

December 20, 2015, Third Sunday of Advent

Advent Prayer Cindy and Helen Bansen. (They have examples I have sent)

Welcome (Scott)

- General welcome
- Fourth Sunday of Advent
- Christmas Eve services at 5 and 7:30 p.m.; please invite a neighbor or friend.
- “After a time of silent reflection, we will continue in worship.”

ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS (Scott)

PRAYERS of the PEOPLE (Instructions for Assisting Minister, which are new as of Sept. 27)

Sequence in worship: *The ushers will bring forward the Communion elements and the offering plates. The offering plates will have any prayer requests that worshipers have written. The Assisting Minister (AM) and pastor will receive these from the ushers and hold them while the pastor prays, thanking God for both the monetary gifts and the prayer requests.*

After the prayer, the AM and pastor will place the plates and Communion elements on the Communion Table/Altar and then the AM will introduce the Prayers of the People as he or she and the pastor stand behind the table.

Introduction/Instructions for the congregation: *Say something like the following in your own words to introduce the prayers:*

- We are invited into a time of prayer to express our thanks, to pray for concerns of ourselves and others for the church, for the world and for those in need.
- We are invited to include our joys and thanksgivings, our sorrows and burdens as we pray either silently or aloud.
- If you pray aloud, please conclude your petition with the phrase, “Lord, in your mercy, to which we will all respond, “Hear our prayer.”

Begin the time of prayer using these or similar words:

- Lord, hear us as we offer you our joys and thanksgivings and the concerns of our hearts. . . *or*
- Almighty God, in Jesus Christ you taught us to pray, so we offer these petitions in his name. . .
or
- God our Creator, guide us by your Holy Spirit, that these prayers may serve your will and show your love for the world. . . *or*
- Mighty God, whose Word we trust and whose Spirit enables us to pray, hear our requests as we pray them silently or aloud. . .

Our petitions should include prayers for the Church universal and for TLPC; for community or local concerns; for peace and justice in the world and for those who govern; and for those who suffer in body, mind or spirit. Please be prepared to pray for one of these areas if you do not hear it offered aloud by a TLPC worshiper. You of course may include additional prayers of your own during the time of open prayer.

The pastor will conclude the time of prayer.

FIRST READING (Lector) - *The prophet Micah speaks hope to people who had seen the northern kingdom of Israel fall and dreaded what would happen to the southern kingdom of Judah. He speaks of a future shepherd-king who, like David, will come from the small town of Bethlehem. (Ephrathah refers to the area around Bethlehem.) He will lead the people back to God and bring peace. New Testament writers understood this passage to be referring to Jesus.*

Micah 5:2-5a

But you, O Bethlehem of Ephrathah,
who are one of the little clans of Judah,
from you shall come forth for me
one who is to rule in Israel,
whose origin is from of old,
from ancient days.
Therefore he shall give them up until the time
when she who is in labor has brought forth;
then the rest of his kindred shall return
to the people of Israel.
And he shall stand and feed his flock in the strength of the LORD,
in the majesty of the name of the LORD his God.
And they shall live secure, for now he shall be great
to the ends of the earth;
and he shall be the one of peace.

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL READING - Luke 1:39-55

(Scott as narrator, Cindy as Elizabeth and Helen as Mary)

I have sent them the reading in a separate email.

Prayer of Dedication (Scott—after offering)

(Pray also to acknowledge the written prayer slips)

Invitation to the Table and Communion: (Scott)