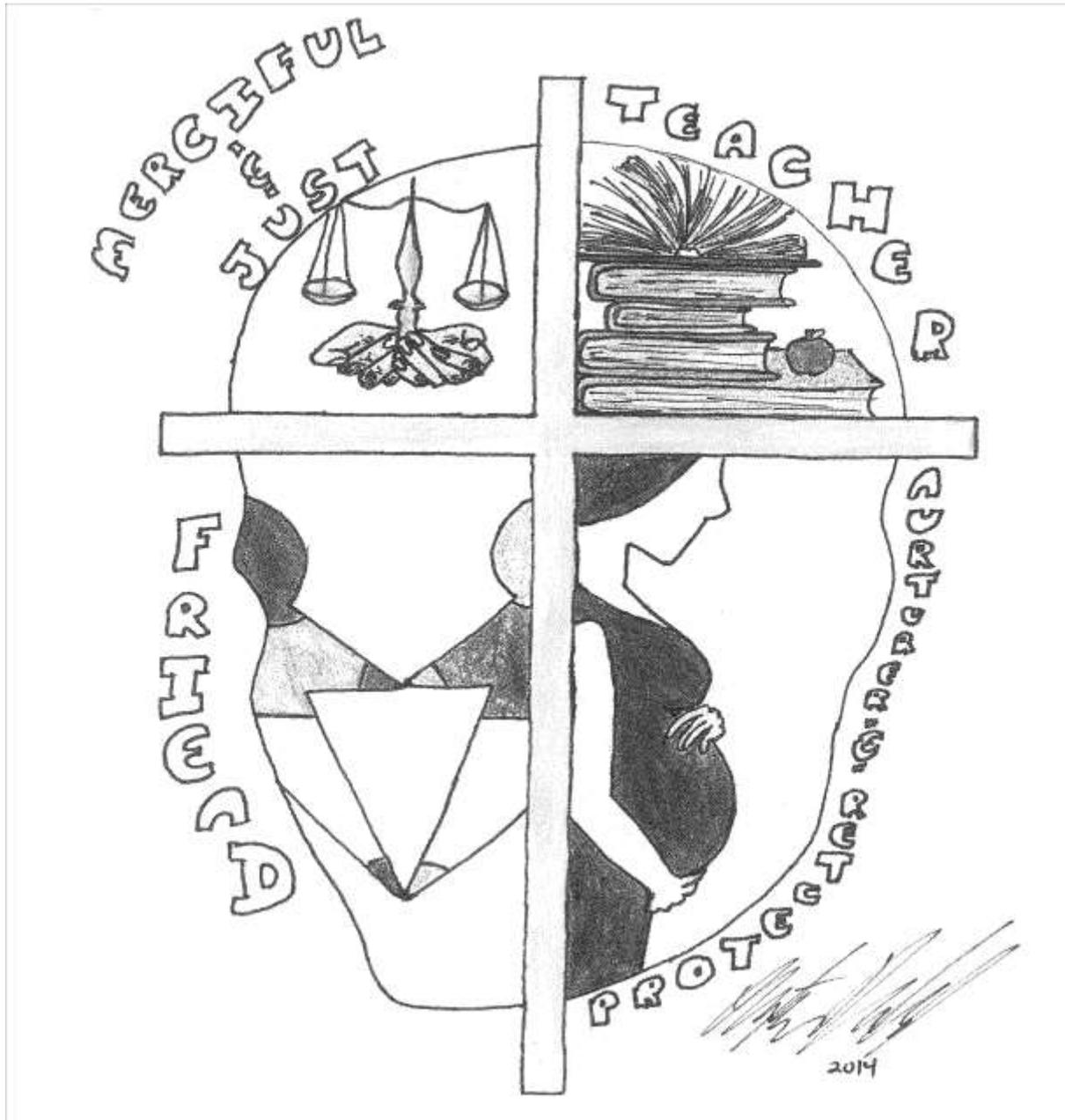


*Youth Sunday, May 11, 2014*



## *God, Our Parent*

*In the Words of our Children and Youth  
Through Scripture, Meditation, Dialogue & Prayer*

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# *God, Our Parent: The Word of God made Flesh In the Words of our Children and Youth*

*Please note that during this service individual dialogues based on the words of our children and youth are interspersed throughout.*

PRELUDE

*Now Thank We All Our God*

J.S. BACH

Arr. A.B. Couper  
Youth Handbell Choir

WELCOME AND THE CALL TO WORSHIP

KYLE LANGMACK

One Voice: I would know you, Lord.

