

Communion Hymn

Invitation to the Table

Confession and Assurance

Open us, O God, free us to reflect the sacred. Touch us with your presence, we pray in your Holy Name, Christ, Anointed One. Amen.

Great Thanksgiving

The Lord be with you. And also with you.

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

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God. It is right to give our thanks and praise.

...And so, with your people on earth and all the company of heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hymn sung **Praise God, Praise God of pow’r and might, praise God whose presence shines through our night. Praise God of glory, hosanna sing, reflecting the sacred story. This, this is Christ the One who mirrors Love for all of us. Haste, haste to bring him laud, the Word of time eternal.**

...And so, in remembrance of your mighty acts in Jesus Christ, we offer ourselves as a holy and living sacrifice, in union with Christ’s offering for us, as we proclaim the mystery of faith. **Christ has died; Christ is risen; Christ will come again.**

...And all God’s people said, “Amen.”  
**(sung) This, this is Christ the One, who mirrors love for all of us.**  
**Haste, haste to bring him laud, the Word of time eternal.**

\*All are welcome to the table at Central Congregational Church. The bread served is gluten free. We all partake together when the pastor invites us to eat and drink.

The Body of Christ, broken for you. **Thanks be to God.**

The Cup of New Life, poured out for you. **Thanks be to God.**

REFRAMING THE SACRED

*We too often think that something “sacred” is far away and not available to us. This Advent season, we are “reframing” the way we recognize the sacred reflected all around and through us. As we prepare to move into the world, we begin to reframe our view of the world and our circumstance, illuminating new ways of being the Christ (Anointed One) tangibly present.*

Anointed as Sacred People

\*Closing Hymn

“O Splendor of God’s Glory Bright”

Insert

Benediction

Three-Fold Amen

Postlude

Andante

Bach



<div>Central Congregational Church, United Church of Christ</div> <div>An Open and Affirming Congregation</div> <div>“A Community of Faith, Hope, and Love, Growing through Worship and Service”</div>		
Sunday, December 7, 2025	10 o’clock a.m.	
Second Sunday in Advent		
Welcome to Central Congregational Church, where no matter who you are or where you are on life’s journey, you are welcome. If you are visiting us today, know that we are glad to have you. As we worship together, please note that an * indicates a time to stand as you are able. Sentences in <b>bold</b> are to be spoken by the congregation.		
GATHERING		
Prelude	Angel Suite arr. Keveren	Tudor Bota, Music Director
Welcome and Announcements		Lynn Horton
Ring the Bell		
REFLECTING THE SACRED		
<i>We are reminded that we are called to reflect the sacred each and every day. "Incarnation" is a word that means that God's presence came to dwell among all people, and we believe this happened in a special way in the birth of Jesus. All creation has always been imbued with the Creator's brilliance. This season, we will remember the call to shine with this holy light.</i>		
Crossing the Threshold		
*Advent Processional and Reading	Shaun, Lindsay & Colton Moore	
Love is the heart of the Advent story. Divine Love takes on flesh and lives among us. It is Love that sees the sacred in every face, every struggle, every joy. We listen for Love calling us to compassion, to tenderness, to courage, and to a deeper awareness of God’s presence in all things.		
<b>We light the second candle—the Candle of Love—</b>		
trusting that Love is both gift and calling. May this flame remind us that the sacred is reflected whenever we forgive, reach out, embrace, and serve. Come, O Love, and live in us.		
*Sung Response (sing twice)		
Upon this moment, upon these people, upon this place, the holy comes. And sacred knowing brings sacred being for sacred doing of God’s plan.		
Opening Prayer and Lord’s Prayer		Joe Chapman, Liturgist
Loving and Holy God, we trust that the steady glow of these candles helps us notice the sacred shining in places we often overlook. Gather us into Your presence where Love is not simply a feeling but a way of seeing. As we wait for Christ’s coming, soften our hearts, deepen our compassion, and help us welcome Your Love as the light that guides our steps and the gift we are called to reflect into the world. Come to us now. Make this time holy, and make us mirrors of Your sacred Love. We pray these things in the name of your Great Love saying, <b>“Our Father, who art in heaven...”</b>		
*Hymn of Love	“People, Look East”	#142 Blue
<i>(Children may come forward during the final verse.)</i>		

