

*Sharing the Peace

LEADER The peace of the Lord be with you always.
PEOPLE **And also with you.**

Pass the peace to those around you as you leave.

Vespers

A service of evening prayer at Covenant CRC



Welcome to Vespers.

The Vesper Sparrow is named after its tendency to sing most gloriously during the vesper (evening) hours after most other species have quieted for the night. As we pray and ponder and praise, may we join the creation in bringing glory to our Creator as we close out the day.

Fourth Sunday of Easter

April 30, 2023

Words of Welcome

Opening Scripture

John 8:12

LEADER Jesus said, "I am the light of the world; whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life."

Silence

Song

"Come Light Our Hearts"

Words and music: by Sandra McCracken
© 2014 Drink Your Tea Music

Chorus:
For you, O Lord, our souls in stillness wait.
For you, O Lord, our souls in stillness wait.
Truly our hope is in You, truly our hope is in You.

O Lord of life, our only hope,
your radiance shines on all who look to you in the dark.
Emmanuel come, come light our hearts. *(to chorus)*

O Joy above all other loves,
in you we find more than enough.
We come as we are, O heal and restore.
Come light our hearts. *(to chorus)*

*Greeting

LEADER Grace to you and peace from God our Father and from the Lord Jesus Christ.

PEOPLE **Thanks be to God.**

*Opening Sentences

LEADER Our help is in the name of the Lord;

Collect

PEOPLE **Keep watch, dear Lord, with those who work, or watch, or weep this night, and give your angels charge over those who sleep. Tend the sick, Lord Christ; give rest to the weary, bless the dying, soothe the suffering, pity the afflicted, shield the joyous; and all for your love's sake. Amen.**

Silence

LEADER Guide us waking, O Lord, and guard us sleeping,

PEOPLE **that awake we may watch with Christ, and asleep rest in his peace.**

*Parting Song

"The Lord's My Shepherd"

Words and music: Stuart Townend
© 1996 Thankyou Music

The Lord's my shepherd, I'll not want.
He makes me lie in pastures green.
He leads me by the still, still waters,
his goodness restores my soul.

Chorus:
And I will trust in You alone.
And I will trust in You alone,
for your endless mercy follows me,
your goodness will lead me home.

He guides my ways in righteousness,
and he anoints my head with oil,
and my cup, it overflows with joy,
I feast on his pure delights. *(to chorus)*

And though I walk the darkest path,
I will not fear the evil one,
for you are with me, and your rod and staff
are the comfort I need to know. *(to chorus)*

Prayer of Consecration

The Lord's Prayer

PEOPLE **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.**

Preparing the Bread and Cup

LEADER The bread that we break
is a sharing in the body of Christ.

PEOPLE **We who are many are one body,
for we all share the same loaf.**

LEADER The cup for which we give thanks
is a sharing in the blood of Christ.

PEOPLE **The cup that we drink
is our participation in the blood of Christ.**

Passing the Elements

"Ten Thousand Reasons"

LUYH 559

Prayer of Thanksgiving

LEADER Loving God, you have put gladness in our hearts;
you have satisfied our hunger with good things. In
giving all, you have not withheld from us your own
dear Son. How can we withhold anything from you,
our Lord and our God? Renew us day by day with
the gift of your Spirit, that we may give ourselves
completely to your service and walk with joy in the
footsteps of Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

PEOPLE **the maker of heaven and earth.**

LEADER It is good to give thanks to the Lord,

PEOPLE **to sing your praise, O Most High;**

LEADER to declare your steadfast love in the morning,

PEOPLE **and your faithfulness at night.**

*Song

"Rejoice in All Your Works"

Words and music: Wendell Kimbrough
© 2014 Wendell Kimbrough

Every mouth that cries for food,
every lung that yearns for breath,
every eye that searches through the dark for light—
all creation looks to you for its breath and for its food.
From the goodness of your hand we're satisfied.

Chorus:

*Oh rejoice in all your works,
King of Heaven, King of Earth!
Every creature you have made declares your praise.
We rejoice in all you've made,
God of all-sustaining grace!
With the mountain, sky, and sea, we sing your praise!*

Every tree that thirsts for rain,
every bird that seeks its nest,
every heart that waits in hope to be made glad—
all creation looks to you for its breath and for its food.
From the goodness of your hand we're satisfied. *(to chorus)*

May the pond'rings of my heart, and the song upon my lips,
with the chorus of creation join in praise:
to the God who made all things, to the Spirit who sustains,
to the Son who over all creation reigns! *(to chorus)*

Prayer of Confession

Silence

LEADER Most merciful God,

PEOPLE **we confess that 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.
We are truly sorry and we humbly repent.
For the sake of your Son Jesus Christ,
have mercy on us and forgive us;
that we may delight in your will,
and walk in your ways,
to the glory of your Name. Amen.**

The Assurance

Ephesians 2:4-7

LEADER God, who is rich in mercy, out of the great love with which he loved us even when we were dead through our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved—and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, so that in the ages to come he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.

LEADER O God, make speed to save us.

PEOPLE **O Lord, make haste to help us.**

LEADER Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit.

PEOPLE **As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be. Alleluia. Amen.**

Song

“Father, We Love You”

Words and music: Donna Adkins
© 1976, 1981 Maranatha! Music

Father, we love you, we worship, we adore You,
glorify your name in all the earth,
glorify your name, glorify your name,
glorify your name in all the earth.

Jesus, we love you...

Spirit, we love you...

The Psalm

Psalm 23

LEADER Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit.

PEOPLE **As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be. Alleluia. Amen.**

Meditation: With Us Always

*Song

“The Lord Is My Shepherd”

Words: Psalm 23:1-2, Music: Folk melody, arr. Charlotte Larsen
© 1994 CRC Publications

The Lord is my shepherd; I'll walk with him always.
He leads me by still waters; I'll walk with him always.
Always, always, I'll walk with him always.
Always, always, I'll walk with him always.

The Great Prayer of Thanksgiving

LEADER The Lord be with you,

PEOPLE **and also with you.**

LEADER Lift up your hearts.

PEOPLE **We lift them up to the Lord.**

LEADER Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

PEOPLE **It is right for us to give thanks and praise.**

The Institution

The Memorial Acclamation

LEADER Let us proclaim the mystery of our faith:

PEOPLE **Christ has died. Christ is risen.
Christ will come again.**

Dying, he destroyed our death.

Rising, he restored our life.

Lord Jesus, come in glory.