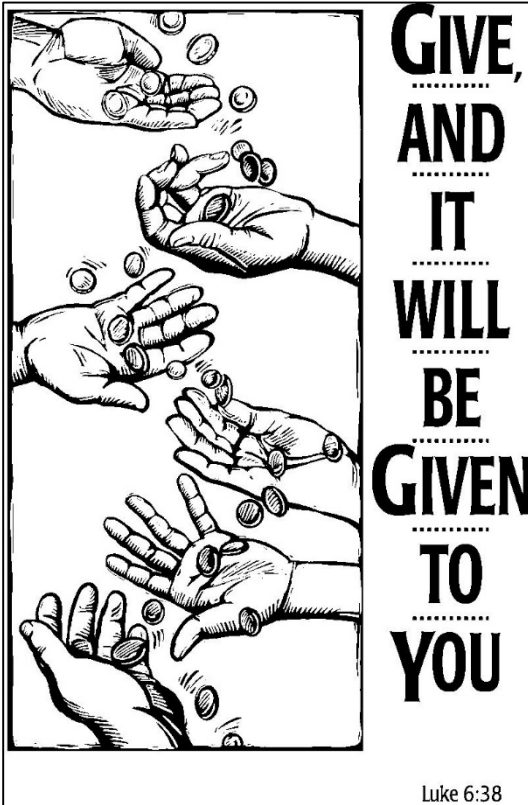


Messiah Lutheran Church

GATHER, EMPOWER, SERVE



✠ Holy Communion ✠

Seventh Sunday after Epiphany

February 23, 2025



SEVENTH SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY

Mercy. Mercy. Mercy. Joseph lives it in Egypt. Jesus preaches it in the gospel. The Spirit guides us into merciful lives with the power of forgiveness to reconcile what is fractured and divided. Such merciful living is the baptismal blessing of having put on Christ. It is the gift of the life-giving Spirit. It is a reflection of God's glory revealed in Christ.

GATHERING

PRELUDE

Stand

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

P: Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God,
who forgives all our sin,
whose mercy endures forever.

C: Amen

P: God of all mercy and consolation,
come to the help of your people,
turning us from our sin,
to live for you alone.
Give us the power of your Holy Spirit
that we may confess our sin,
receive your forgiveness,
and grow into the fullness of
Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

C: Amen

P: Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.

Kneel

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 together with Christ.
By grace you have been saved.
In the name of † Jesus Christ,
your sins are forgiven.
Almighty God strengthen you with power
through the Holy spirit,
that Christ may live in your hearts through faith.

C: Amen



"I am your brother, Joseph...

GOD SENT ME

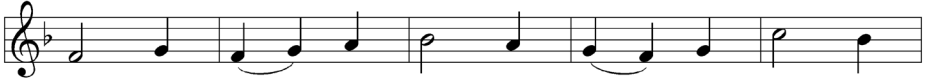
before you to preserve life."

Genesis 45:4-5

Stand

GATHERING HYMN

Lord of Glory, You Have Bought UsLBW 424



1 Lord of glo - ry, you have bought us with your
 2 Grant us hearts, dear Lord, to give you glad - ly,
 3 Won - drous hon - or you have giv - en to our
 4 Yes, the sor - row and the suf - f'ring which on
 5 Lord of glo - ry, you have bought us with your



life - blood as the price, nev - er grudg - ing
 free - ly, of your own. With the sun - shine
 hum - blest char - i - ty in your own mys -
 ev - 'ry hand we view chan - nels are for
 life - blood as the price, nev - er grudg - ing



for the lost ones that tre - men - dous sac - ri - fice;
 of your good - ness melt our thank - less hearts of stone
 te - rious sen - tence, "You have done it all to me."
 gifts and of - f'ring due by sol - emn right to you;
 for the lost ones that tre - men - dous sac - ri - fice.