REFRACTING THE SACRED		
<i>As light passes through a medium, it can be redirected in ways that make its brilliance more visible, as in a prism. As we encounter the message today, we see the world and our own lives and loved ones in a different light, one that invites us to know more deeply the sacred nature of all things.</i>		
The Sacrament of Baptism	Jackson & Ethan Teles	
Introduction and Singing	“I Was There to Hear Your Borning Cry”	#75 Blue
Children’s Message		
Prayer for Illumination		Rev. Lee Atherton
First Reading	“Romans 15:4-13” NRSVUE	
Second Reading	“Matthew 3:1-12” NRSVUE	
Response		
This is the word of God for the people of God.		
Thanks be to God		
Sermon		Pastor Lee
REFILLING THE SACRED		
<i>We are wells of the sacred. God's presence is poured into creation in a never-ending flow of love. We enter a time of prayer that invites us to be refilled in ways that can help us pour out our love throughout the week. All we must do in this moment is open our hearts to the Holy One.</i>		
Joys and Concerns		
Sung Response	“Emmanuel, Emmanuel” (refrain tune)	#134 Blue
Emmanuel, Emmanuel, his name is called Emmanuel.		
God with us, revealed in us, his name is called Emmanuel.		
Pastoral Prayer		
Saint Patrick’s Prayer in Unison		
Christ with me, Christ before me, Christ behind me, Christ in me, Christ beneath me, Christ above me, Christ on my right, Christ on my left, Christ when I lie down, Christ when I sit down, Christ when I arise.		
Sung Response “Emmanuel, Emmanuel” (as above)		
Invitation to Offering		Joe
Offertory		
*Doxology	(to the tune of “What Child is This”)	#162 Blue
Praise God from whom all blessings flow, praise God all creatures here below.		
Praise God, all heavens and the earth, reflecting the sacred story.		
This, this is Christ the One who mirrors love for all of us.		
Haste, haste to bring him laud, the Word of time eternal.		
This, this is Christ the One who mirrors love for all of us.		
Haste, haste to bring him laud, the Word of time eternal.		
*Prayer of Dedication		



*“A Community of Faith, Hope, and Love, Growing through Worship and Service”*

Interim Pastor	Rev. Lee Atherton	508-308-7116	Pastor-Lee@cccchelmsford.org
Director of Music	Tudor Bota	978-772-3173	tudormbota@gmail.com
Office Administrator	Margie Dissinger	978-256-5931	office.admin@cccchelmsford.org
Sunday School Coord.	Jennifer Hart	610-781-2074	jennifer.hart@cccchelmsford.org
Custodian	Juarez Gomes	978-957-5075	
Council President	Lynn Horton	978-256-8524	lynn@terpsoft.com
Church Phone & Email	978-256-5931	office.admin@cccchelmsford.org	
Church Address	1 Worthen Street, Chelmsford, MA 01824		
U.C.C. Website	ucc.org (United Church of Christ)		

**Pastoral Search Committee:**

Martha Chenault  
Glenn Dissinger  
Sue Houde  
John Lamplough  
Emmett Lyons  
April McCarthy  
Barbara Reilly  
Dorinda Toppan, Chairperson

We declare ourselves to be an Open and Affirming congregation, welcoming into the full life and ministry of the church persons of every race, culture, age, gender identity and gender expression, sexual orientation, physical or mental ability, marital status, education, and economic status. We especially and intentionally welcome all who have known the pain of exclusion or discrimination in the church and society.



Scan the QR code to give your offering electronically and support our ministry.  
Thank you for your generosity!



## Welcome to Central Congregational Church!

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*No matter who you are, or where you are on your spiritual journey, you're welcome here!*

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### Good morning and welcome to Sunday morning worship!

We are glad you are here to worship together! Please join in Fellowship Hall after the service for food and fellowship. This service of worship is being livestreamed on Facebook and YouTube. If you do not wish to be visible on the internet, please choose a seat in the balcony.

