



Maundy Thursday
Worship Service
March 28, 2024
7:00 p.m.

Prince of Peace Lutheran Church

815 East Farm Road 182
Springfield, Missouri 65810
Pastor Carl R. Gauck, Presiding

THEME: *This evening our Lenten observance comes to an end, and we gather with Christians around the world to celebrate the Three Days of Jesus' death and resurrection. Tonight we remember Christ's last meal with his disciples, but the central focus is his commandment that we live out the promise embodied in this meal. As Jesus washed his disciples' feet, so we are called to give and receive love in humble service to one another. Formed into a new body in Christ through this holy meal, we are transformed by the mercy we have received and carry it into the world. Departing worship in solemn silence, we anticipate the coming days.*

WELCOME **indicates to please stand as you are able*

GATHERING

P The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God.

***CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS**

P Friends in Christ, in this Lenten season we have heard our Lord's call to struggle against sin, death, and the devil—all that keeps us from loving God and each other. This is the struggle to which we were called at baptism. Within the community of the church, God never wearies of forgiving sin and giving the peace of reconciliation. On this night let us confess our sin against God and our neighbor, and enter the celebration of the great Three Days reconciled with God and with one another.

All sit and keep silence for reflection and self-examination.

P Most merciful God,

C we confess that we are captive to sin and cannot free ourselves. We have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. For the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, so that we may delight in your will and walk in your ways, to the glory of your holy name. Amen.

P God, who is rich in mercy, loved us even when we were dead in sin, and made us alive are forgiven. Almighty God strengthen you with power through the Holy Spirit, that Christ may live in your hearts through faith.

C Amen.

***GREETING**

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.

*PRAYER OF THE DAY

A Eternal God,

C in the sharing of a meal your Son established a new covenant for all people, and in the washing of feet he showed us the dignity of service. Grant that by the power of your Holy Spirit these signs of our life in faith may speak again to our hearts, feed our spirits, and refresh our bodies, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

WORD

FIRST READING

Exodus 12:1-4 [5-10] 11-14

¹The LORD said to Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt: ²This month shall mark for you the beginning of months; it shall be the first month of the year for you. ³Tell the whole congregation of Israel that on the tenth of this month they are to take a lamb for each family, a lamb for each household. ⁴If a household is too small for a whole lamb, it shall join its closest neighbor in obtaining one; the lamb shall be divided in proportion to the number of people who eat of it. [⁵Your lamb shall be without blemish, a year-old male; you may take it from the sheep or from the goats. ⁶You shall keep it until the fourteenth day of this month; then the whole assembled congregation of Israel shall slaughter it at twilight. ⁷They shall take some of the blood and put it on the two doorposts and the lintel of the houses in which they eat it. ⁸They shall eat the lamb that same night; they shall eat it roasted over the fire with unleavened bread and bitter herbs. ⁹Do not eat any of it raw or boiled in water, but roasted over the fire, with its head, legs, and inner organs. ¹⁰You shall let none of it remain until the morning; anything that remains until the morning you shall burn.] ¹¹This is how you shall eat it: your loins girded, your sandals on your feet, and your staff in your hand; and you shall eat it hurriedly. It is the passover of the LORD. ¹²For I will pass through the land of Egypt that night, and I will strike down every firstborn in the land of Egypt, both human beings and animals; on all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgments: I am the LORD. ¹³The blood shall be a sign for you on the houses where you live: when I see the blood, I will pass over you, and no plague shall destroy you when I strike the land of Egypt.

¹⁴This day shall be a day of remembrance for you. You shall celebrate it as a festival to the LORD; throughout your generations you shall observe it as a perpetual ordinance.

PSALM 116:1-2,12-19 (*Worship Assistant reads the non-bold print; congregation reads the bold print*)

¹I love the LORD, who has heard my voice and listened to my supplication,

²**for the LORD has given ear to me whenever I called.**

¹²How shall I repay the LORD for all the good things God has done for me?

¹³**I will lift the cup of salvation and call on the name of the LORD.**

¹⁴I will fulfill my vows to the LORD in the presence of all God's people.