and with that have free - ly giv - en bless - ings
 till our cold and self - ish na - tures, warmed by
 Can it be, O gra - cious Mas - ter, that you
 right of which we may not rob you, debt we
 Give us faith to trust you bold - ly, hope, to



count - less as the sand to the un - thank - ful
 you, at length be - lieve that more hap - py
 deign for alms to sue, say - ing by your
 may not choose but pay, lest that face of
 stay our souls on you: but, oh, best of



and the e - vil with your own un - spar - ing hand.
 and more bless - ed 'tis to give than to re - ceive.
 poor and need - y, "Give as I have giv'n to you?"
 love and pit - y turn from us an - oth - er day.
 all your grac - es, with your love our love re - new.

Text: Eliza S. Alderson, 1818-1889, alt.
 Music: HYFRYDOL, Rowland H. Prichard, 1811-1887

APOSTOLIC GREETING

P: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God,
and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

G: **And also with you.**

CANTICLE OF PRAISE



Glo-ry to God in the high-est, and peace to God's peo-ple on earth.

All



Lord God, heav-en-ly King, al-might-y God and Fa-ther, we



wor-ship you, we give you thanks, we praise you for your glo-ry.



Lord Je-sus Christ, on-ly Son of the Fa-ther, Lord God, Lamb of God,



you take a-way the sin of the world: have mer-cy on us;



you are seat-ed at the right hand of the Fa-ther: re-ceive our prayer.



For you a-lone are the Ho-ly One, you a-lone are the Lord,



you a-lone are the Most High, Je-sus Christ, with the Ho-ly Spir-it,



in the glo-ry of God the Fa-ther. A-men.

PRAYER OF THE DAY**P**: Let us pray.

O Lord Jesus, make us instruments of your peace, that where there is hatred, we may sow love, where there is injury, pardon, and where there is despair, hope. Grant, O divine master, that we may seek to console, to understand, and to love in your name, for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: Amen

Sit

WORD**FIRST READING: Genesis 45:3-11, 15**

Many years after being sold into slavery by his jealous brothers, Joseph reveals himself to them. Now the second-in-command in Egypt, Joseph reassures his brothers that God has used their evil intentions for good to preserve life during a devastating famine, and Joseph forgives them.

A: A Reading from Genesis:

³ Joseph said to his brothers, “I am Joseph. Is my father still alive?” But his brothers could not answer him, so dismayed were they at his presence.

⁴ Then Joseph said to his brothers, “Come closer to me.” And they came closer. He said, “I am your brother, Joseph, whom you sold into Egypt. ⁵ And now do not be distressed, or angry with yourselves, because you sold me here; for God sent me before you to preserve life. ⁶ For the famine has been in the land these two years; and there are five more years in which there will be neither plowing nor harvest. ⁷ God sent me before you to preserve for you a remnant on earth, and to keep alive for you many survivors. ⁸ So it was not you who sent me here, but God; he has made me a father to Pharaoh, and lord of all his house and ruler over all the land of Egypt. ⁹ Hurry and go up to my father and say to him, “Thus says your son Joseph, God has made me lord of all Egypt; come down to me, do not delay. ¹⁰ You shall settle in the land of Goshen, and you shall be near me, you and your children and your children’s children, as well as your flocks, your herds, and all that you have. ¹¹ I will provide for you there—since there are five more years of famine to come—so that you and your household, and all that you have, will not come to poverty.” ¹⁵ And he kissed all his brothers and wept upon them; and after that his brothers talked with him.

A: The word of the Lord.**C**: Thanks be to God.

PSALM: Psalm 37:1-11, 39-40

The cantor sings the refrain; the congregation repeats it.

The low - ly shall pos - sess the land; they will de -

light in a - bun - dance of peace.

Sung responsively between the cantor and congregation.