### Children

- ☺ Children are always welcome in our services of worship.
- ☺ Busy Bags for kids are available in the narthex (lobby).

**Deacons are available during Sunday services.** Reach out to any of them with questions or concerns. You can spot them wearing a [blue name tag](#).

<b>Greeter(s):</b>	Virginia & Mark Timmins
<b>Advent Candle Lighters</b>	Shaun, Lindsay & Colton Moore
<b>Liturgist:</b>	Joe Chapman
<b>Deacon of the Day:</b>	Scott Dorman
<b>Coffee Hour Hosts:</b>	Kelly Hargett
<b>Worship Service Flowers</b>	Today's arrangement is given by the Strobel family in honor of all the youth at CCC.

*Many thanks to all who enrich our morning together.*

## Announcements and Events – Sunday, December 7, 2025



**TODAY All are invited to attend the CCC Christmas Concert, “Glory to the Newborn King!” at 3:00 PM** – Music by soloists, SonLight Band, Bell Choir, and children and adult choirs. Freewill offering.



**Advent & Christmas Small Group Gatherings** – Reflecting the Sacred During Advent Small Group Studies Our Advent theme this year is "Reflecting the Sacred", and there are two opportunities to join a small study group for personal reflection. Join Shaleena Pulliam at her home on Saturdays at 4:30pm (beginning 12/6) or Pastor Lee at church, or Zoom on Wednesdays at 11am (beginning 12/3). We'll be using the "Everything is Sacred" journal (which you can download; the link is in the Nov 21 bulletin email and the Nov 25 e-announcements) along with Richard Rohr's book, "Every Thing is Sacred." Please RSVP by emailing Pastor Lee at [pastor-lee@cccchelmsford.org](mailto:pastor-lee@cccchelmsford.org).



**Secret Santa 2025 Update** – As of Thursday, there are 10 gifts left to claim, please go to the link to choose a gift.. Gift collection starts **December. 7th ( today)** and ends **December 14th**. Please have your gift wrapped and labeled with the recipient/family number and your contact information, along with a gift tag for the child “from Santa”.

Visit: <https://www.cccchelmsford.org/secret-santa>



**Christmas Tree Sales** - There are many open slots for selling trees. There are 3 Ways to sign-up:

- Sign-up online on SignUp: <https://signup.com/go/wDiyQEZ> - Review the options listed and choose the spot(s) you like
- Sign-up in Fellowship Hall: a sign-up poster in Fellowship Hall on Sundays
- Speak with Glenn or Margie Dissinger (or email [margie228@gmail.com](mailto:margie228@gmail.com))



**Pastor Rich Gift Card Ministry** - One of the ways the congregation has directly helped individuals with food insecurity is through the giving of Market Basket gift cards. The gift cards are purchased through the Diaconate Good Samaritan Fund and more recently through the Pastor Rich Gift Card Ministry, which was established to honor his wish that any memorial gifts in excess of those needed to purchase the bench in his memory be used toward providing gift cards to persons in need. Without your continued donations, CCC will be unable to assist others through this vital ministry. Checks can be made payable to CCC, with “RK Gift Card Ministry” in the memo line and placed in the offering plate or mailed to the church office.

**Food Donations Needed** - With the impending loss of government-supported food sources, your help in meeting the need is greater than ever. Central Congregational Church collects and delivers non-perishable food donations to the Greater Lowell Food Pantry regularly. Please consider bringing canned goods and other non-perishable foods to CCC. You **can** help feed the hungry who live right in our community. Thank you!

**Ginnie Hall Meal Ministry** - As was announced a few weeks ago, KiSeLo has formed the Ginnie Hall Meal Ministry. Ginnie always made sure that those needing a meal, whether they were recovering from hospitalization, were house bound, or were lonely and just needed a meal and fellowship, would receive a nice meal. KiSeLo will continue Ginnie’s legacy by offering the same. **To request a meal, or to offer to make and deliver a meal, please contact Merri Robison.** You will find her contact information in the directory.