**Response: But how can I know what I have not seen?**

I would hear your voice, Lord.

**But how do I recognize your voice in the noise around me?**

I would follow in your ways.

**But who will guide me along the right paths?**

**In Unison: We see you, we sense you, we hear you; we come to know you through our relationships with others. And now, hoping to deepen our relationship with you, let us come together to worship God.**

\*HYMN 311

*We Meet You, O Christ*

NORMANDY

## **DIALOGUE 1: *God of Justice and Mercy***

SCRIPTURE

*Genesis 2:8–9, 15–17*

SAVANNAH GOINS

*Now, the Lord God had planted a garden in the east, in Eden and there he put the man he had formed. The Lord God made all kinds of trees grow out of the ground—trees that were pleasing to the eye and good for food. In the middle of the garden were the tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil...The Lord God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it. And the Lord God commanded the man, “You are free to eat from any tree in the garden but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat from it you will certainly die.”*

**Counsellor:** Tell me, what seems to be the problem?

**Patient:** I’m in a spiritual void—you see, I don’t think I really know my heavenly parent? At best God is some far away being, sending down strict rules and harsh punishments. How can I relate to that? I don’t know God!

**Counsellor:** What about your parents here on earth? Tell me about them.

**Patient:** Well, at times they can be a bit strict too—

**Counsellor:** Yes? Say more.

DON'T TOUCH THAT.

DON'T play ball in the house.

NO TV until you finish your homework.

You can't watch that until you are older.

You can't go to his house until I meet his parents.

I don't want you to go to a party where there is alcohol.

SCRIPTURE

*Genesis 2:15–17*

SAVANNAH GOINS

*When the woman saw that the fruit of the tree was good for food and pleasing to the eye, and also desirable for gaining wisdom, she took some and ate it. She also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it.*

**Counsellor:** Yes?

I touched it.

We threw the ball.

I didn't do my homework.

I watched the movie.

I went to his house without permission.

What's wrong with a little alcohol?

SCRIPTURE

*Genesis 3:6*

SAVANNAH GOINS

*Then the man and his wife heard the sound of the Lord God as he was walking in the garden in the midst of the day and they hid from the Lord God among the trees of the garden.*

**Counsellor:** And then what happened?

I lost it.

I broke something important.

I failed the test.

I started having nightmares.

I felt guilty.

My friend drank too much. She was involved in a serious car accident last night.

**Counsellor:** Listen

*(Student 1 enters with iPad and begins to work)*

**Student 2**— Can you come here a minute? I need your help with something.  
(*Student 1 places pad on stool and leaves*)

**Student 3**— Who left their iPad just sitting out? I've always wanted one of these. Who's gonna know?

**Student 1**— Have you seen my iPad? It was just here.

**Student 3**— No, I just got here man.

**Student 1**— I can't believe it. That had all of my pictures and everything on it. My Grandfather just died. Those pictures were my last good memories of him.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION (*in unison*)

JULIA HAISS

**God, we confess that we don't always understand the boundaries that you have placed upon us. We fail to see that the boundaries are not there to restrict our fun. They are there to give us the fullness of life. You have given us moral limits, yet we engage in behaviors that do not promote our physical well-being. You give us boundaries to ensure that we can live together in harmony, yet we use the boundaries to better ourselves when it is helpful, but not when it is inconvenient. Often we use your boundaries to make ourselves higher than our neighbor. Instead of seeking justice and peace, we seek revenge for perceived wrongs with subtle words and actions that exclude the other. Forgive us for our self-centered ways and guide us toward a more holistic life that draws the full creation into your presence. Listen as we privately confess our sins.**

PRIVATE CONFESSION OF SIN (*in silence*)

**Student 3:** – I'm sorry, I did take it. Here it is.

**Student 1:** – Thank you, thank you, thank you. You just can't know how much this means to me to get this back. I just can't thank you enough for returning it.

