Prayers for Election Eve

November 2, 2026

5:30 p.m.



The Church of the Holy Spirit (Episcopal)

Knowing • Loving • Serving
God + Neighbor

204 Monument Road
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"Flying Over the USA at Night with City Light Illumination" (Evgeny Kuklev; June 2022)

We gather in silence.
We invite you to use this time for quiet prayer.

The Prelude **A medley of early American hymns and spirituals** Various

The Greeting

Please stand, as you are able.
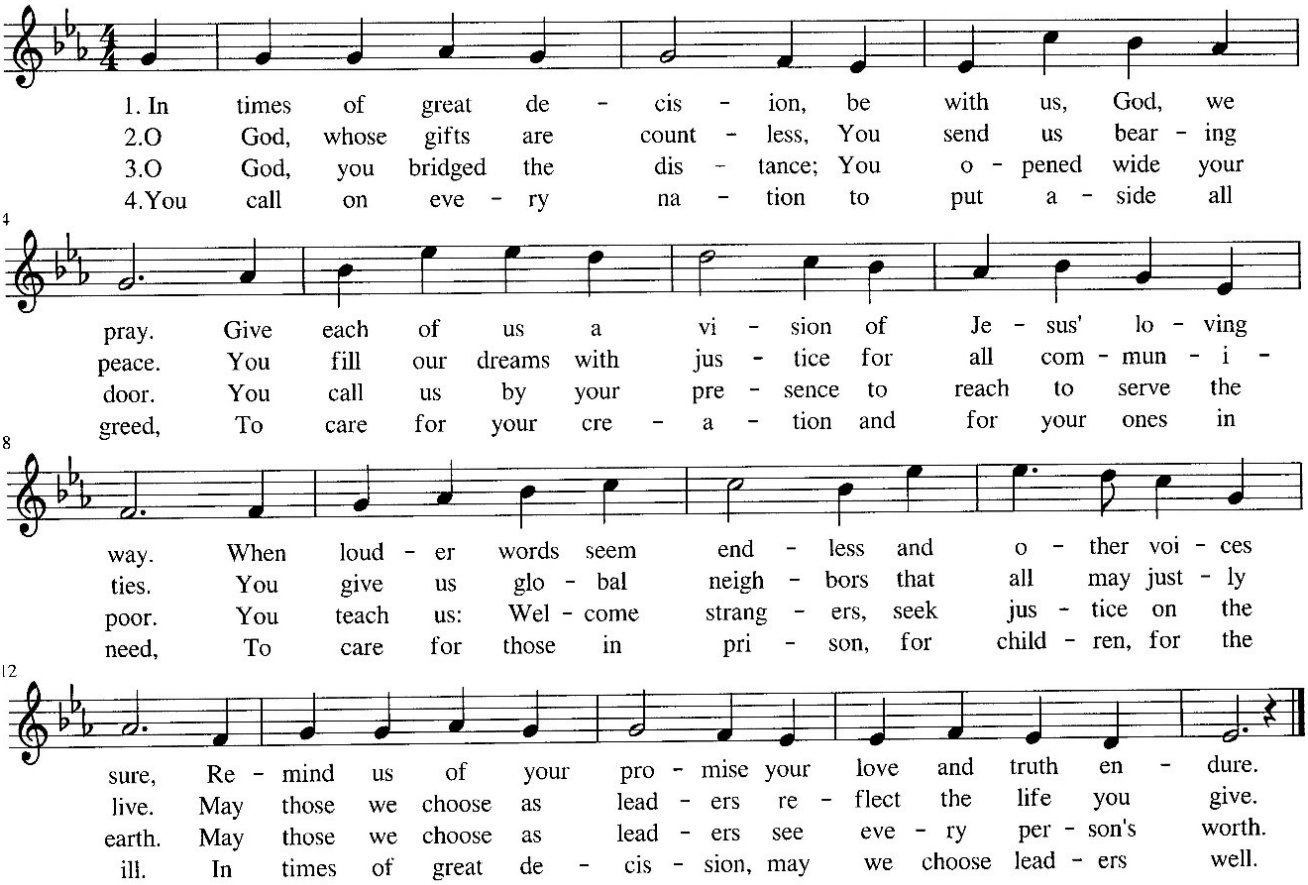
Officiant Blessed be God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.
People **And blessed be God's kingdom, now and forever. Amen.**

The Collect

Officiant The Lord be with you.
People **And also with you.**
Officiant Let us pray.

