



# Welcome

ORDER OF WORSHIP FOR

**Sunday,  
December 28,  
2025  
10:00 AM**

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**First Sunday of  
Christmastide**





# Welcome to Worship!

**SUNDAYS @ 10:00AM**

**In-person Worship.** All are welcome to join us

**Livestream on YouTube.** Live at 10am then available on our channel after



## Ways to Give

**Send a Check.** Mail to the address below ... this way still works fine!

**Send with Zelle.** Use your banking app to send to [finance@stpeteruccskokie.org](mailto:finance@stpeteruccskokie.org)

**Use PayPal.** <https://www.paypal.me/stpeteruccskokie>

**Set up Vanco.** <https://secure.myvanco.com/L-ZCME/home>

Set up your account or log in to give



## Open Communion

**All Christians** and seekers after God are invited to partake of the Lord's Supper with us the **first Sunday of every month** and special Holy Days (Christmas, Maundy Thursday, and Easter). **At-home Communion** participants are invited to provide their own elements and join when Pastor bids you, "take, eat, and drink."



## About St. Peter's UCC

We've been in the heart of downtown Skokie since 1867. We are a part of the United Church of Christ, which means we are passionate about our faith and open in our thinking. We believe in a Triune God who **loves everyone**, regardless of gender identity, orientation, race, status, or physical or mental ability, and we **joyously welcome all people** to share worship, membership, marriage, baptism, funeral, and fellowship with us.



## Contact, Follow, or Talk to Us

**Rev. Brenda Barnes Jamieson (Interim Pastor):** [pastor@stpeteruccskokie.org](mailto:pastor@stpeteruccskokie.org)

**Ben Westphal (Music Director):** [bcwestphal@gmail.com](mailto:bcwestphal@gmail.com)

**Laura Olson (Office Manager):** [office@stpeteruccskokie.org](mailto:office@stpeteruccskokie.org)

Office hours Mon-Fri 9am to 2pm

**Facebook/Instagram/YouTube:** @stpeteruccskokie

**Website:** [www.stpeteruccskokie.org](http://www.stpeteruccskokie.org)

*Like, follow, or join our  
email list for up-to-date info  
about events and activities!*



**8013 Laramie Avenue, Skokie, IL 60077 | 847-673-8166**

**St. Peter's United Church of Christ in Skokie**  
**Order of Worship for**  
**Sunday, December 28, 2025 at 10:00am**  
**First Sunday of Christmastide**

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*Welcome to worship. The music before the service is intended as a time of silent prayer and preparation.*

**GATHERING MUSIC**

Kenneth Griggs

**RINGING OF THE BELLS**

**WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Peggy Reins

*Will those who are able please stand up*

**CALL TO WORSHIP**

One: Praise the LORD! Praise the LORD from the  
heavens; praise him in the heights!

**All: Praise him, all his angels; praise him, all his host!**

One: Praise him, sun and moon; praise him, all you  
shining stars!

**All: Praise him, you highest heavens, and you waters  
above the heavens!**

One: Let them praise the name of the LORD, for he  
commanded and they were created.

**All: He established them forever and ever; he fixed  
their bounds, which cannot be passed.**

One: Praise the LORD from the earth, you sea monsters  
and all deeps, fire and hail, snow and frost, stormy  
wind fulfilling his command!

**All: Mountains and all hills, fruit trees and all cedars!**

One: Wild animals and all cattle, creeping things and flying birds!

**All: Kings of the earth and all peoples, princes and all rulers of the earth!**

One: Young men and women alike, old and young together!