DECLARATION OF FORGIVENESS

One Voice: Hear the word of the Lord.

The Lord is compassionate and gracious, slow to anger, abounding in love. God will not always accuse, nor will God harbor anger forever. God does not treat us as our sins deserve or repay us according to our iniquities." For as high as the heavens are above the earth, so great is God's love for those who fear him. As far as the east is from the west, so far has he removed our transgressions from us" (*Psalms 103:11-12*).

Friends, believe the good news of the Gospel.

**Response:** In Jesus Christ, we are forgiven.

UBI CARITAS

U - bi ca - ri - tas \_\_\_\_\_ et a - - - mour. \_\_\_\_\_ U - bi  
Love and car - ing are \_\_\_\_\_ there is God. \_\_\_\_\_ Where Love and  
ca - ri tas \_\_\_\_\_ De - us i - bi est. \_\_\_\_\_ Where  
car - ing are, \_\_\_\_\_ there \_\_\_\_\_ is \_\_\_\_\_ God. \_\_\_\_\_

**Patient:** I see. God's boundaries are fair and they are there to protect us.

**Counsellor:** And, God's justice is always tempered by mercy.

MEDITATION 1 *Stepping Out of Bounds—God's Justice, God's Mercy* COLLIN DENBOW



God's justice and mercy, quite an interesting topic when we look at the world today, if you were to take a poll of all the people of the world even all Christians you would end up with a million different answers on what justice should be. It is hard to see Justice in the world sometimes when we see such things as civil war, racism, unfair sentencing and in general a world that looks closer to destroying itself every day. I think to look at Justice we must know the definition, "the administering of deserved punishment or reward.". The question we must ask about this though is who determines what is deserved? Many would say a judge, some a parental figure and less still recently some would say elected officials. But as Christians we don't have to wonder, God tells us who determines what is deserved by saying in John 8:7 "He who is without sin among you, let him be the first to throw a stone at her." Despite this people will say how judgment is a necessary evil to stop violence and crime, yet we have the most incarcerated persons in the world and we are still a country plagued with gun violence and hatred. The Justice of God is not for us to determine, none of us are without sin therefore we cannot pass judgment, but yet we so often put God in our corner so to speak and use him as an excuse to condemn others and by doing this we completely miss the point of the New Testament, God did not come to damn us he came to save us. God's judgment upon us is not what we have earned. After all why would Jesus have sacrificed himself for a world of sinners if he believed we should get what we deserve? This is the mercy of God, as we see in James

2:12-13 “So speak and so act as those who are to be judged by the law of liberty. For judgment will be merciless to one who has shown no mercy; mercy triumphs over judgment.” Evident in this is the point that we are not called to be judges but to be accepting to those among us who may have done wrong. Throughout the New Testament the same message rings out, love is the answer and maybe if we could bring God’s mercy and God’s love just a little bit into our lives the next time we accuse someone of something or pass judgment upon someone we don’t know we may just be starting a trend for the better. This is what the church has taught me growing up here. It has given me a community in which no matter how many times I made a mistake I was not judged or looked down upon. It is such a thankless task that our community here takes upon itself every time a child enters the church, to spread God’s love not to spread one’s own judgment. I would like to publicly thank each and every member of this church family who has so influenced me becoming the person I am today, as I head off to college I will take the lessons I have learned here and attempt to apply them on the journey before me. Thank You.