Lord God Almighty, you have made all the peoples of the earth for your glory, to serve you in freedom and in peace: Give to the people of our country a zeal for justice and the strength of forbearance, that we may use our liberty in accordance with your gracious will. Guide the people of the United States tomorrow in the election of officials and representatives and in the response to referendum questions; that, by faithful administration and wise laws, the rights of all may be protected and our nation be enabled to fulfill your purposes; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen**.

Hymn ***In Times of Great Decision*** *Aurelia*



Please be seated.

A Reading

Old South Meeting House [1] January Gill O'Neil (1937 -)

We draw breath from brick
step on stones, weather-worn,
cobbled and carved
with the story of this church,
this meeting house,
where Ben Franklin was baptized
and Phillis Wheatley prayed—a mouth-house
where colonists gathered
to plot against the crown.
This structure, with elegant curves
and round-topped windows, was the heart
of Boston, *the body of the people,*
survived occupation for preservation,
foregoing decoration
for conversation.
Let us gather in the box pews
once numbered and rented
by generations of families
held together like ribs
in the body politic. Let us gaze upon
the upper galleries to the free seats
where the poor and the town slaves
listened and waited and pondered
and prayed
for revolution.
Let us testify to the plight
of the well-meaning at the pulpit
with its sounding board high above,
congregations raising heads and hands to the sky.
We, the people—the tourists
and townies—one nation under
this vaulted roof, exalted voices
speaking poetry out loud,
in praise and dissent.
We draw breath from brick. Ignite the fire in us.
Speak to us:
the language is hope.

Please stand or kneel, as you are able.

[1] Copyright © 2016 by January Gill O'Neil. This poem was commissioned by the Academy of American Poets and funded by a National Endowment for the Arts *Imagine Your Parks* grant.

Prayers

With our trust in the Lord our God, we raise our voices together – asking to be guided this in season by your wisdom, mercy, and compassion.

Loving God, we give thanks for the right to vote, and for those who have sacrificed to secure this right. Help us to approach this responsibility as an act of faith, with prayer and discernment.
God of all nations,
Guide us toward wisdom and love.

Loving God, watch over all candidates in this election and their families. Protect them from hatred and all violence. Stir them to speak and act with integrity.
God of all nations,
Guide us toward wisdom and love.

Loving God, be present at all polling locations, that they would be places of integrity, peace, fairness and unhindered access for all.
God of all nations,
Guide us toward wisdom and love.

Loving God, open our hearts and eyes to the least of your children, that our votes would represent the in-breaking of your kingdom from sea to shining sea.
God of all nations,
Guide us toward wisdom and love.

Loving God, help us all to truly love our neighbor, and to act with love in all things.
God of all nations,
Guide us toward wisdom and love.

Please be seated.
We keep four minutes of silence.

During any of the three periods of silence this evening you are invited to come forward to light a candle.

Please stand as you are able for the hymn.

Hymn

God of All Peoples *Bunessan* ("Morning Has Broken")

1
God of all peoples, cultures and nations,
God of the poor and wealthy ones, too —
Be with our land as we make decisions;
Help us, we pray, to listen to you.

2
May we hear well your call to do justice;
May we know all your children have worth.
May we seek leaders who will end violence;
May we choose ones who care for your earth.