- 1 Do not be provoked by | evildoers;
do not be jealous of those | who do wrong.
- 2 **For they shall soon wither | like the grass,
and like the green grass | fade away.**
- 3 Put your trust in the LORD | and do good;
dwell in the land and | find safe pasture.
- 4 **Take delight | in the LORD,
who shall give you your | heart's desire. R**
- 5 Commit your way to the LORD; put your trust | in the LORD,
and see what | God will do.
- 6 **The LORD will make your vindication as clear | as the light
and the justice of your case like the | noontday sun.**
- 7 Be still before the LORD and wait | patiently.
Do not be provoked by the one who prospers, the one who succeeds
in | evil schemes.
- 8 **Refrain from anger, leave | rage alone;
do not be provoked; it leads on- | ly to evil. R**
- 9 For evildoers shall | be cut off,
but those who hope in the LORD shall pos- | sess the land.
- 10 **In a little while the wicked shall | be no more;
even if you search out their place, they will | not be there.**
- 11 But the lowly shall pos- | sess the land;
they will delight in abun- | dance of peace.
- 39 **But the deliverance of the righteous comes from | you, O LORD;
you are their stronghold in | time of trouble.**
- 40 You, O LORD, will help them and | rescue them;
you will rescue them from the wicked and deliver them,
because in you | they seek refuge. **R**

SECOND READING: 1 Corinthians 15:35-38, 42-50

In the Apostles' Creed, we speak of the "resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting." Using the metaphor of a planted seed and the story of Adam, Paul preaches passionately about the mystery of following Christ's perfect life into eternity.

A: A Reading from First Corinthians:

³⁵ But someone will ask, "How are the dead raised? With what kind of body do they come?" ³⁶ Fool! What you sow does not come to life unless it dies. ³⁷ And as for what you sow, you do not sow the body that is to be, but a bare seed, perhaps of wheat or of some other grain. ³⁸ But God gives it a body as he has chosen, and to each kind of seed its own body.

⁴² So it is with the resurrection of the dead. What is sown is perishable, what is raised is imperishable. ⁴³ It is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory. It is sown in weakness, it is raised in power. ⁴⁴ It is sown a physical body, it is raised a spiritual body. If there is a physical body, there is also a spiritual body. ⁴⁵ Thus it is written, "The first man, Adam, became a living being"; the last Adam became a life-giving spirit. ⁴⁶ But it is not the spiritual that is first, but the physical, and then the spiritual. ⁴⁷ The first man was from the earth, a man of dust; the second man is from heaven. ⁴⁸ As was the man of dust, so are those who are of the dust; and as is the man of heaven, so are those who are of heaven. ⁴⁹ Just as we have borne the image of the man of dust, we will also bear the image of the man of heaven.

⁵⁰ What I am saying, brothers and sisters, is this: flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable.

A: The word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

Stand

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

CANTOR: Love your enemies, and you will be children of | the Most High; forgive, and you will | be forgiven.

C: Repeat the Alleluias.

GOSPEL: Luke 6:27-38

Jesus continues to address a crowd of his disciples. He invites his followers to shower radical love, blessing, forgiveness, generosity, and trust even on enemies and outsiders. Living in harmony with God's intent brings the reward of overflowing blessing.

P: The Holy Gospel according to St. Luke, the sixth chapter.

C: **Glory to you, O Lord.**

Jesus said: ²⁷ “But I say to you that listen, Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, ²⁸ bless those who curse you, pray for those who abuse you. ²⁹ If anyone strikes you on the cheek, offer the other also; and from anyone who takes away your coat do not withhold even your shirt. ³⁰ Give to everyone who begs from you; and if anyone takes away your goods, do not ask for them again. ³¹ Do to others as you would have them do to you.

³² “If you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners love those who love them. ³³ If you do good to those who do good to you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners do the same. ³⁴ If you lend to those from whom you hope to receive, what credit is that to you? Even sinners lend to sinners, to receive as much again. ³⁵ But love your enemies, do good, and lend, expecting nothing in return. Your reward will be great, and you will be children of the Most High; for he is kind to the ungrateful and the wicked. ³⁶ Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful.