¹⁵**Precious in your sight, O LORD, is the death of your servants.**

¹⁶O LORD, truly I am your servant; I am your servant, the child of your handmaid; you have freed me from my bonds.

¹⁷**I will offer you the sacrifice of thanksgiving and call upon the name of the LORD.**

¹⁸I will fulfill my vows to the LORD in the presence of all God's people,

¹⁹**in the courts of the LORD's house, in the midst of you, O Jerusalem.**

Second Reading:

1 Corinthians 11:23-26

²³For I received from the Lord what I also handed on to you, that the Lord Jesus on the night when he was betrayed took a loaf of bread, ²⁴and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, "This is my body that is for you. Do this in remembrance of me." ²⁵In the same way he took the cup also, after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me." ²⁶For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

***LENTEN ACCLAMATION**



P The Holy Gospel according to John, the thirteenth chapter

C Thanks be to God.

***GOSPEL READING**

John 13:1-17, 31b-35

¹Now before the festival of the Passover, Jesus knew that his hour had come to depart from this world and go to the Father. Having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end. ²The devil had already put it into the heart of Judas son of Simon Iscariot to betray him. And during supper ³Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he had come from God and was going to God, ⁴got up from the table, took off his outer robe, and tied a towel around himself. ⁵Then he poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples' feet and to wipe them with the towel that was tied around him. ⁶He came to Simon Peter, who said to him, "Lord, are you going to wash my feet?" ⁷Jesus answered, "You do not know now what I am doing, but later you will understand." ⁸Peter said to him, "You will never wash my feet." Jesus answered, "Unless I wash you, you have no share with me." ⁹Simon Peter said to him, "Lord, not my feet only but also my hands and my head!" ¹⁰Jesus said to him, "One who has bathed does not need to wash, except for the feet, but is entirely clean. And you are clean, though not all of you." ¹¹For he knew who was to betray him; for this reason he said, "Not all of you are clean."

¹²After he had washed their feet, had put on his robe, and had returned to the table, he said to them, “Do you know what I have done to you? ¹³You call me Teacher and Lord—and you are right, for that is what I am. ¹⁴So if I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another’s feet. ¹⁵For I have set you an example, that you also should do as I have done to you. ¹⁶Very truly, I tell you, servants are not greater than their master, nor are messengers greater than the one who sent them. ¹⁷If you know these things, you are blessed if you do them.” ^{31b}“Now the Son of Man has been glorified, and God has been glorified in him. ³²If God has been glorified in him, God will also glorify him in himself and will glorify him at once. ³³Little children, I am with you only a little longer. You will look for me; and as I said to the Jews so now I say to you, ‘Where I am going, you cannot come.’ ³⁴I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another. ³⁵By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.”

P The Gospel of the Lord.

C Praise to you, O Christ.

SERMON

Pastor Carl R. Gauck

*HYMN OF THE DAY

Where Charity and Love Prevail
verses 1, 2 & 3

ELW # 359



1 Where char - i - ty and love pre - vail, there God is ev - er found;
2 With grate-ful joy and ho - ly fear, God's char - i - ty we learn;
3 Let us re - call that in our midst dwells Christ, God's ho - ly Son;
4 Let strife a - mong us be un - known; let all con - ten - tions cease.
5 Let us for - give each oth - er's faults as we our own con - fess,



brought here to - geth - er by Christ's love, by love we thus are bound.
let us with heart and mind and soul now love God in re - turn.
as mem - bers of each bod - y joined, in him we are made one.
Be God's the glo - ry that we seek; be his our on - ly peace.
that we may love each oth - er well in Chris - tian gen - tle - ness.

Text: Latin hymn, 9th cent.; tr. Omer Westendorf, 1916–1997, alt.

Music: TWENTY-FOURTH, attr. Lucius Chapin, 1760–1842

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***PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION** (*The response to “Merciful God,” is “receive our prayer”*)

*SHARING OF THE PEACE

P The peace of Christ be with you always

C And also with you.

MEAL

*THE 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.

*SEASONAL SENTENCE

*WORDS OF INSTITUTION

*THE LORD'S PRAYER

- P** Lord, remember us in your kingdom, and teach us to pray:
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.