3
May we be thoughtful in our decisions:
Who will be truthful, moral and wise?
Who will restore the streets that we live in?
Who will love those whom others despise?

4
How will the ones campaigning to lead us
Care for the stranger, outcast and poor?
Will they hear ones who long have been silenced?
Or will they say that wealth matters more?

5
God, may this time of anger be over;
May we grow past our current divide.
Make us as one, as sisters and brothers;
In this good land, may your love abide.

Please be seated.

A Reading

Sirach 10:1-8, 12-14, 18

A wise magistrate educates his people,
and the rule of an intelligent person is well ordered.
As the people's judge is, so are his officials;
as the ruler of the city is, so are all its inhabitants.
An undisciplined king ruins his people,
but a city becomes fit to live in through the understanding of its rulers.
The government of the earth is in the hand of the Lord,
and over it he will raise up the right leader for the time.
Human success is in the hand of the Lord,
and it is he who confers honor upon the lawgiver
Do not get angry with your neighbor for every injury,
and do not resort to acts of insolence.

Arrogance is hateful to the Lord and to mortals,
and injustice is outrageous to both.
Sovereignty passes from nation to nation
on account of injustice and insolence and wealth.
The beginning of human pride is to forsake the Lord;
the heart has withdrawn from its Maker.

For the beginning of pride is sin,
and the one who clings to it pours out abominations.
The Lord overthrows the thrones of rulers,
and enthrones the lowly in their place.
Pride was not created for human beings,
or violent anger for those born of women.

Please stand or kneel, as you are able.

Prayers

Holy One, we pray for peace in our nation. May the sense of community and connection be greater than any division or difference, no matter how entrenched. Knowing we will vote in schools, community centers, town offices and other communal gathering places, may our commitment to care for one another grow as we stand in lines, talk to our neighbors and recognize the humanity we share. May we show one another kindness and respect, today and in all the days to come. Lord, in your mercy,
Hear our prayer.

Holy One, we pray for peace across your world. In Gaza, the West Bank, Lebanon, Israel and Iran. In Russia and Ukraine. In Haiti. In Sudan and South Sudan. In all places torn apart by war or civil unrest. Guard and guide those who live in unrelieved fear. We remember especially children and the aged in harm's way, and all whose illnesses place them at particular risk. Protect those who are working for peace, caring for the wounded, and grieving those who have died. Lord, in your mercy,
Hear our prayer.