**All: Let them praise the name of the LORD, for his name alone is exalted; his glory is above earth and heaven.**

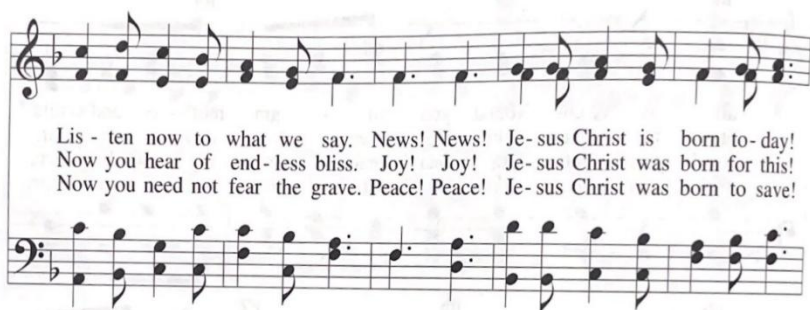
One: He has raised up a horn for his people, praise for all his faithful, for the people of Israel who are close to him.

**All: Praise the LORD!**

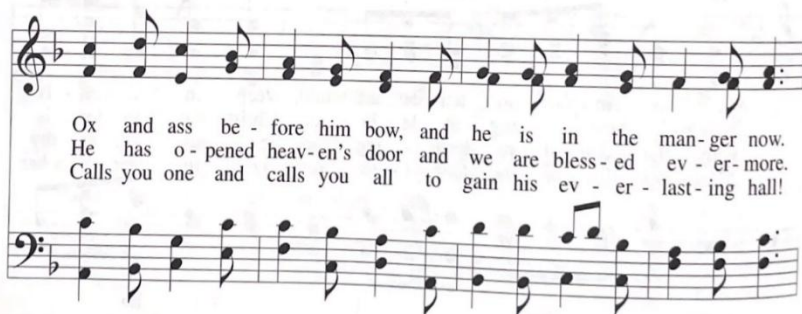
# OPENING RESPONSE "Good Christians, All Rejoice"



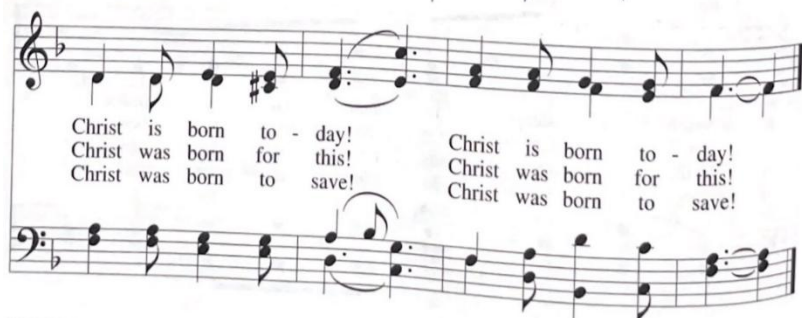
1 Good Chris-tians all, re-joice with heart and soul and voice!  
 2 Good Chris-tians all, re-joice with heart and soul and voice!  
 3 Good Chris-tians all, re-joice with heart and soul and voice!



Lis - ten now to what we say. News! News! Je - sus Christ is born to - day!  
 Now you hear of end - less bliss. Joy! Joy! Je - sus Christ was born for this!  
 Now you need not fear the grave. Peace! Peace! Je - sus Christ was born to save!



Ox and ass be - fore him bow, and he is in the man - ger now.  
 He has o - pened heav - en's door and we are bless - ed ev - er - more.  
 Calls you one and calls you all to gain his ev - er - last - ing hall!



Christ is born to - day!  
 Christ was born for this!  
 Christ was born to save!

Christ is born to - day!  
 Christ was born for this!  
 Christ was born to save!

## **CALL TO CONFESSION**

One: In a world that still knows fear, displacement, and injustice, we remember the Holy Family who fled danger under the cover of night. Christ has always stood with the vulnerable, the threatened, and the wandering. So, we come to this moment not in shame, but in honesty—trusting that God meets us with compassion stronger than fear and love deeper than exile.

