draw near to all who face unexpected sorrow this summer  
and join with those who celebrate happy occasions, too.  
Be our Bread for the journey to sustain us and encourage us,  
whatever the days ahead holds for us.

In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns  
with you and the Holy Spirit, as the One True Living God,  
now and forever we pray. **Amen.**

### **Benediction**

May you, people of God, know that  
God our Father made you and guides your every step;  
Jesus Christ gave his life for you and brings you new life;  
the Spirit keeps you in the Lord's presence and empowers you to serve.  
May almighty God continue to bless you and move you each day as you serve him.  
**Amen.**