Holy One, we pray for those in our nation and across the world whose lives and communities have been disrupted or destroyed by climate change, floods and landslides in this past year. As these losses recede from the headlines, strengthen our will to remember and assist those who suffer. Allow not our hearts to withdraw. Lord, in your mercy,
Hear our prayer.
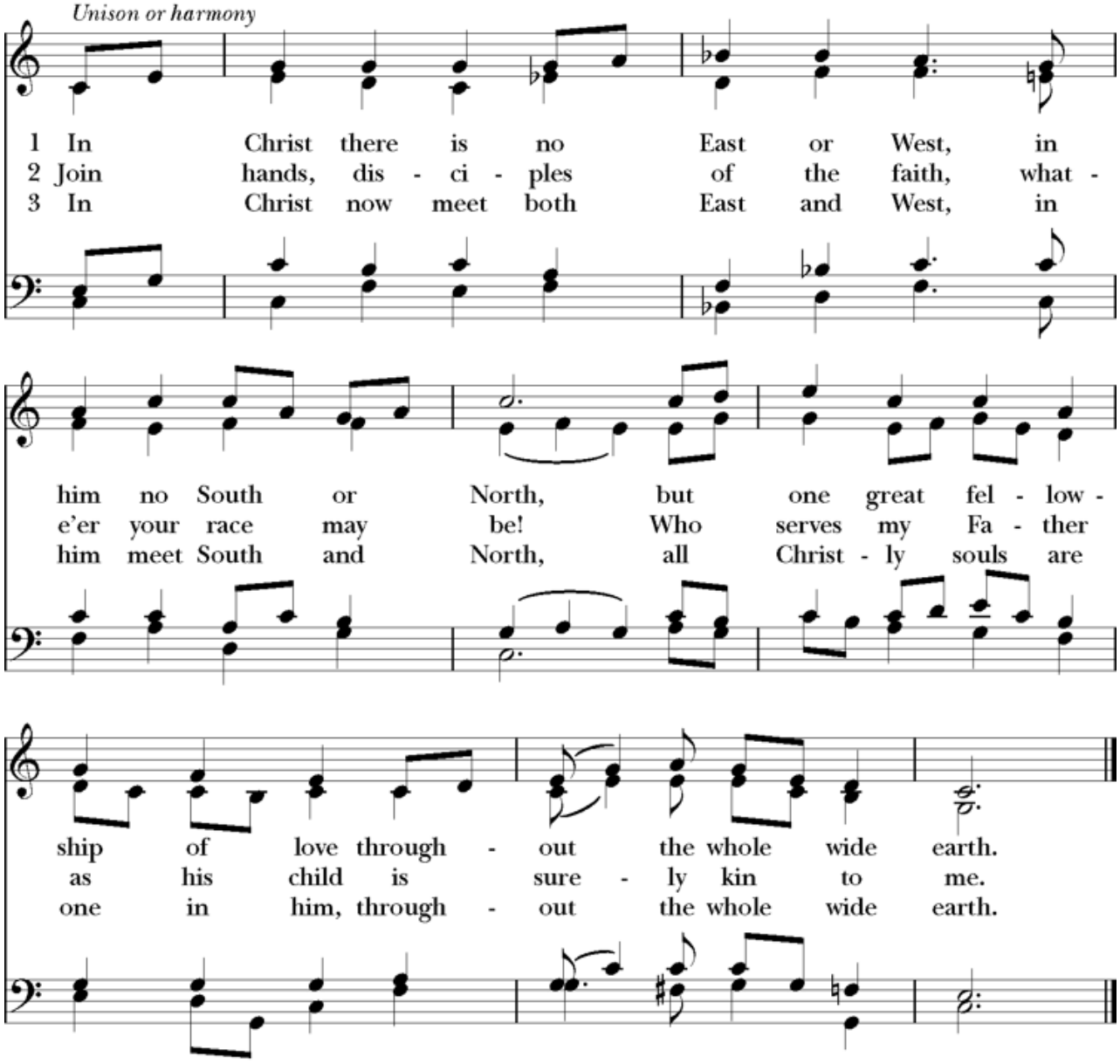
Holy One, you proclaim your truth in every age by many voices: Direct, in our time, we pray, those who speak where many listen and write what many read; that they may do their part in making the heart of this people wise, its mind sound, and its will righteous. Lord, in your mercy,
Hear our prayer.

Holy One, you have bound us together in a common life. Help us, in the midst of our struggles for justice and truth, to confront one another without hatred or bitterness, and to work together with mutual forbearance and respect. Lord, in your mercy,
Hear our prayer.

Please be seated.
We keep four minutes of silence.

Please stand as you are able for the hymn.

Hymn LEVAS 62 **In Christ there is no East or West** *McKee*



Please be seated.

A Poem

A New National Anthem [2]

Ada Limón (1976 -)