Let us come before God, who invites us to truth, healing, and renewal. Please join me in our prayer of confession:

## **PRAYER OF CONFESSION**

**A: When your children cry out in danger,  
we confess that too often we look away.  
When you call us to protect the vulnerable,  
we confess that we cling to comfort instead of  
courage.  
When the world is marked by violence and grief,  
we confess that we grow numb instead of  
nurturing hope.  
Forgive us, Loving God.  
Help us to rise in solidarity with those who flee  
danger,  
to challenge systems that harm your people,  
and to embody the compassion that Jesus and his  
family once relied on.**

**Lead us back to your way of justice, mercy, and peace.  
Amen.**

## **WORDS OF ASSURANCE**

One: Beloved of God, hear the good news:

Even in the darkest stories of our faith, God is at work bringing protection, liberation, and new life. God meets us not with punishment, but with presence. In Christ we are made whole, restored, and renewed.

You are forgiven.

You are loved.

You are free to begin again—  
to walk in the way of peace.

Will you join me in affirming these words of promise?

**All: We will! Thanks be to God! Amen.**

## **SUNG RESPONSE            “Gloria”**

**A:        Glo-o-o-o-o-o-ria, in excelsis Deo,  
            Glo-o-o-o-o-o-ria, in excelsis Deo.**

## **PASSING OF THE PEACE**

One: The peace of Christ be with you all.

**A:        And also with you!**

*Share a sign of God’s peace: a smile, a wave, an elbow bump, a handshake, a hug. Let us fill this space with love.*

**SUNG RESPONSE****"Joy to the World"**

v.1

1. Joy to the world! the Lord is come: Let earth re -  
 2. Joy to the earth! the Sav - iour reigns: Let men their  
 3. He rules the world with truth and grace, And makes the

ceive her King; Let ev - ery heart pre - pare Him room,  
 songs em - ploy; While fields and floods, rocks, hills, and plains  
 na - tions prove The glo - ries of His right - eous - ness,

And heaven and na - ture sing, And heaven and na - ture  
 Re - peat the sound - ing joy, Re - peat the sound - ing  
 And won - ders of His love, And won - ders of His

And Re - peat the sound - ing joy, . . . . .  
 And won - ders of His love, . . . . .

And Re -  
 And

sing, And heaven, and heaven and na - ture sing.  
 joy, Re - peat, re - peat the sound - ing joy.  
 love, And won - ders, won - ders of His love. A-MEN.

heaven and na - ture sing,  
 peat the sound - ing joy,  
 won - ders of His love,

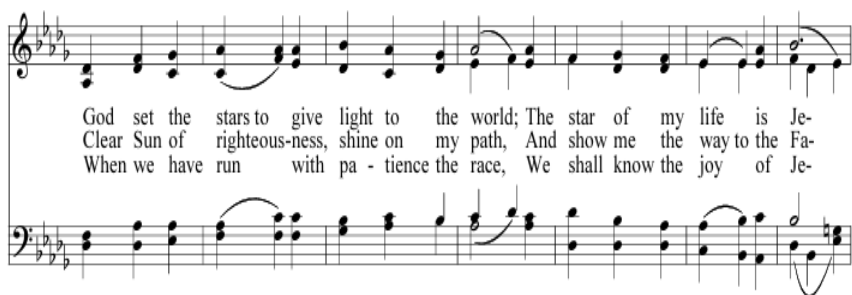
*The congregation may be seated***SCRIPTURE READING****Isaiah 2:2-5****"Toward the Light" by Anne Weems** *Read by Marilyn Froehlich*



# HYMN “I Want to Walk as a Child of the Light”

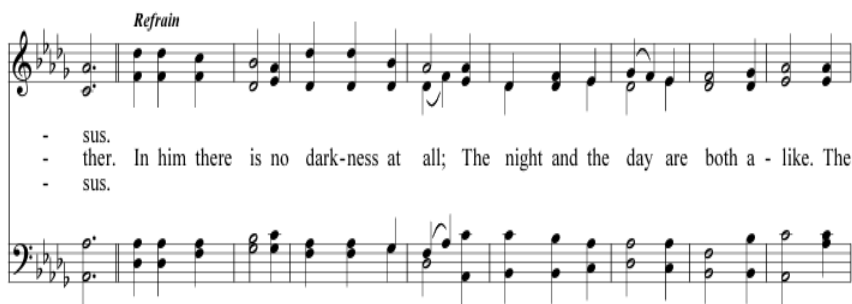


1. I want to walk as a child of the light; I want to fol - low Je - sus.  
 2. I want to see the bright-ness of God; I want to look at Je - sus.  
 3. I'm look-ing for the com-ing of Christ; I want to be with Je - sus.