\*HYMN 261

*There’s a Wideness in God’s Mercy*

IN BABILONE

SCRIPTURE

*1 Corinthians 13:11–12*

CARTER LANGMACK

*When I was a child, I talked like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I put childish ways behind me. Now we see but a poor reflection as in a mirror, then we shall see face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I am fully known.*

**Patient:** But that is still only part of who God is.

**Counsellor:** Yes, all of us have many facets. Let me ask you a question. What do you think your parents want most for you?

**Patient:** I suppose to learn, to grow, to live up to my fullest potential?

**Counsellor:** God, too, wants to guide you into your fullest humanity.

**Litany on teaching**

## DIALOGUE 2: *Learning*

SCRIPTURE

*Deuteronomy 32:1–2, 11-12*

JUSTIN MITCHELL

*Listen, O heavens, and I will speak; hear, O earth, the words of my mouth. Let my teaching fall like rain and my words descend like dew, like showers on new grass, like abundant rain on tender plants.*

Teach me to learn, so I may understand all that you have to teach.

Teach me to know your word so I may unlock your mystery.

CONGREGATION *(In unison)*

*Psalms 25:4–5*

CARTER LANGMACK

***Show me your ways, O Lord, teach me your paths: guide me in your truth and teach me, for you are God my Savior, and my hope is in you all day long.***

Teach me to understand you so I may never be alone.

Teach me to open my eyes so I may become more aware of the world around me.

SCRIPTURE

*Psalms 25:8–9*

JUSTIN MITCHELL

*Good and faithful is the Lord: therefore he instructs sinners in his ways. He guides the humble in what is right and teaches them his ways.*

Teach me that others have feelings so I can bring love, not hurt to others.

Teach me how to forgive others so I may be free from hatred.

Teach me to understand others so I may be more caring.

Teach me to love my neighbor so I may love myself.

Teach me to love myself so I may truly love my neighbor.

SCRIPTURE

*Psalms 119:33–37*

CARTER LANGMACK

*Teach me, O Lord to follow your decrees; then I will keep them to the end. Give me understanding and I will keep your law and obey it with all my heart. Direct me in the path of your commands, for there I find delight. Turn my heart toward your statutes and not toward selfish gain. Turn my eyes away from worthless things, preserve my life according to your word.*

Teach me to pray more often so I may better talk with you.

Teach me to be good so I will not hurt myself by testing your boundaries.

Teach me to be helpful so I may be a better helper to others in need.

ALL CHILDREN *(In unison)*

**As parents gently guide their children into maturity,  
guide me so I may become all that you have created me to be.**

CONGREGATION *(In unison)*

*Proverbs 1:5–9*

*Let the wise listen and add to their learning and let the discerning get guidance—for understanding proverbs and parables, the saying and riddles of the wise. The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge, but fools despise wisdom and discipline. Listen, my son, to your father's instruction and do not forsake your mother's teaching. They will be a garland to grace your head and a chain to adorn your neck.*

MEDITATION 2

*The Greatest Lessons I Have Learned*

GRETCHEN DRUSHEL



As the youngest of three, you learn to adjust to being called "Christina, no Elanor, no Diana, bla, el-dia-Chri- Gretchen" by my parents. When there are so many of us, it's just

unavoidable. But throughout life, we learn to do and know many things. Some being from a formal education, being taught how to add, read music, recite the alphabet, write research papers, and so on. But what does any of this mean? What do these teachings do for me, as a

person? I mean, yeah, an education is great, but will that change anything other than the likeliness of getting a job? Even nowadays, all that's being taught is how to take standardized tests, that don't really affect you, but the school, the city, the state, the country. So why use these teachings when you can learn to be a better person instead.