The truth is, I've never cared for the National
Anthem. If you think about it, it's not a good
song. Too high for most of us with "the rockets'
red glare" and then there are the bombs.
(Always, always there is war and bombs.)
Once, I sang it at homecoming and threw
even the tenacious high school band off key.
But the song didn't mean anything, just a call
to the field, something to get through before
the pummeling of youth. And what of the stanzas
we never sing, the third that mentions "no refuge
could save the hireling and the slave"? Perhaps
the truth is that every song of this country
has an unsung third stanza, something brutal
snaking underneath us as we absent-mindedly sing
the high notes with a beer sloshing in the stands
hoping our team wins. Don't get me wrong, I do
like the flag, how it undulates in the wind
like water, elemental, and best when it's humbled,
brought to its knees, clung to by someone who
has lost everything, when it's not a weapon,
when it flickers, when it folds up so perfectly
you can keep it until it's needed, until you can
love it again, until the song in your mouth feels
like sustenance, a song where the notes are sung
by even the ageless woods, the shortgrass plains,
the Red River Gorge, the fistful of land left
unpoisoned, that song that's our birthright,
that's sung in silence when it's too hard to go on,
that sounds like someone's rough fingers weaving
into another's, that sounds like a match being lit
in an endless cave, the song that says my bones
are your bones, and your bones are my bones,
and isn't that enough?

[2] Copyright © 2018 by Ada Limón. From *The Carrying* (Milkweed Editions, 2018)

A Reading

John 18:33-38

Then Pilate entered the headquarters again, summoned Jesus, and asked him, "Are you the King of the Jews?" Jesus answered, "Do you ask this on your own, or did others tell you about me?" Pilate replied, "I am not a Jew, am I? Your own nation and the chief priests have handed you over to me. What have you done?" Jesus answered, "My kingdom is not from this world. If my kingdom were from this world, my followers would be fighting to keep me from being handed over to the Jews. But as it is, my kingdom is not from here." Pilate asked him, "So you are a king?" Jesus answered, "You say that I am a king. For this I was born, and for this I came into the world, to testify to the truth. Everyone who belongs to the truth listens to my voice." Pilate asked him, "What is truth?"

Please stand or kneel, as you are able.

A Prayer

Attributed to St. Francis of Assisi

Lord, make us instruments of your peace.
Where there is hatred, let us sow love; where there is injury, pardon;
Where there is discord, union; where there is doubt, faith;
where there is despair, hope; where there is darkness, light;
where there is sadness, joy.
Grant that we may not so much seek to be consoled as to console;
to be understood as to understand; to be loved as to love.
For it is in giving that we receive; it is in pardoning that we are pardoned;
and it is in dying that we are born to eternal life. Amen.

Please be seated. We keep four minutes of silence and then stand as able for the remainder of the service.