**Chelmsford Christmas Tree Pickup** – Troop 75 is offering Christmas tree pickups in Chelmsford on Jan. 3, 4, 10, or 11. Visit <https://ChelmsfordTreePickup.org> to schedule or email [xmastrees@chelmsfordtreepickup.org](mailto:xmastrees@chelmsfordtreepickup.org) with questions. A donation of \$10-25 is appreciated. If you would like more information, please contact Cynthia Dorman.



**Sunday School Needs Volunteers** – Nursery Coordinator, teacher, and people willing to substitute or be a floater are needed. Please see Jennifer Hart.

### THIS WEEK AT CCC

<b>Sun, Dec 7</b>	Glory to the Newborn King - Concert	3:00 PM	Sanctuary
<b>Mon, Dec 8</b>	Movie Club	7:00 PM	Zoom
<b>Tues, Dec 9</b>	Knitters & Crocheters	10:30 AM	Parlor
	Lunch Bunch	11:45 AM	Room 202
	Sonlight Band Rehearsal	7:30 PM	Sanctuary
<b>Wed, Dec 10</b>	Council	7:30 PM	Zoom
<b>Thurs, Dec 11</b>	Bell Choir Rehearsal	5:45 PM	Room 312
	Chancel Choir Rehearsal	7:00 PM	Sanctuary
<b>Sat, Dec 13</b>	Pub Theology	7:00 PM	110 Grill

**Pastor Lee’s Office Hours:** Sundays, 8:15–1:00; Tuesdays, 9:00–2:00; Wednesdays 9:00–12:00. She is also available by appointment.

**United Church of Christ Statement of Faith** (adapted by Robert V. Moss and further adapted for use with young children.

**We believe in God. We believe in Jesus. We believe in the Holy Spirit.**

**God is always creating the world, and creates people in God’s image. God shows us the way to right living. God loves all people and wants us to live without sin.**

**Jesus Christ, the man of Nazareth, who lived and died for us conquered sin and death so that we would be forgiven and have eternal life.**

**God sends the Holy Spirit, creating and renewing Jesus’ church, binding in covenant all of God’s faithful people .**

**God calls us into the church to accept the cost and joy of following Jesus, to be of service to the whole human family, to share Jesus’ story with all the world, and resist evil, to share in Christ’s baptism and eat at his table, to join him in his passion and victory.**