CELEBRATION OF HOLY COMMUNION

Admission to the Sacrament is by invitation of the Lord. We welcome our guests to commune with us today in the faith that Christ is present in this Sacrament. Those who do not commune are welcome to come forward for a blessing. All bread is gluten free. Apple juice is in the center of the tray, or upon request. If you are unable to kneel, please feel free to stand at the communion rail. If you are unable to come forward, please tell an usher and the Holy Supper will be brought to you.

INVITATION TO HOLY COMMUNION

- P** The body of Christ, given for you.
P The blood of Christ, shed for you.

*LAMB OF GOD

Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world; have mer-cy on
us. Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world; have
mer-cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a-way the
sin of the world; grant us peace, grant us peace.

COMMUNION HYMN

Great God, Your Love Has Called Us verses 1, 3 & 4

ELW # 358



1 Great God, your love has called us here, as we, by love, for
2 We come with self - in - flict - ed pains of bro - ken trust and
3 Great God, in Christ you call our name and then re - ceive us
4 Then take the towel, and break the bread, and hum - ble us, and
5 Great God, in Christ you set us free your life to live, your



love were made. Your liv - ing like - ness still we bear,
cho - sen wrong, half - free, half - bound by in - ner chains,
as your own, not through some mer - it, right, or claim,
call us friends. Suf - fer and serve till all are fed,
joy to share. Give us your Spir - it's lib - er - ty



though marred, dis - hon - ored, dis - o - beyed. We come, with all our
by so - cial forc - es swept a - long, by pow'rs and sys - tems
but by your gra - cious love a - lone. We strain to glimpse your
and show how grand - ly love in - tends to work till all cre -
to turn from guilt and dull de - spair, and of - fer all that



heart and mind your call to hear, your love to find.
close con - fined, yet seek - ing hope for hu - man - kind.
mer - cy seat and find you kneel - ing at our feet.
a - tion sings, to fill all worlds, to crown all things.
faith can do while love is mak - ing all things new.

Text: Brian A. Wren, b. 1936

Music: RYBURN, Norman Cocker, 1889-1953

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Music © Oxford University Press. Used by permission.

*POST COMMUNION BLESSING

P The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in his grace.

C Amen.

***PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION**

A Let us pray. Lord Jesus, in a wonderful sacrament you strengthen us with the saving power of your suffering, death, and resurrection. May this sacrament of your body and blood so work in us that the fruits of your redemption will show forth in the way we live, for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C Amen.

Congregation is seated

STRIPPING OF THE ALTAR

Linens, paraments, and candles are removed from the altar.

As this is done, the cantor will cant Psalm 88.

There is no benediction.

Psalm 88

¹*O LORD, God of my salvation, when, at night, I cry out in your presence,*

²*let my prayer come before you; incline your ear to my cry.*

³*For my soul is full of troubles, and my life draws near to Sheol.*

⁴*I am counted among those who go down to the Pit; I am like those who have no help,*

⁵*like those forsaken among the dead, like the slain that lie in the grave,*

like those whom you remember no more, for they are cut off from your hand.

⁶*You have put me in the depths of the Pit, in the regions dark and deep.*

⁷*Your wrath lies heavy upon me, and you overwhelm me with all your waves. Selah*

⁸*You have caused my companions to shun me; you have made me a thing of horror to them.*

I am shut in so that I cannot escape; ⁹my eye grows dim through sorrow.

Every day I call on you, O LORD; I spread out my hands to you.

¹⁰*Do you work wonders for the dead? Do the shades rise up to praise you? Selah*

¹¹*Is your steadfast love declared in the grave, or your faithfulness in Abaddon?*

¹²*Are your wonders known in the darkness, or your saving help in the land of forgetfulness?*

¹³*But I, O LORD, cry out to you; in the morning my prayer comes before you.*

¹⁴*O LORD, why do you cast me off? Why do you hide your face from me?*

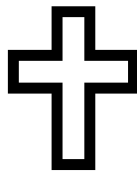
¹⁵*Wretched and close to death from my youth up, I suffer your terrors; I am desperate.*

¹⁶*Your wrath has swept over me; your dread assaults destroy me.*

¹⁷*They surround me like a flood all day long; from all sides they close in on me.*

¹⁸*You have caused friend and neighbor to shun me; my companions are in darkness.*

All leave the church in silence.