God did not create us to teach us to find every answer, but to find yourself, whether being through life experiences or from deep thought. Most of what I learned was respect, the most basic teaching, now lost in this modern age of society. Though there are small instances of true respect, these are not enough to balance out everything else. I remember a couple years ago, I was going out to eat with my father, and our waitress commended how polite I was compared to the usual teens she should have to deal with. Though I was flattered, I was also pretty flabbergasted that it is surprising for one to see respect, than is it to not. I never saw the woman as someone I could mess with to potentially get a free meal, but as someone who is working a difficult job that just needs some hope. I have learned to think about others and how they feel before I act, to make both of our lives easier. Respect, by definition, is a feeling of deep admiration for someone or something elicited by their abilities, qualities, or achievements. But in reality is it even admiration? Or is it just acknowledgment, the lack of ignorance to even try to understand and treat another and yourself well? But

what do I know, respect is a major lesson that is used in everyday life, but not necessarily taught.

But the most important thing I've learned in my life is to love others for who they are, not what they are. In a society who judges you if you are black, white, old, young, gay, straight, republican, democrat, male, female, it means nothing. God created people to help one another, to take advantage of our differences, and to help each other. We use our differences as a way to separate ourselves, to liberate ourselves, to benefit ourselves. But what does that even do? Politicians using their powers to limit potential happiness of those who are different. Of those who have a "choice" of who and what they are. But, as one difference between us gets more recognized, more are created. So we must learn from ourselves and others. Not as simple as reading a textbook about 8th grade science, no matter how difficult it may be, to love and respect one another.

**Patient:** So what happens if I don't live up to God's expectations? What if I'm a disappointing student?

**Counsellor:** Good parents want their child to succeed in life because they love them, not the other way around.

ANTHEM

*Feed My Lambs*

NATALIE SLEETH  
Chapel and Psalter Choirs

### DIALOGUE 3: *Nurture*

SCRIPTURE

*Deuteronomy 32:11–12*

COLLIN DENBOW

*Like the eagle that stirs up its nest, and hovers over its young, God spreads wings to catch you, and carries you on pinions.*

I felt supported when my parents helped me with my school project.  
And when my brother helps me with my hard homework.

I felt supported when my parents planned a party for me and my friends.  
And when they come to my concerts and sports activities, my school and church events.

My parents support me by providing basic needs  
By giving me stability,  
By supporting my life's choices.

SCRIPTURE

*Matthew 23:37*

GRETCHEN DRUSHEL

*Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the city that kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to it!  
How often have I desired to gather your children together as a hen gathers her brood  
under her wings?*

My parents have protected me by teaching me common sense.

They set boundaries to keep me safe.

My mom comforts and loves me for who I am and doesn't want to change me.

When I hug my dad I feel supported, protected and loved.

SCRIPTURE

*Isaiah 66:13*

COLLIN DENBOW

*As a mother comforts her child, so I will comfort you; you shall be comforted in  
Jerusalem.*

My parents helped me through a bad time.

They helped me get over my problems.

They fix my hurts when I fall.

They made a special blanket for my bed.

They make my favorite foods for me.

They give me cuddles when I am tired.

SCRIPTURE

*Isaiah 49:15*

GRETCHEN DRUSHEL

*Can a woman forget her nursing child, or show no compassion for the child of her womb?  
Even these may forget, yet I will not forget you.*

MEDITATION 3

*A God who Nurtures and Protects*

JULIA HAISS



In the Old Testament, God was perceived as a shepherd; one who nurtured, guided, and protected. In today's world, some believe this shepherd is more difficult to find, harder to distinguish among those around us. But perhaps we can no longer see God as a guiding shepherd because the role of God is emulated by our families, by our peers and idols. I see a nurturer represented by both of my parents; my mother raised me to be more careful while my father placed a greater emphasis on, well, rolling with the punches. Although their ideals sometimes conflict, they have made me a more aware individual as a whole. For that, I cannot thank them enough. My siblings, although not always at my side, serve as my protectors. From their mistakes, I learn, from their accomplishments I also learn, and from their roles as simply my older brother and sister, I learn most. It's not essential for one to have a strong, loving family in order to feel the

guidance of God. People who nurture and protect us are often completely invisible in everyday life. Because of this, it is our duty and obligation to carry forward the way of God by guiding, nurturing, and protecting others.

**Counsellor:** Tell me about your friends. What is a good friend?

**Patient:** A friend is someone you can always be yourself with.

Friends are kind.