**God promises to forgive us, give us grace, help us be courageous when we work hard for justice and peace.**

**God promises that the Holy Spirit will be with us all the time. God promises us eternal life.**

**Blessing and honor, glory and power be unto God. Amen.**

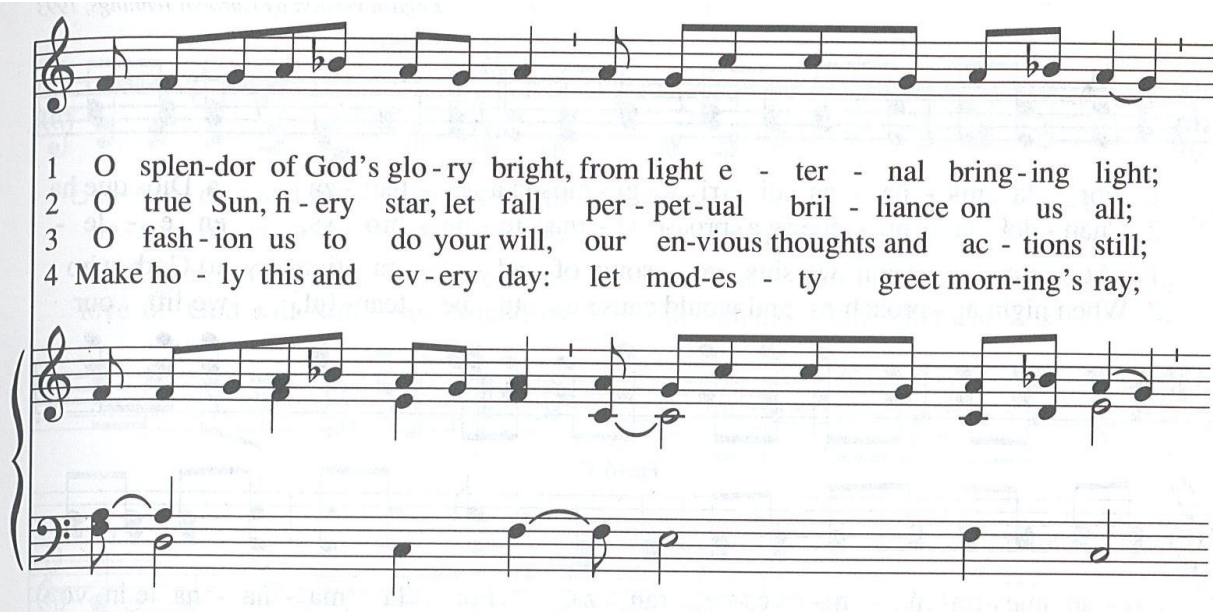
**Prayer of Baptism**

Pastor: Christ be with you.