³⁷ “Do not judge, and you will not be judged; do not condemn, and you will not be condemned. Forgive, and you will be forgiven; ³⁸ give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, will be put into your lap; for the measure you give will be the measure you get back.”

P: The Gospel of the Lord.

C: **Praise to you, O Christ.**

Sit

SERMON **Janet Stroble, ALWL**

Stand

HYMN OF THE DAY

Forgive Our Sins as We Forgive.....LBW 307



1 "For - give our sins as we for - give," you taught us, Lord, to pray;
2 How can your par - don reach and bless the un - for - giv - ing heart
3 In blaz - ing light your cross re - veals the truth we dim - ly knew:
4 Lord, cleanse the depths with - in our souls and bid re - sent - ment cease;



but you a - lone can grant us grace to live the words we say.
that broods on wrongs and will not let old bit - ter - ness de - part?
how tri - fling oth - ers' debts to us; how great our debt to you!
then, by your mer - cy rec - on - ciled, our lives will spread your peace.

Text: Rosamond E. Herklots, 1905–1987, alt.
Music: DETROIT, *The Sacred Harp*, Philadelphia, 1844
Text © Oxford University Press 1969.

APOSTLES' CREED

**I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.**
I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord.
**He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit
and born of the virgin Mary.**
**He suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried.**
He descended into hell.
On the third day he rose again.
**He ascended into heaven,
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.**
He will come again to judge the living and the dead.
**I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen**

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

A brief silence is held after the introduction.

P: With the Spirit of Christ shining upon us, let us boldly pray for the church, the world, and all of creation.

After each petition:

P: God of grace,

C: **hear our prayer.**

The prayers conclude:

P: We entrust our prayers to you, O God, in the sure and certain hope that your promise is revealed among the people.

C: **Amen**

PEACE

P: The peace of Christ be with you always.

C: **And also with you.**

The pastor and congregation greet one another in the name of the Lord.

Peace be with you. **R:** Peace be with you.

Sit

MEAL

OFFERING

The Offering is received as the Lord's table is prepared.

ANTHEM

We Are One..... **Joseph M. Martin**

Stand

OFFERTORY

As the gifts are presented, the Offertory is sung

Let the vine-yards be fruit-ful, Lord, and fill to the brim our cup of
 bless-ing. Gath-er a har-vest from the seeds that were sown, that
 we may be fed with the bread of life. Gath-er the hopes and dreams of
 all; u-nite them with the prayers we of-fer. Grace our ta-ble



with your pres - ence, and give us a fore - taste of the feast to come.

OFFERING PRAYER

A: Let us pray.

C: God of grace, your love reaches to the heavens,
and your abundance to the depths of the seas.
Bless what we offer to your service:
our gifts, our abilities, and our hearts.
Let us overflow with gratitude and generosity,
now and always.
Amen

GREAT THANKSGIVING

The Lord be with you. And al - so with you.

Lift up your hearts. We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

PREFACE

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God, through our Savior Jesus Christ; who on this day overcame death and the grave, and by his glorious resurrection opened to us the way of everlasting life. And so, with all the choirs of angels, with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, Lord God of pow'r and might,
 heav'n and earth are full of your glo - ry.
 Ho - san - na in the high - est. Bless - ed is he who comes
 in the name of the Lord. Ho - san - na in the high - est.

EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER

[P]: Holy, mighty, and merciful Lord,
 heaven and earth are full of your glory.
 In great love you sent to us Jesus, your Son,
 who reached out to heal the sick and suffering,
 who preached good news to the poor,
 and who, on the cross, opened his arms to all.

In the night in which he was betrayed,
 our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks;
 broke it, and gave it to his disciples,
 saying: Take and eat;
 this is my body, given for you.
 Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks,
 and gave it for all to drink,
 saying: This cup is the new covenant in my blood,
 shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin.
 Do this for the remembrance of me.