Worship Assistant: Gail Ernst

Cantor: Angie Messner

Organist: Donna Mohr

Altar assistants: Gayle Bell, Sue Wilford, & Caroline Wake

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PRINCE OF PEACE ANNOUNCEMENTS

WELCOME EVERYONE, ESPECIALLY OUR VISITORS! As a congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, we are a community of faith gathered together by the Spirit, fed with the Word and with the Sacraments, and sent to serve in the name of Christ.

PRAYER REQUESTS/PRAYER LIST: Call or email the church office with prayer requests for the congregational prayer list, and/or email prayer group who will also lift up your prayer concerns.

REMINDERS: Please remember to turn off cell phones and/or place them on airplane mode prior to the beginning of worship. Doing so will help improve the internet strength for livestreaming the worship service on Facebook.



Protein Drive: 40 Days of Lent

We will be collecting foods high in protein for Least of These throughout Lent and ending at Easter. Foods high in protein are:

- ***Canned tuna and salmon***
- ***Mac and cheese***
- ***Dried beans***
- ***Peanut Butter***
- ***Nuts***
- ***Must be non-perishable***

THANK YOU! Members of the Outreach Team donated 146 pounds of items donated to Least of These Food Pantry Wednesday, February 28! Please keep the donations coming throughout Lent!

FLOWERS TO ADORN THE CROSS ON EASTER MORNING: Remember to bring flowers with you on Easter Sunday to place on the wooden cross in the Memorial Garden before the Worship Service

CHILDREN'S SUNDAY SCHOOL: Sunday School for children is on Sunday mornings at 10:30 a.m. in "Dani's Room."

CARE RIDES: Need a ride to church, church events, doctor appointments, picking up medication, and/or grocery shopping, etc.? The Congregational Care Team can help! We do need sufficient notice and a specific time frame to schedule. If you need this service or want to volunteer with this ministry, please call Sue Bergeson at 641-750-1144. If she does not answer, please leave a message and she will return the call. *Thank you and God's Blessings, Your Congregational Care Team*

POP FOOD PANTRY: A reminder POP has a Food Pantry located in the lower level of the building. The pantry is located in the cabinets in the last classroom on the right before you exit to the lower level parking lot. Bags are located on the wooden table and basic pantry items are included. If you would like to donate to the pantry, you can leave your donations in the same room on the table, or in the cry room on the table. Diane Washburn and Kathy Corwin routinely go through the donations within the pantry and remove items that have aged and slipped out of date. *Outreach Team*



APRIL NOISY OFFERINGS: April 6 & 7 Noisy Offerings will go to ELCA Rev. Dr. Bradn Buerkle, who currently serves as a Dean for far rural eastern Russia. Our Companion Synod, part of the Central States Synod and chaired by Rev. Gary Teske, also works to offer support of Bradn. Our congregation at POP has maintained a sponsorship of Rev. Dr. Bradn Buerkle through the ELCA Global Mission for over 15+ years.

BIRTHDAY & ANNIVERSARY LISTINGS IN THE TIDINGS: Is your birthday and/or wedding anniversary listing missing in the Tidings newsletter? Please take a moment to notify the church office via email at princeofpeaceelca@gmail.com or 417-881-0833 so that your information can be added to the church database as well as listed in the newsletter.

SEWING & CRAFT DAY AT THE CHURCH: Every second and fourth Thursday of the month, 9 am until approximately 1 pm in the Fellowship Hall. Leania Carter coordinates the group. We assemble in the Fellowship Hall with our respective craft projects and also work on community outreach projects. (*i.e. bibs and blankets for Newborns in Needs, etc.*) We enjoy a devotional at our mid morning coffee and snack break as well as enjoy a sack lunch together around noon. Even if you do not have a craft project to bring along, join us for fellowship!

THANK YOU TO ALL who assisted with cleaning up, planted flowers, added mulch, mowed, trimmed, weeded, edged, blew out and/or raked up dead leaves, cut down trees, did spring cleaning, etc. last week!