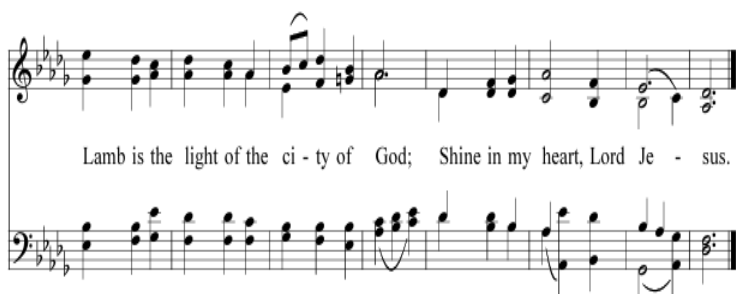


God set the stars to give light to the world; The star of my life is Je-  
 Clear Sun of righteous-ness, shine on my path, And show me the way to the Fa-  
 When we have run with pa - tience the race, We shall know the joy of Je-

*Refrain*



- sus.  
 - ther. In him there is no dark-ness at all; The night and the day are both a - like. The  
 - sus.



Lamb is the light of the ci - ty of God; Shine in my heart, Lord Je - sus.

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**SPECIAL MUSIC**

"Selected"

Kenneth Grigg

**MEDITATION** "Hope in a Cradle," by Cole Arthur Riley,  
*read by Peggy Reins*

**INVITATION TO SILENT PRAYER AND LORD'S PRAYER  
CALL TO OFFERING**

**One:** In the Christmas story, God's greatest gift is not wrapped in gold or glory,  
but placed gently into the world— love made flesh, hope made near.

**All:** **As we continue to celebrate the birth of Christ, we remember that we are invited not only to receive, but also to respond. We give because we have been given so much—grace that meets us, love that welcomes us, and hope that calls us to care for one another.**

**One:** I invite you now to share your gifts—your tithes, your offerings, and the giving of your lives—so that love may continue to take on flesh in our community and in our world.

## CALL TO OFFERING

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but placed gently into the world— love made flesh, hope made near.

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## OFFERTORY

*Will those who are able please stand up*

## OFFERTORY RESPONSE

**ALL: What can I give him,  
poor as I am?  
If I were a shepherd,  
I would bring a lamb,  
if I were a wise man  
I would do my part,  
yet what I can I give him,  
give my heart.**

## PRAYER OF DEDICATION

**One:** Please join me in our Prayer of Dedication:

**All:** **Generous and gracious God, we offer these gifts in gratitude and trust.**

**Receive them as signs of our hope and our desire to follow the way of love.**

**Bless what has been given—that it may bring comfort where there is pain,**

**justice where there is inequity, and light where the world feels heavy with shadows.**

**As you once came among us as a child, come again through these offerings—**

**in acts of compassion, in communities of care, and in lives shaped by your peace.**

**We dedicate all that we are and all that we have to you, as we continue to live the good news of Christmas. Amen.**

*The congregation may be seated*

## SCRIPTURE READING

**“The Promise Fulfilled”**

**by Marion van der Loo**

Isaiah 35:3-10

*Read by Jenn Schneider*

# CLOSING HYMN “Go Tell it On the Mountain”

*Refrain*  
Unison

Go tell it on the moun - tain, O-ver the hills and ev - 'ry-where.

Go tell it on the moun - tain That Je - sus Christ is born!

*Harmony*

1. While shep-herds kept their watch-ing O'er si - lent flocks by night, Be -  
 2. The shep-herds feared and trem-bled When lo! a - bove the earth Rang  
 3. Down in a low - ly man - ger The hum - ble Christ was born, And

hold, through-out the heav - ens There shone a ho - ly light.  
 out the an - gel cho - rus That hailed our Sav - ior's birth.  
 God sent us sal - va - tion That bless - ed Christ-mas morn.