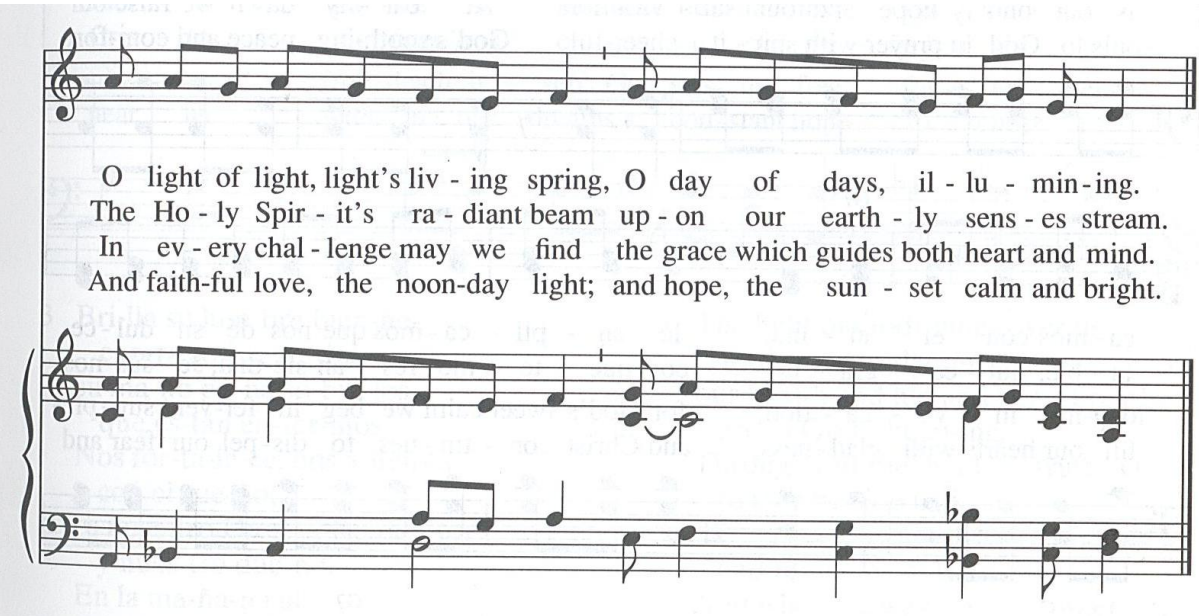
**People: And also with you.**



Hymn      O Splendor of God's Glory Bright

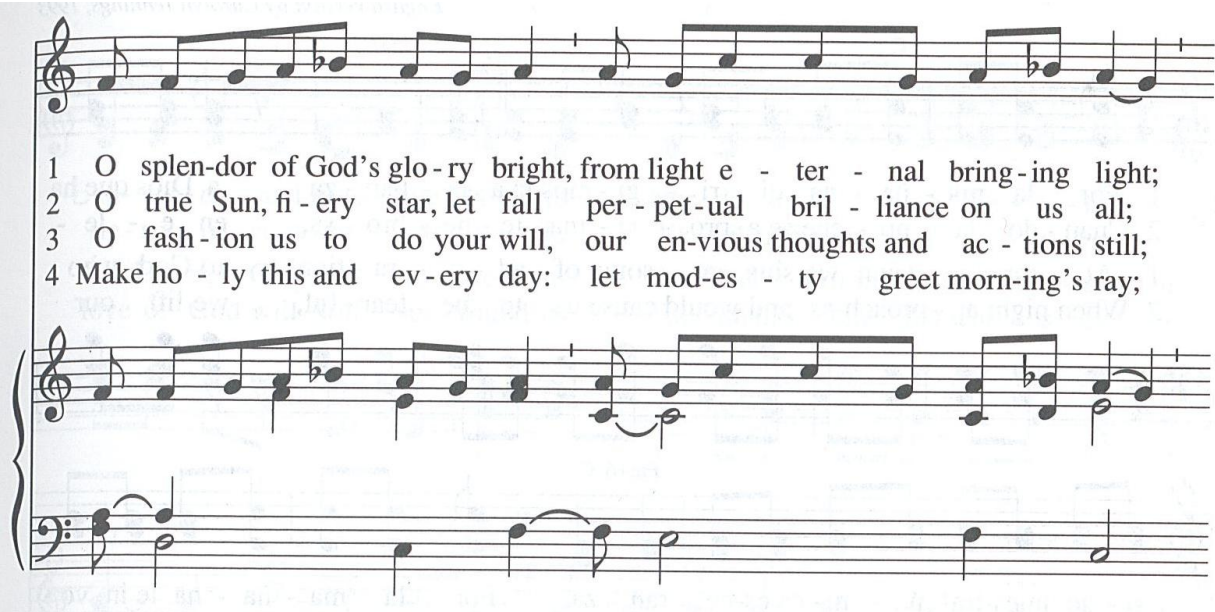


1 O splen-dor of God's glo-ry bright, from light e - ter - nal bring-ing light;  
2 O true Sun, fi-ery star, let fall per - pet-ual bril - liance on us all;  
3 O fash-ion us to do your will, our en-vious thoughts and ac - tions still;  
4 Make ho - ly this and ev-ery day: let mod-es - ty greet morn-ing's ray;