Friends are respectful.

Friends are loyal and don't betray your trust.

Friends are real and honest.

Friends come when you're hurt.

Friends are my shield against sadness

A friend is someone who comforts and cheers you up.

A friend can make us laugh.

Friends are people who care about you, comfort you, hang out with you, play with you.

Friends are our connection to the world.

Friends are always there.

**Counsellor:** And what about your parents? Can they be your friend as well?

My dad is like a friend when we joke around.

My parents are like friends when we have fun together

Friends are supportive. Parents support you like friends.

They listen to your problems and help you.

**Counsellor:** And what about God. Have you ever thought of God as your friend too?

**Patient:** Now I'm beginning to see the face of God. But, it's still a little fuzzy around the edges.

**Counsellor:** True. But think about it. Do we ever fully know anyone, even ourselves? God is known and God is Mystery.

## DIALOGUE 4: *God as Friend*

SCRIPTURE

*John 15:12–15*

KATHERINE HAGEN

*My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you. Greater love has no one than this that he lay down his life for his friends. You are my friends if you do what I command. I no longer call you servants, because a servant does not know his master's business. Instead, I have called you friends, for everything that I learned from the father I have made known to you.*

MEDITATION 4

*God Known, God Mysterious*

CARTER LANGMACK



For a great duration of my life, I had blindly navigated, trusting only myself, arms stretched in front of me not in embrace, but in fear of running into something. But besides this state I was in, I never really attempted to look for a guide. I never understood how people were able to put so much faith and trust in someone who they've never seen or even heard before, someone who I could not possibly fathom. So, I went on with my life. I would go from place to place, continuing my daily routine until the day was over. Then I would start again the next day. I continued this lifestyle with my parents and brothers. Occasionally, we would get into little arguments and I wouldn't be able to understand them. Eventually, they were resolved and life went on.

Another argument would occur, but this time a bit more serious, as life was furthering, revealing more possible issues and concerns. Then it would subside. But as life continued, more concerns arose, causing the arguments to become more severe. Of course there was fighting, but I still loved my parents and brothers. I always did. I wouldn't always understand them, but of course I still loved them. And as I thought about this, I remembered a lesson I was taught in Church Youth. Just because you love someone doesn't mean you have to understand them completely. I loved God, but I didn't understand God, so I never gave the opportunity to guide me. I believed that God could only guide me when I understood. But there I was, being guided by my parents. I loved my parents immensely, but a lot of the time, I didn't understand them. I trusted them. I started to trust God, even though I couldn't understand the mysteries of God. But, as some people believed in God, God was also the center of their blame. Before, this was another reason for my thoughts toward God. It seemed that people followed God just so they could have a source of blame when tragedies existed. With our finite minds and self-centered views, it seemed fit for this to occur. We can't deduce why God does certain things, yet people turn their

backs on God in the face of tragedy. But as we observe the world beyond the tragedies, we see miracles. We see God's glorified works, what the people who look past the tragedies see. Of course, some people believe that tragedies shouldn't occur since God exists, assuming their finite knowledge of the situation is greater than God's infinite wisdom. One reason we know God to be so great is because we cannot reduce His thinking to ours. He guides, and we trust Him. Although God is Mysterious, He is Known.

## LITANY PRAYER

**One Voice:** God, I see you as I ponder the deeper mysteries of learning. But your very presence is a mystery I cannot prove with rational thought.

**Response:** **You are known to me, you are mystery.**

I see you in the beauty of art and music, and in the best of media that move us beyond ourselves.

But we are a culture obsessed with surface-level art and media that obscure our vision of your presence in the world.

**You are known to me, you are mystery.**

I see you in the miracle of new life, in babies and grandparents; it is a wonder to me that humans have been given the ability to create life.

But why can't I always see you as easily in the stranger, in the person I don't always agree with, in the person I don't really like? Why can't I always see your image in myself?