Remembering, therefore,
 his death, resurrection, and ascension,
 we await his coming in glory.

Pour out upon us the Spirit of your love, O Lord,
 And unite the wills of all who share this heavenly food,
 the body and blood of Jesus Christ, our Lord;
 to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit,
 be all honor and glory, now and forever.

C: Amen

LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father, who art in heaven,
 hallowed be thy name,
 thy kingdom come,
 thy will be done,
 on earth as it is in heaven.

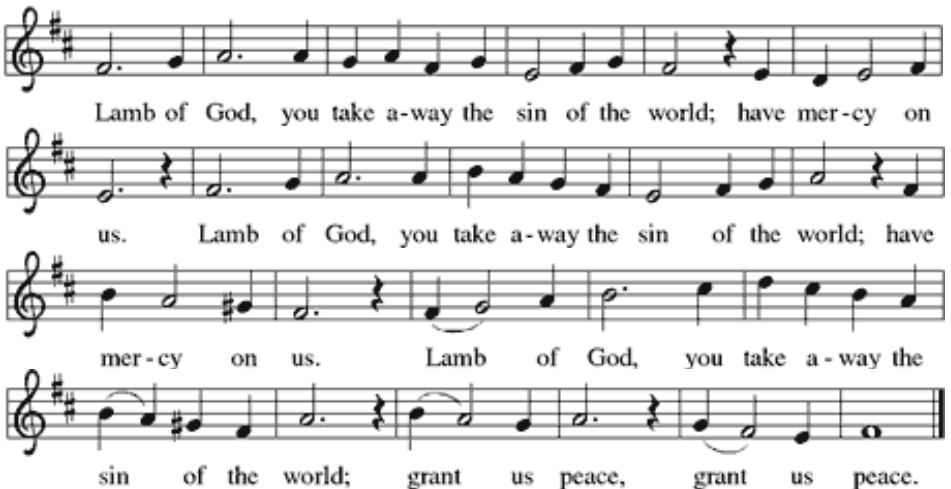
Give us this day our daily bread;
 and forgive us our trespasses,
 as we forgive those
 who trespass against us;
 and lead us not into temptation,
 but deliver us from evil.

For thine is the kingdom,
 and the power, and the glory,
 forever and ever. Amen

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

P: Come to the banquet, for all is now ready.

C: Thanks be to 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.

Sit

COMMUNION

All baptized believers are invited to this holy meal. Those not communing are invited for a blessing. Please follow the instructions of the ushers to gather at the altar table. As the ministers give the bread and wine, they say these words to each communicant:

The body of Christ, given for you. The blood of Christ, shed for you.

The communicant may say: Amen

COMMUNION HYMN

Lord Jesus, Think on MeLBW 309

1 Lord Je - sus, think on me, and purge a - way my sin;
 2 Lord Je - sus, think on me, by anx - ious thoughts op - pressed;
 3 Lord Je - sus, think on me, nor let me go a - stray;
 4 Lord Je - sus, think on me, that, when the flood is past,
 from self - ish pas - sions set me free and make me pure with - in.
 let me your lov - ing ser - vant be and taste your prom - ised rest.
 through dark - ness and per - plex - i - ty point out your cho - sen way.
 I may the e - ter - nal bright - ness see and share your joy at last.

Text: Synesius of Cyrene, 375–430; tr. Allen W. Chatfield, 1808–1896, alt.
 Music: SOUTHWELL, W. Daman. *The Psalmes of Dauid*, 1579, alt.

Stand

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

C Amen

POST-COMMUNION PRAYER

A: Let us pray.

Nourishing God,
at this table you have refreshed us
with holy gifts of food and drink.
Strengthen us for service,
and send us out to embody your good news
of liberation and healing for the sake of the world.
In the name of Christ, we pray,

C: Amen

SENDING

BLESSING

P: The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord’s face shine on you with grace and mercy.
The Lord look upon you with favor and † give you peace.