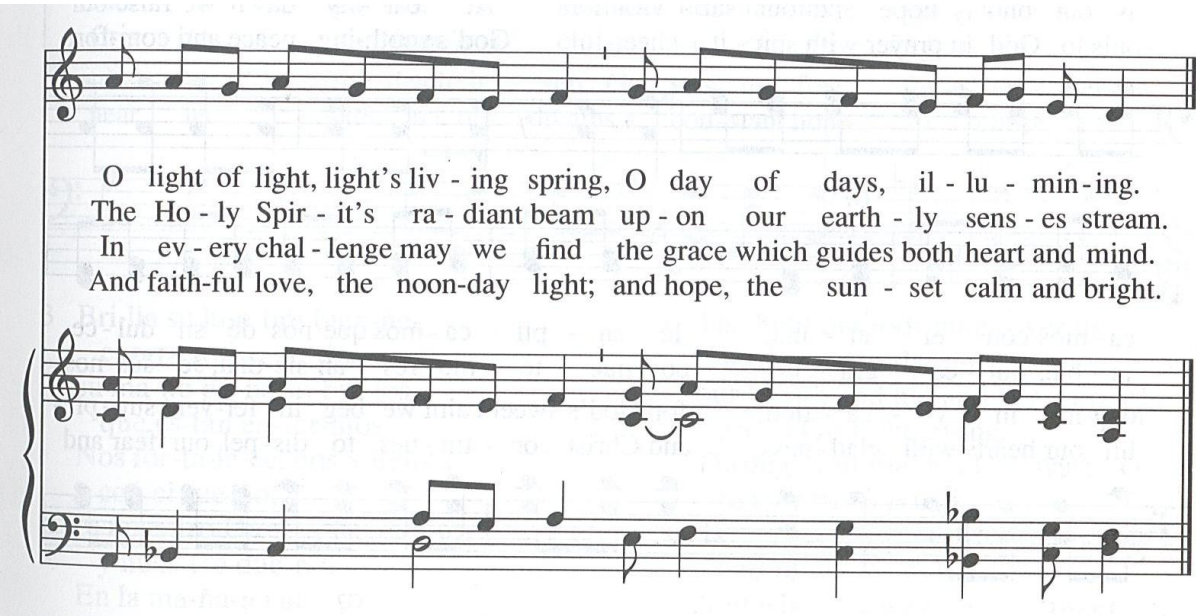


O light of light, light's liv - ing spring, O day of days, il - lu - min-ing.  
The Ho - ly Spir - it's ra - diant beam up - on our earth - ly sens - es stream.  
In ev - ery chal - lenge may we find the grace which guides both heart and mind.  
And faith-ful love, the noon-day light; and hope, the sun - set calm and bright.

Hymn      O Splendor of God's Glory Bright



1 O splen-dor of God's glo-ry bright, from light e - ter - nal bring-ing light;  
2 O true Sun, fi-ery star, let fall per - pet-ual bril - liance on us all;  
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And faith-ful love, the noon-day light; and hope, the sun - set calm and bright.

**Can Tree Donation Suggestions**

On these ornaments are some of the most needed items from the Open Pantry right now. We encourage you to take this home as a reminder and contribute that item or any other items if you are able. You can also bring that ornament back to hang on the can tree as a decoration. Thank you for supporting the Sunday School children as they live out the call to serve others and care for our community.  
~ Thoughtfully submitted by the Christian Education Committee



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HYMN LYRICS

Hymn of Hope                      “People, Look East”                      #142 Blue

People, look east. The time is near    Of the crowning of the year.  
Make your house fair as you are able, Trim the hearth and set the table.  
People, look east and sing today: Love, the Guest, is on the way.  
  
Furrows, be glad. Though earth is bare, One more seed is planted there:  
Give up your strength the seed to nourish, That in course the flower may flourish.  
People, look east and sing today: Love, the Rose, is on the way.

Stars, keep the watch. When night is dim One more light the bowl shall brim,  
Shining beyond the frosty weather, Bright as sun and moon together.  
People, look east and sing today: Love, the Star, is on the way.

Angels, announce with shouts of mirth him who brings new life to earth.  
Set every peak and valley humming with the word, the Lord is coming.  
People, look east and sing today: Love, the Lord, is on the way.

Hymn                      “I Was There to Hear Your Borning Cry”                      #75 Blue

I was there to hear your borning cry, I'll be there when you are old.  
I rejoiced the day you were baptized, To see your life unfold.  
  
I was there when you were but a child, with a faith to suit you well;  
In a blaze of light you wandered off to find where demons dwell.  
  
When you heard the wonder of the Word I was there to cheer you on;  
You were raised to praise the living God, to whom you now belong.

If you find someone to share your time and you join your hearts as one,  
I'll be there to make your verses rhyme From dusk 'till rising sun.  
  
In the middle ages of your life, not too old, no longer young,  
I'll be there to guide you through the night, complete what I've begun.  
  
When the evening gently closes in, and you shut your weary eyes,  
I'll be there as I have always been with just one more surprise.  
  
I was there to hear your borning cry, I'll be there when you are old.  
I rejoiced the day you were baptized, to see your life unfold.

Hymn                      “Emmanuel, Emmanuel”                      #134 Blue

Emmanuel, Emmanuel, his name is called Emmanuel.  
God with us, revealed in us, his name is called Emmanuel.

Hymn                      Break Thou the Bread of Life                      #321 Blue

Break now the bread of life, dear Lord, to me, as thou didst break the loaves  
beside the sea. Beyond the sacred page I seek thee, Lord; my spirit pants for  
thee, O living Word.  
  
Bless thou the truth, dear Lord, to me, to me, as thou didst bless the bread by  
Galilee. Then shall all bondage cease, all fetters fall; and I shall find my peace,  
my All in all!  
  
O send thy Spirit Lord, now unto to me, touch thou my longing eyes that I may  
see. give me to eat and live with thee above; teach me to love thy truth, for  
thou art love.