*to Refrain*

**CHARGE**

- One: As you go from this place, remember that Christmas does not end at the manger.
- All: The love born among us is still growing—in acts of kindness, in courage that seeks justice, in compassion that makes room for all.**
- One: Carry the light you have received into ordinary moments and uncertain places.
- All: Live the good news you have heard: that love is stronger than fear, that hope can take flesh in you, and that peace begins with how we choose to live.**
- One: Go now, to love boldly, to serve generously, and to trust that God goes with you.

**BENEDICTION**

- One: May the God who comes close bless you with rest when you are weary, with courage when the path feels unclear, and with joy that surprises you.
- All: May the light of Christ, born into the world in love, shine in your hearts and through your lives.**
- One: And may the Spirit guide your steps, holding you in grace and sending you out in peace.
- All: Go in love.**
- All: Go in hope.**
- All: Go in peace. Amen.**

**POSTLUDE**

Kenneth Grigg

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**FOR WORSHIP TODAY**

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MINISTER	Rev. Brenda Barnes Jamieson
MUSIC DIRECTOR	Ben Westphal
DEACON	Barb Bailey
LIVESTREAM RECORDING	Beth Sterba
NURSERY ATTENDANT	Carolyn Van Til

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# News in the Pews

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**Welcome to worship! May this time of prayer and praise help you hold on a bit longer to Christmas joy and carry it into the new year.**

**We extend heartfelt gratitude to all our volunteers; without their help, this and every service would not be possible – thank you.**

**Thank you to Kenneth Griggs for filling in for Ben today.**

**Baby Shower for Jesus is winding down!** Our Sunday School program is sponsoring collecting baby items for the Niles Township Food pantry to give to their needy families. Items like baby food formula, diapers, lotions, cheerios, fruit cups, fruit snacks, juice and milk boxes and pudding cups are all great items to donate. You can place your items in the sanctuary under the tree on Sundays, or on the table outside the gym during the week. Thank you so much for your help!

**Thinking about joining the church?** We will be holding classes in January. If you might be interested, please tell Brenda, Laura or another church leader.

**A call to Audit.** Your Board of Finance is looking for one of two people that could volunteer to help audit the

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records of the Financial Secretary and the Treasurer before our annual meeting. If you or someone you know has a skillset or an inquiring mind to dive in and ask pertinent questions about how St. Peter's manages our finances, please reach out to Chad McCoy at [chadwood.mccoy@gmail.com](mailto:chadwood.mccoy@gmail.com). The time would be a few hours in the church office sometime in mid-January. Thank You!

**2026 Calendars are in!** Copies will be available in the Narthex, Lanford Fellowship Hall, and near the offices. Take one for a friend, too!

**Softgoods Drive in January!** Starting January 4<sup>th</sup>, we will be collecting clothing, bedding, linens, shoes, belts, hats, coats, pillows & stuffed toys for our Savers Fundrive, which pays by the pound. Bring your items to the office on weekdays or on Sundays. Thanks for your help!

*Our People*

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**Please keep St. Peter's extended family in your thoughts and prayers. Other folks that need your prayers include:**

- Matt Anthony, nephew of Marlene Russell, who has incurable cancer.
- Kate Traub, niece of the Bailey's, recovering from surgery.
- Mark Taylor.
- The Kuras family welcomed a baby girl Virginia! All are doing well.
- Daughters of Ann Herren Jenny and Betsy, both recovering after surgeries.  
Wendy, friend and colleague of Beth Sterba, who is fighting liver cancer.
- Chad McCoy and his family.
- Richard Hook who had a stroke.
- Kathy Zipperer and her family.
- Dorothy Panzke with a new health concern.
- Annie's friend Renee is fighting a long term, rare illness. She and her family are fighting to find a remedy that will slow and maybe even reverse the progress of this illness.
- Nicole McGinnis, childhood friend of Laura's who is fighting stage 4 cancer.
- David, uncle of Chad McCoy, as he undergoes kidney dialysis treatments.
- Robert Elliot, brother-in-law of Anna Riley, diagnosed with cancer stage 2.
- Prayers for Julius and all immigrants, refugees and displaced people.
- Sharon Johnson's daughter Donna continues her battle with Lymphoma, which can be controlled but not cured.
- Susan Garcia's Aunt Janice battling cancer.
- Paul Brzozowski has now completed all treatment and will have MRIs every 2 months.