C: Amen

SENDING HYMN

All Creatures of Our God and King, St. 1, 2, 5-7.....LBW 527

DISMISSAL

A: Go in peace. Live in hope.

C: Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE

SERVICE ASSISTANTS

Ushers: Carl Gee, Jody Fullmer, Dave and Rita Strickler, Jimmy Gardner

Lay Assistant: Carol Waltz; **Communion Assistant:** Georgette Copp

Acolyte: Dylan Sherman; **Altar Guild:** Jody Fullmer, Jeannie Bower

Greeters/Communion Presenters: Mike and Dianne Larson

Cantor: Candy Watkins; **Flower Delivery:** Paul Weaver

IN BLESSED MEMORY

The Altar Flowers are given to the Glory of God and in memory of Roland Weaver on the anniversary of his passing, February 21, 2012, by his wife, Jean and family.

The Basket of Flowers is given to the Glory of God and in memory of Helen Fila by her husband and family.

The Basket of Flowers is given to the Glory of God and in memory on the one year passing of my husband, O'B, by his wife Gail and children and their families.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Welcome to Messiah Church! It is our joy to have you worship with us. If you are visiting, please make yourself known and leave your name & information to a congregation member. *We hope to see you again.*

This morning we welcome Janet Stroble, an Authorized Lay Worship Leader (ALWL) of the Upper Susquehanna Synod. Janet has received extensive training so as to provide worship leadership and preaching, and has been authorized by the bishop of the synod to preside at the Eucharist.

This morning we welcome our family and friends who came to join us for worship on this morning. Immediately following worship, we will meet in Shaheen Hall for a soup and sandwich luncheon along with some great conversation and getting to know our neighbors, hosted by the Fellowship Committee.

There will be a choir rehearsal immediately following worship today.

Join us for Bible Study and Fellowship on Wednesdays at 6:30. *All are Welcome!*

Help Wanted: Snow Removal ~ Help is needed to clear the walks around the church property after it snows. Position requires dependability and the flexibility to be available within a reasonable period of time following a snow/ice event. This is a paid position - **\$20/hour**. If you or someone you know is able to help, please contact the church office.

MESSIAH LUTHERAN CHURCH
REV. A. BRUCE AMME, PRESIDING AND PREACHING
JARED GIST, ORGANIST
324 South Howard Street | South Williamsport, PA 17702
(570) 326-9171 | www.messiahsouth.org

Countercultural Love

In today's gospel reading, Jesus offers us a vision of a different way of living, one rooted in God's endless mercy. People of God are to love others, do good, and share their possessions—in abundance, in extravagance, to the point that our generosity seems foolish by the world's standards.

This lavishness is possible only through the power of Jesus, who first heals us and invites us to taste and see God's mercy for ourselves. We witness this mercy in scripture through stories of God's profound love and compassion. We experience it as we join in song and prayer in worship, engaging in ancient practices that draw us beyond ourselves and closer to God and neighbor. We remember the mercy we've experienced in the waters of baptism and taste Christ's abundance in holy communion. We practice generosity in our offerings and share God's peace with our fellow worshipers with whom we are bound together, even though we might never have chosen them as neighbors.

With Christ in us, we are able to practice this abundant love today and tomorrow, in our worship and beyond, returning to the font and table again and again to be reminded of the love that dwells within us and surrounds us, making us bold in our love for others.

To try to practice this kind of countercultural love on our own would likely lead to discouragement. But we are given the gift of community—with one another, those who have come before us, and hope for the ones who will come after us. Together, we form one body in Christ, strengthened by God's Spirit. Together, we remind one another of God's promise of unending love and forgiveness and encourage each other to follow Jesus' example. And together, we focus our minds and hearts to catch glimpses of God's kingdom among us, even as we wait for the world Jesus envisions to be made complete on earth as it is in heaven.

From sundaysandseasons.com.

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