A NOTE FROM THE FELLOWSHIP TEAM: We just wanted to say a big thank you to everyone who attended the fish fry on Friday night! We had a lot of fun and hope you did too. We were able to raise \$496 to go to Least of These, and thank you to the wonderful volunteers who cooked, cleaned, served and sang!

A BIG THANK YOU FROM THE LEARNING MINISTRIES TEAM! We had a great time at the Children's Easter Festival on Saturday March 23rd! The Learning Ministries Team would like to thank everyone that assisted with the event and donated items for the event including:

- Ben & Joan Harrell for donating empty & toy-filled Easter eggs.
- Brad Beattie & Price Cutter for donating cookies and bottled water.
- Pastor Carl, Gayle & Amos Bell, Pam Duneman, Tonya Messner, Dave Jahnke, Pastor Katherine Hayes-Wallenburg, Gail Ernst, Ross Jahn, Herb Peterson, Brett Onstott, Chris Hingst, Carolyn & JR Frazier, and Brandon & Angie Messner for volunteering at the event.
- Diane Washburn for donating palms to place on the cross.
- Jason Farley and his petting zoo from Creeds Town Ranch for attending the event.
- Robin Fleetwood with Face Painting by Tangles for attending the event.
- All members of the congregation who donated candy for Easter eggs.
- All members of the congregation who donated to the March Noisy Offering that helped fund activities at the festival.
- Heather Roberts for ordering supplies and printing flyers for the festival.

Thanks to everyone and Happy Easter from the Learning Ministries Team! *Blessings, Angie Messner, Chris Hingst, & Dave Jahnke*

SERVANTS OF THE LORD: If you are unable to serve on a Sunday for a job assignment, please find a replacement on your own. You may then call the church office with changes. Patty Killian

Easter Sunday, March 31st	8:00 am Worship Service	10:30 am Worship Service
Acolyte	Avilene Reece	Bryce Messner
Alleluia Bearer and/or flowered cross bearer	Jeremy Stelford	Raelinn Baker
Worship Asst.	Tammy Jahnke	Brandon Messner
Greeter	Patricia Van Aken	Peggy McCabe
Ushers	Barry Killian & Dave Jahnke	Ross Jahn & Bill Ernst
Organist	Donna Mohr	Donna Mohr
Communion Set-Up	Patty Killian	Patty Killian
Easter breakfast in between services	Fellowship Team	Fellowship Team

Saturday	April 6	April 13	April 20	April 27
Acolyte	Raelinn Baker	Bryce Messner	Bentley Messner	Raelinn Baker
Worship Asst.	Brandon Messner	Rick Lewis	Gayle Bell	Brandon Messner
Greeter	Volunteer Needed	Peggy McCabe	Volunteer needed	Peggy McCabe
Sunday	April 7	April 14	April 21	April 28
Acolyte	Lila Teaster	Elijah Otzelberger	Bella Guillen	Oliver Kavanagh
Worship Assistant	Julie Karlson	Brandon Otzelberger	Brett Onstott	Dave Jahnke
Greeter	Jim & Carol Kerns	Kathy Corwin	Patricia Van Aken	Kent & Leania Carter
Usher	Joel Karlson	Herb Peterson	Ross Jahn	Bill Ernst
Hosts	Greg Verheyen & Jackie Higgins	Brad Beattie & Gina Steffins	Bill & Gail Ernst	Mark & Pam Duneman
Communion Set-Up	Samantha Otzelberger	Samantha Otzelberger	Samantha Otzelberger	Samantha Otzelberger
Tellers	Susan Stelford & Ross Jahn	Kathy Teaster & Paula Kavanagh	Kathy Corwin & Cherie Guillen	Dave & Tammy Jahnke

