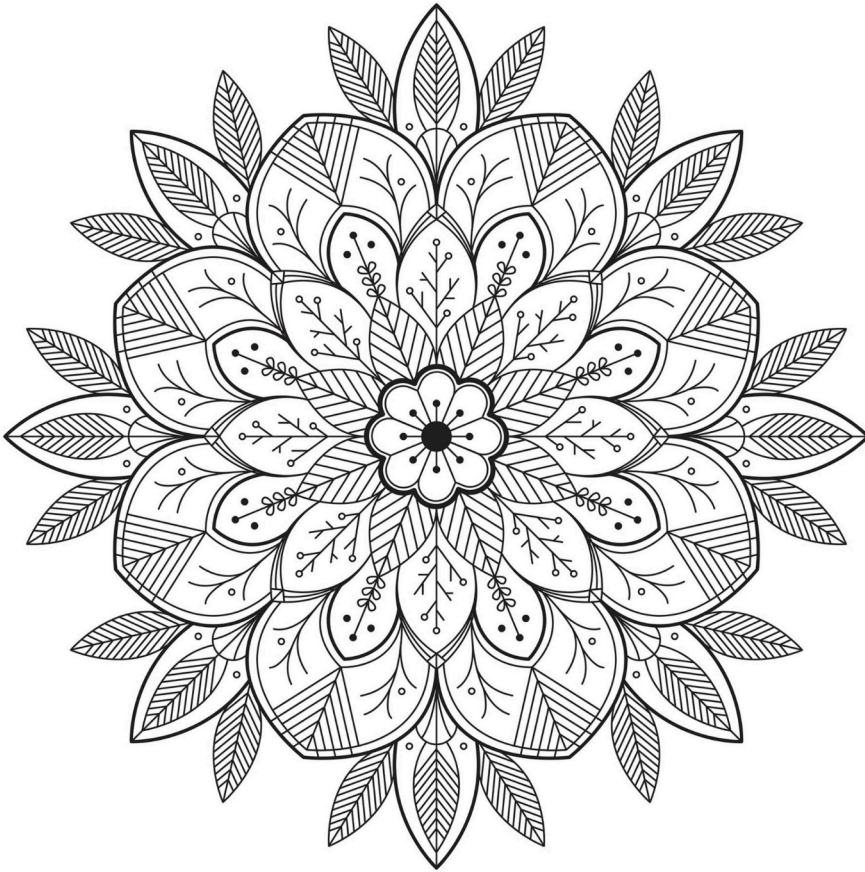


**CONTEMPLATIVE VESPERS**  
**JAN 9, 2025**



AN OFFERING OF  
GOOD SOIL LUTHERAN CAMPUS MINISTRY

## ***WELCOME TO VESPERS***

We hope this time will offer a sacred circulation of wisdom, music, and questions that nourishes the gathered community for lives of purposefulness and love; it is designed with the spectrum of spiritual seekers, the Jesus-curious, and professed Christians in mind.

This contemplative service finds its shape in the traditional form of “vespers” (a word that simply means “evening”). Its liturgical tapestry combines language from scripture, John O’Donohue, the *Iona Abbey Worship Book*, *A New Zealand Prayer Book*, and the digital library of *enfleshed*, as well as resources from the *Evangelical Lutheran Worship* hymnal. The rotation of songs and readings are from a wide range of sources, cited as they appear; with intention and care, we bring the wisdom of kindred from various spiritual streams into dialogue with the wisdom of the Jesus.