**You are known to me, you are mystery.**

## PRAYERS

KYLE LANGMACK

*Includes intercession for people affected by gun violence with the tolling of the tower bell.*

## THE LORD'S PRAYER *(In unison)*

**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 debts, as we forgive our debtors; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory, forever. Amen.**

## INVITATION TO THE OFFERING

### OFFERTORY

CARTER LANGMACK  
Cello

### \* FESTIVAL DOXOLOGY

LASST UNS ERFREUEN

*All who are able may stand, row by row, as the ushers walk forward with the offering plates. All are invited to sing.*

**All creatures, your Creator bless,  
And worship God in humbleness.**

**O sing ye! Alleluia!**

**Praise, praise the Father, praise the Son,**

**And praise the Spirit, Three in One!**

**Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!**

### PRAYER OF DEDICATION

SENIORS

That your mission of justice and mercy might become a reality on earth  
That others might know you and walk in your way,  
That those who suffer might be enfolded in your compassion and love  
We give back to you a portion of what you have so generously given to us.

Bless these offerings and use them that you might be known throughout your creation.

### \* CLOSING CHARGE

As we have been shown your face, and come to know you in the relationships that have blessed our lives, may we also go out and become a blessing to others. And now, we invite those who have guided us along our way to come forward as we celebrate the impact you have had on our lives.

(As the music introduction plays, parents, guardians, and families are invited to come forward and stand with their children. Children sing verse 1, families and children verse 2, and full congregation verse 3. Children and families may return to the pews at the end of the hymn.)

**The Living God**

J. Conner

How can I know you \_\_\_\_\_ and see your face? \_\_\_\_\_ How can I  
shows me \_\_\_\_\_ the way to go, \_\_\_\_\_ the one who  
oth - ers \_\_\_\_\_ the love I've known, \_\_\_\_\_ pass on the

touch you \_\_\_\_\_ feel your em - brace? \_\_\_\_\_ Are you so dis - tant, \_\_\_\_\_ so far a -  
teach - es \_\_\_\_\_ the truths they know, \_\_\_\_\_ the one who com - forts \_\_\_\_\_ my tears a  
won - ders \_\_\_\_\_ that I've been shown, \_\_\_\_\_ com - fort the wea - ry \_\_\_\_\_ a - long the

way? \_\_\_\_\_ How can I know the liv - ing God to - day? \_\_\_\_\_ The one who  
way \_\_\_\_\_ be - comes the face of God for me this day. \_\_\_\_\_ May I show  
way \_\_\_\_\_ and be the face of God to you this \_\_\_\_\_ day. \_\_\_\_\_

**POSTLUDE***Fast Forward*

HOWARD ROWE  
Gretchen Drushel, trombone



THE THANKS OF THE ENTIRE CONGREGATION are extended to Jennifer Conner, Kaori Hongo, John Marsh, Sybil Marsh, Jonathan Moyer, Jim Tomaszewski, Ann Williams, and the Covenant children, youth, and families for their preparation of today's service. *God our Parent* was the theme for this year's Workshop Rotation classes. The Youth Sunday service is in the words of our children and youth as they had opportunities to study and discuss throughout these past months.

Veronica Bromelmeier	Savannah Goins	Naomi Marsh	Christopher Moyer
Keasia Clark	Katherine Hagen	Graham Miller	Kate Tracanna
Collin Denbow	Victoria Hagen	Greer Miller	Asha Stewart
Gretchen Drushel	Julia Haiss	Camron Mitchell	Laila Stewart
Donald Goins	Carter Langmack	Justin Mitchell	
Jonathan Goins	Kyle Langmack	Kaileigh Mitchell	

Gretchen Drushel created the cover image and Jennifer Conner designed the t-shirt image. The Children, Youth, and Families Committee members include Ann Williams (chair), Jennifer Conner, John Marsh, LaShawna Adams Mitchell, and David Pulliam. Staff include Kaori Hongo, Willie Howard, Jonathan Moyer, Jonyrma Singleton, and Mindy Stewart.

