

Planting Hope in a Strange Land

The Power of Community, Connection & Caring

MEDITATION

*“Never lose hope, my heart, miracles dwell in the invisible.
If the whole world turns against you keep your eyes on the Friend.” –Rumi*

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

GATHERING WORDS

L: And now may the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you. **P: And also with you.**

PRELUDE

“Close to Thee” andante religioso Music: Silas J. Vail

CALL TO WORSHIP

Linda Thomas, Deacon

L: When the world feels strange and the ground uncertain,

All: God whispers: Build, plant, dwell, seek peace.

L: In the furrows of fear hope can grow.

All: We trust the Gardener of life—the One who remembers, restores, and renews.

L: The God of all comfort is here—breathing hope into weary hearts,
turning our sorrow into compassion.

All: Come, let us worship our God—who meets us in exile and gathers us home again.

*SONG OF REJOICING

“Rejoice in the Lord Always” 2x

In Pew

OPENING PRAYER

Linda Thomas, Deacon

L: Creator of earth and sky, you plant hope in the most unlikely soil—in hearts that tremble, in lands scarred by loss, in people learning to live as strangers and yet as neighbors.

All: We remember the First Peoples of this land, who have known both the grief of displacement and the strength of enduring hope. Teach us to honor their stories and to live as grateful guests upon this sacred ground.

L: As you once called your people to plant gardens in Babylon, call us to sow seeds of compassion here and now—to build what blesses, to seek the welfare of every community, to trust your promise of a joyful harvest.

All: Through Christ, who turns our tears into rivers of life, we pray. Amen.

***OPENING HYMN** “God of the Sparrow, God of the Whale” *Black 32*

WORD FOR ALL GOD’S CHILDREN *Lisa Allen, Church-Life Coordinator*

ANTHEM “A Time for All Seasons” *Choir*
 Words: from Ecclesiastes, Music: Douglas E. Wagner
 Based on a Scottish Folk tune

SCRIPTURE READINGS | Jeremiah 29:1, 4-7, 10-14 & Psalm 126:1-6. pp. 894 & 704
 Linda Thomas, Deacon & Rev. Christina Williams

L: The Word of God for the people of God. **All: Thanks be to God.**

REFLECTION “Planting Hope in a Strange Land” *Rev. Christina Williams*

***RESPONSIVE HYMN** “There is a Balm in Gilead” *Black 553*

PASTORAL PRAYER & PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

During the prayers of the people, you are invited to share your joys and concerns out loud. All are invited to respond, “O Lord, hear our prayers.”

THE LORD’S PRAYER (*All are invited to sing.*) *In Pew*

INVITATION TO OFFERING

OFFERTORY MUSIC “Psalm 84” *Choir*
 Paraphrased: Arlo D. Duba, Setting: Hal H. Hopson

***DOXOLOGY**

Praise God from whom all blessing flow;
Praise God all creatures here below;
Praise God for all that love had done:
Creator, Christ, and Spirit, One Amen.

***UNISON OFFERTORY PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING**

Generous God, you gather our tears and turn them into blessing. As we offer these gifts—coins and bills, prayers and labors of love—receive them as seeds of your hope. Let what we plant in faith bear fruit in joy: feeding the hungry, healing the broken, restoring your creation, and reminding us that every act of generosity is a small resurrection. Through the Giver of all good gifts, we pray. Amen.

***CLOSING HYMN**

“They’ll Know We Are Christians by Our Love”

Insert

***BENEDICTION**

SUNG BENEDICTION

“Christ, Be Our Light”

Choir

Words/Music: Bernadette Farrell

POSTLUDE

“Sun of My Soul”

Vienna, c. 1774, Transcribed: Clarence Kohlmann

** Please stand in body or spirit.*

Many thanks to the volunteers who enriched our morning together!

Tech Deacon, Amelia Allen; Choir, Kay Clark, Linda Thomas, Joyce Kenneally, Meg Tivey, Alan King, Chris Polloni; Hospitality, Betsy Woodley; Food donation, Roberta Markham

Leading worship today: Rev. Christina Williams, Pastor, Stephanie Miles, Music director, Lisa Allen, Church-life co-director, Linda Thomas, Deacon

NEW HERE TODAY?

No matter who you are or where you are on life's journey you are welcome here!

To help you navigate Sunday mornings with us, please see the guide below.

1. **Order of Worship:** **An asterisk means stand in body or spirit. **Bold text** is spoken in unison.*
2. **Kid's Connection:** *After the "Word for all God's children," the children leave worship for a time learning and fun with Bible stories, crafts, and games with Lisa Allen.*
3. **TAKE TWO** *is an adult faith formation group that meets after worship with Lisa Allen every other Sunday. Join the discussion on God's grace today.*
4. **Coffee and Conversation:** *You are welcome to gather with us after worship to meet some new friends in the Covenant Room, down the hall on the right.*
5. **Have Questions?** *Please reach out to Rev. Christina or the Deacon of the day.*

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