### **Hospitality notes for our time together:**

- **Attend to your well-being.** We celebrate the distinctive heart, mind, and life experience you bring tonight; we trust your discernment to be invited, supported, and challenged in ways - and to degrees - that are healthy and right for you.
- **Engage actively or just be here!** Wherever you see a “+” symbol next to a section, you are invited to participate - bold liturgical text is traditionally read “all together.” However, it is entirely valid to simply *be* here in a more passive posture. How or if you participate may vary week to week, or even section by section. There’s no “right way.”
- **Movement through the service will be unhurried.** Time is often rendered as a commodity to be utilized efficiently. Consider this space a refuge from efficiency - we are here to slow down. It may be a challenge at first not to get ahead of where we are, but you are invited to discover ease in the unusual pace. Just breathe.
- **If you wish to engage in a multi-sensory way,** there are items available to you on the central altar. There are a few hydrosol or oil options for scent (mindful of our scent-sensitive neighbors, please use lightly), a small bowl of water to mark a cross on your forehead, and worry stones for your hands. Your bulletin is a ready canvas if you like to journal, doodle, or take notes - you’re most welcome to. Colored pencils are available!
- **Restrooms are located just outside the sanctuary,** located on your left as you leave through the main doors. Though the restrooms are labeled for “men” and “women,” please utilize whichever best accommodates your comfort and safety.

## WELCOME

### OPENING RESPONSES+



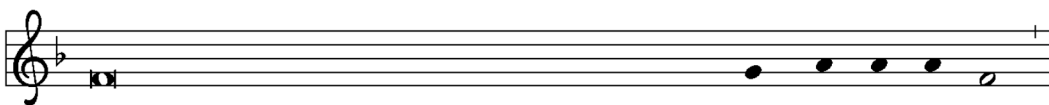
‘Come,’ my | he- art says, ‘seek | now God’s face.’ (Ps. 27:8)  
God is our re- | fuge and strength, a very present | help in trouble. (Ps. 46:1)  
Sing to God | a new song. Sing to God, | all the earth. (Ps. 96:1)

### INVOCATION+

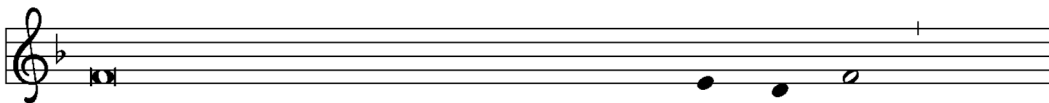
In the name of God:  
Creator, Redeemer, and Giver of life.  
**Amen.**

Grace to you and peace  
from God our Creator,  
the love at our beginning  
and without end,  
in our midst and with us.  
**God is with us,  
here we find new life.**

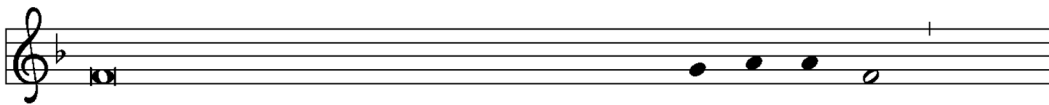
### THANKSGIVING FOR LIGHT



We give you thanks, O God, for in the beginning you called light in - to being,



and you set lights in the sky to govern night and day.



In a pillar of cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night



you led your peo - ple in - to freedom.

Enlighten our darkness by the light of your Christ; may your Word be  
a lamp to our feet and a light to our path; for you are mer-ci - ful,  
and you love your whole cre-a-tion, and with all your crea-tures we give you glory,  
through your Son Je - sus Christ, in the unity of the Ho - ly Spirit,  
now and for - ev - er. **A - men.**

### PRAYER FOR CANDLE LIGHTING

As light departs to let the  
earth be one with night,  
silence deepens in the mind,  
and thoughts grow slow;  
when we look into the heart,  
may our eyes have the kindness  
and reverence of candlelight.

**Amen.**

### WISDOM OF ANCESTORS AND KIN

*A reading is shared to infuse us with the spiritual wisdom of those who have come before us and those who discern beside us.*

Spirituality, the divine-human relationship, starts with an ache. Our souls ache each time we recognize that there is something missing in our experiences of the sacred.... The work of reforming our souls is important. I think we need a different spirituality for our times. We long for a different kind of community. One that doesn't simply tell us what to believe and how to

behave but one that teaches us how to listen for the divine voice. We are looking for a spirituality not predefined but within which we can ask questions and learn from one another. My spiritual language and vocabulary are Christian, but I also believe that God is much bigger than my own vocabulary. I hope to continue learning from others who have experienced God in ways that I may not have words for yet.