PRINCE OF PEACE CALENDAR

Thursday, March 28	7:00 pm	Maundy Thursday Worship Service with Holy Communion led by Pr. Carl Gauck
Friday, March 29	7:00 pm	Good Friday Worship Service
Saturday, March 30		NO SATURDAY EVENING WORSHIP SERVICE
Sunday, March 31	8:00 am	Easter Worship with Holy Communion led by Pr. Carl Gauck
	9:00 am	Easter Breakfast
	9:45 am	Easter Egg Hunt for Children
	10:30 am	Easter Worship with Holy Communion led by Pr. Carl Gauck
Monday, April 1		Church Office closed-Easter observance
	6:30 pm	Monday Evening Bible Study (<i>Fellowship Hall</i>)
Tuesday, April 2	6:00 pm	Outreach Team Meeting (<i>Library</i>)
	7:00 pm	Worship Team Meeting (<i>ZOOM</i>)
Wednesday, April 3	10:00 am	Pericope Team Study (<i>ZOOM</i>)
	6:00 pm	Long Range Planning Committee (<i>Library</i>)
Saturday, April 6	5:00 pm	Saturday Evening Worship Service with Holy Communion led by Pr. Carl Gauck
Sunday, April 7	9:30 am	Worship Service with Holy Communion led by Pr. Carl Gauck
	10:30 am	Fellowship with coffee & snacks (<i>Fellowship Hall</i>)
	10:30 am	Children's Sunday School (<i>Dani's Classroom</i>)

CHURCH CALENDAR ONLINE: Remember to check out the church calendar online for the most up to date information on what is happening here at Prince of Peace by visiting our church web page at www.pop-elca.net! Additionally, please remember to inform the church office when meeting dates are determined so the meetings can be added to the church calendar.

GIVING OPPORTUNITIES!

- 1) Place your offering in the offering plate located at the back of the church either before or after the worship service;
- 2) Mail your offering to the church at 815 E. Farm Road 182, Springfield, MO 65810;
- 3) Give electronically by downloading the "VANCO MOBILE" app on your telephone or tablet via Google Play or the App Store; select **Prince of Peace Lutheran Church Springfield, MO** and give at your convenience;
- 4) Go to pop-elca.net home page, scroll to the bottom of the page where you will see the opportunity to give online;
- 5) Scan the QR code to the right. Once scanned with a QR reader on your phone or tablet, it will immediately take you to where you can give your offering through the "VANCO MOBILE" app.



PRINCE OF PEACE STAFF

Rev. Carl R. Gauck, Transitional Pastor

Dr. Tammy Jahnke, PMA

Heather Roberts, Office Manager

Susan Stelford, Financial Secretary

Jackie Higgins, Bookkeeper

Congregational Custodians

Phone: (417) 881-0833

Email: princeofpeaceelca@gmail.com

web site: www.pop-elca.net



Prince of Peace Lutheran Church, ELCA

Prayers of Intercession for March 28, 2024

- A** Trusting in Jesus who gave his life for the world, let us pray for the church, the world, and all in need.

A brief silence.

- A** God who kneels to wash our feet, gather your church around the world during this holy week. Humble the powerful and lift up any who are marginalized. Renew our faith and make us bold in service and love to our neighbors. Merciful God,

C **receive our prayer.**

- A** God who blesses the grain of the soil and the fruit of the vine, inspire in us a reverent care for the earth. Sustain fields, gardens, and wild places, that all people are fed and every living thing flourishes. Merciful God,

C **receive our prayer.**

- A** God whose greatest commandment is love, guide all who govern by the principle of love. Transform unjust human systems that oppress some for the gain of others. Restore communities as places of justice and concern for those who are vulnerable. Merciful God,

C **receive our prayer.**

- A** God who was betrayed, comfort people everywhere who have suffered abuse at the hands of someone they knew and trusted. Heal the bodies, minds, and hearts of victims of exploitation. Help all in pain to know that you are near (*especially all who are currently on our congregation's prayer list, on our hearts and on our minds*.....). Merciful God,

C **receive our prayer.**

- A** God who sits at the table with us, grant the joy of your presence to people celebrating first communion today, and to all who share the meal. Strengthen communities of faith in grace and courage. Merciful God,

C **receive our prayer.**

Here other intercessions may be offered.

- A** God who brings new life out of death, we pray with thanks for the lives of those who have joined the communion of saints (*especially*). In our holy meal, connect us to the faithful who have gone before us, and nourish us as your people living today. Merciful God,

C **receive our prayer.**

- A** Receive these prayers, loving God, for the sake of the One who loved us to the end, Jesus Christ, our redeemer.

C **Amen.**