The Concluding Collect

O Lord, mercifully receive the prayers of your people who call upon you, and grant that we may know and understand what things we ought to do, and also may have grace and power faithfully to accomplish them; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen**.
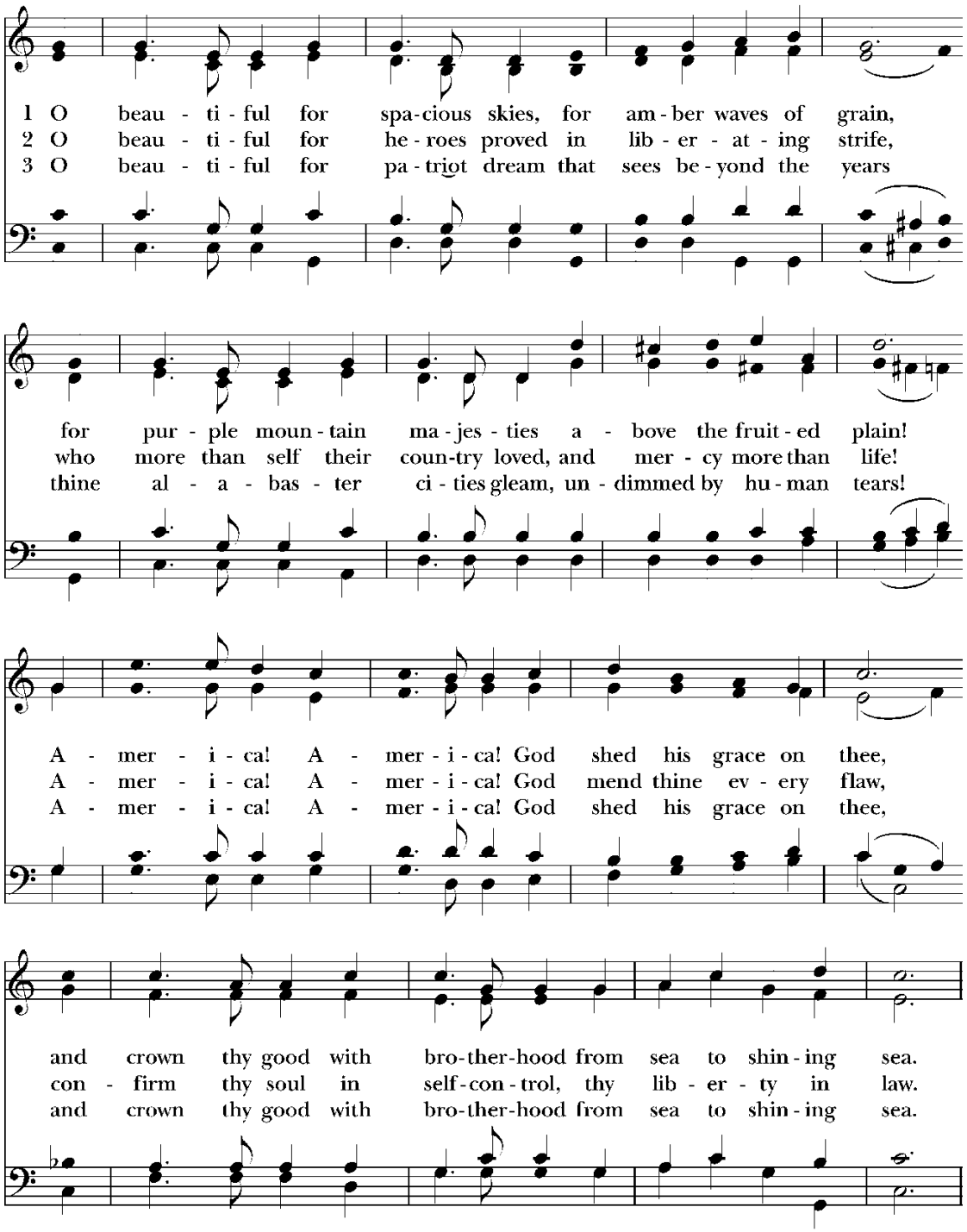
The Blessing[3]

Where selfishness can cripple lives, or love can set them free,
what happens from this moment on rests now with you and me:
if our audacious words of grace can frame what we would pray,
then from this moment, in our time, let love infuse each day. [4]

[3] Andrew Pratt 22/5/2024 "On the announcement of a General Election" © 2024 Stainer & Bell Ltd, London, England copyright@stainer.co.uk

Go forth into the world in peace. Be of good courage. Hold fast that which is good. Render to no one evil for evil. Strengthen the fainthearted. Support the weak. Help the afflicted. Honor everyone. Love and serve the Lord, rejoicing in the power of the Holy Spirit; and the blessing of God, creating, redeeming and sustaining, be among you and remain with you always. **Amen.**

Hymn 719 *America the Beautiful* *Meterna*



The Dismissal

Officiant Go in peace to love and serve the Lord
People **Thanks be to God.**

You are welcome to remain in church this evening for as long as you wish.

We gratefully receive any cash or check offering this evening.

Please place your offerings in the basins at the exits.
Tonight's offering will support the feeding and clothing services of The Lower Cape Outreach Council.

Officiant	The Rev. Patrick C. Ward
Assisting	The Rev. Nancy J. Hagner
Minister of Music	Joan Kirchner
Readers	Earle Bailey, Doug Fromm, Dianne Fromm, Ruth Campbell
Ushers	Brian Skea, Michael Isner
Audio/Video	Brenda Ridgeway

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