Cindy S. Lee, *Our Unforming: De-Westernizing Spiritual Formation*

**SONG+**

**The Way Knows the Way**

**Lyndsey Scott**

<sup>D</sup>You don't have to know the way  
The way knows the way  
You don't have to plan the way  
Trust the way, feel your way  
The way knows, the way knows  
The way knows the way

**SCRIPTURE & REFLECTION+**

*A gospel verse is shared to illuminate the concerns, questions, and practices of Jesus, followed by space for reflection, inquiry, and insight.*

<sup>35</sup> The next day John [the Baptist] again was standing with two of his disciples, <sup>36</sup> and as he watched Jesus walk by he exclaimed, "Look, here is the Lamb of God!" <sup>37</sup> The two disciples heard him say this, and they followed Jesus. <sup>38</sup> When Jesus turned and saw them following, he said to them, "**What are you looking for?**" They said to him, "Rabbi" (which translated means Teacher), "where are you staying?" <sup>39</sup> He said to them, "Come and see."

John 1:35-39

**SONG+**

**May I Be Empty**

**Batya Levine**

<sup>E</sup>May I be empty and open to receive the light  
May I be empty and open to receive  
  
May I be full and open to receive the light  
May I be full and open to receive

**PSALM 78 (RE-IMAGINED)**

**Rev. M. Jade Kaiser**

Beloved, remember this!  
Though we speak in modern language,  
these holy truths reach from generations past.  
The sacred stories we tell are made of the stuff that lasts  
when everything else fades away.  
They come from sources of wisdom tried and tested  
through struggle and contemplation.  
When the ones before us were pressed to their spiritual limits,  
bound by oppressive restraints,

made weary by loss,  
these truths were a lifeline.  
It reaches to us still today.  
It is our healing, our strength, our memory, our future.  
No matter the risks we face,  
we will not sever the threads of wisdom  
that weave our survival together.  
We carry on  
and carry out these divine teachings,  
that promise hope beyond our reach.  
We tell the stories of God.  
We do not allow histories to become hidden –  
not their ugly nor their glory.  
For God has always set free through truths  
proclaimed and practiced.  
This lineage of liberation that  
companions through the impossible and the unimaginable  
dare not end with us.

#### **PRAYERS OF THE COMMUNITY+**

We gather here in your presence, God,  
**in our need, and bringing with us the needs of the world.**

We come to you, for you come to us in Jesus,  
**and you know by experience what human life is like.**


We come with our faith and with our doubts;  
**we come with our hopes and with our fears.**

We come as we are, because you invite us to come;  
**and you have promised never to turn us away.**

*During this time, you are invited to light a candle or to simply be present with open heart  
and open mind. We will regather for closing prayer at the sounding of the singing bowl.*

## PRAYER OF JESUS +

<sup>A</sup>Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us.



Our Fa - ther in heav - en, hal - lowed be your name,  
your king - dom come, your will be done, on earth as in heav - en.  
Give us to - day our dai - ly bread. For - give us our sins as we  
for-give those who sin a - gainst us. Save us from the time of tri - al  
and de - liv - er us from e - vil. For the king - dom, the pow'r,  
and the glo - ry are yours, now and for - ev - er. A - men.

## BENEDICTION

It is night after a long day.  
What has been done has been done;  
what has not been done has not been done;  
let it be.

May the blessing of God be among us and between us, now and always.  
May the quietness of God's peace enfold us, all dear to us, and all who have no peace.  
May we look expectantly to a new day, new joys, and new possibilities.

**Amen.**

*Go in peace.*

