

# 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.

# Fourteenth Sunday after Pentecost

## September 3, 2023

### Words of Welcome

### Opening Scripture

*Psalm 16:7-8*

LEADER I will bless the Lord who gives me counsel; my heart teaches me, night after night. I have set the Lord always before me; because he is at my right hand, I shall not fall.

*Silence*

### Song

*"Come to Me, Weary Traveler"*

*LUYH 123*

### \*Greeting

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

### \*Opening Sentences

LEADER Our help is in the name of the Lord;  
PEOPLE **the maker of heaven and earth.**  
LEADER Jesus Christ is the light of the world,  
PEOPLE **the light no darkness can overcome.**  
LEADER Stay with us, Lord, for it is evening  
PEOPLE **and the day is almost over.**  
LEADER Let you light scatter the darkness  
PEOPLE **and illumine your church.**

### \*Song

*"How Lovely Is Your Dwelling"*

*LUYH 507*

### The Prayers

Prayers of the People: Sharing our Joys & Concerns

### 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.**

### Collect

LEADER 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.**  
LEADER May Almighty God bless, preserve, and keep us, this night and forevermore.  
PEOPLE **Amen.**  
LEADER Let us bless the Lord.  
PEOPLE **Thanks be to God.**

### \*Parting Song

*"Take Up Your Cross"*

*LUYH 326*

### \*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.*

**3 for I have always been mindful of your unfailing love  
and have lived in reliance on your faithfulness.**

4 I do not sit with the deceitful,  
nor do I associate with hypocrites.

5 I abhor the assembly of evildoers  
and refuse to sit with the wicked.

6 I wash my hands in innocence,  
and go about your altar, Lord,

7 proclaiming aloud your praise  
and telling of all your wonderful deeds.

**8 Lord, I love the house where you live,  
the place where your glory dwells.**

9 Do not take away my soul along with sinners,  
my life with those who are bloodthirsty,

10 in whose hands are wicked schemes,  
whose right hands are full of bribes.

**11 I lead a blameless life;  
deliver me and be merciful to me.**

**12 My feet stand on level ground;  
in the great congregation I will praise the Lord.**

LEADER Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the  
Holy Spirit:

PEOPLE **as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for  
ever. Alleluia. Amen.**

### The New Testament Reading

*Romans 12:9-21*

LEADER This is the Word of the Lord.

PEOPLE **Thanks be to God.**

### The Gospel Reading

*Matthew 16:21-28*

LEADER This is the Word of the Lord.

PEOPLE **Thanks be to God.**

### Meditation: Follow with Fascination

#### \*Song of Response

*"In Christ Alone"*

*LUYH 770*

### 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 for  
give us; that we may delight in your will, and  
walk in your ways, to the glory of your Name.  
Amen.**

### The Assurance

LEADER Almighty God have mercy on you, forgive you all  
your sins through our Lord Jesus Christ, strengthen  
you in all goodness, and by the power of the Holy  
Spirit keep you in eternal life. Amen.

### Song

*"Take My Life and Let It Be"*

*LUYH 863:1,5,6*

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.**

### The Psalm

*Psalm 26*

1 Vindicate me, Lord,  
for I have led a blameless life;  
**I have trusted in the Lord  
and have not faltered.**

2 Test me, Lord, and try me,  
examine my heart and my mind;