Others in our church family to keep close in our hearts include Larry Baumhardt, Lois Jarmuth and Bob Seitman.

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***If you are aware of others to include in our shared prayers, please let a church officer, an Elder, or the office know!***

**Happy Birthday this week** to Ben Westphal, Jim Todd and John Karol.

**According to the schedule** and barring any switches, next Sunday's Lector is Karen Christianson, and Mike Ryan is on Nursery duty. Thank you so much for your service!

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**CHURCH LEADERSHIP**

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PRESIDENT	Peggy Reins
VICE-PRESIDENT	Barb Todd
TREASURER	Chad McCoy
SECRETARY	Annie Noorts
FINANCIAL SECRETARY	Maria Altmayer

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*Regular Reminders!*

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**Let us know you were here!** Please sign the attendance sheet in the black pew pads and when you think your pew is ready, please pass the pad towards the center aisle of the church.

**We are always grateful for all offerings to the church.** So many thanks to everyone who's been keeping us going with your donations! See inside the front cover for details on how to donate.

**Private Signs:** You will notice certain rooms around the church have been designated as "private." If ICE should ever come to our building, they will not be allowed to enter any room marked "private."

**You can now donate via Zelle!** Put [finance@stpeteruccskokie.org](mailto:finance@stpeteruccskokie.org) in the address. Please indicate under memo/notes where the funds should go.

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## **MISSION MOMENTS**

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**Cosmic Praise**

**December 28, 2025**

**First Sunday after Christmas Day**

**WHITE**

**Psalm 148**

How many forlorn Christmas trees, kicked to the curb and stripped of all their tinsel glory, did you see on your way to church today? One? Two? Perhaps even three?

Once again, the world has rushed the seasons, ushering in the bleak midwinter before its time. I have always wondered why we are quick to start our holiday celebrations earlier each year, and then seem to be in a rush to pack it all away? We are still in Christmastide until Epiphany, Jan. 6 which, before St. Nick came with a sack full of toys, was traditionally the time to exchange gifts, recalling the gold, frankincense and myrrh that the Magi presented to the Christ Child.

But rather than lingering to listen to the angels sing, we stop too soon, leaving many to come down with a severe case of post-holiday letdown. You might recognize the symptoms: sadness, lethargy, and trouble getting back into the swing of mundane routines.

While my Christmas tree stays lit until Jan. 6, I am still susceptible to post-holiday letdown. But when I find myself struggling to get out of bed and stare with dread at the computer, not wanting to check work

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emails, I reach for the best cure I know of. I reach for God's enduring Word.

It is in the Good Book that we find the psalmist's prescription for let downs and blues of all kinds (not just holiday!): A huge dose of praise, administered every hour on the hour.

Praise him, all his angels! Praise him, all his host! Praise him you highest heavens! Praise him!

When we turn our attention to lifting our praises rather than cursing the darkness, our hearts start soaring with an indestructible hope. We begin believing that with God all things are possible. Frowns become smiles. Mountains become molehills. Strength, courage and energy return.

Praise is a transformative spiritual discipline that I urge us to add to our New Year's resolutions, that is, if you make resolutions. I remember reading years ago that Satan is more afraid of praise coming from our lips than praise. Yes, praise is that powerful. So my friends, practice praise — this day and always.

*God of light and love, the Christmas decorations that filled our hearts with joy are being taken down. The corners of our lives that were illuminated with the glow of warm hope are now bleak and cold. Yet still we are being reminded to praise You — now and always. And so, hear our praises this day. And may our praise to You be the very thing that chases away the gloomy shadows all around. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.*

(Rev. Donna Frischknecht Jackson is a communications specialist for the United Church of Christ and author of today's Sunday Bulletin.)

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