

WEEK OF PRAYER
for
CHRISTIAN UNITY

"DO YOU BELIEVE THIS?"

(JOHN 11:26)

St. Matthews Lutheran Church

WHERE COMMUNITY GATHERS AND GROWS

January 19, 2025

Week of Prayer for Christian Unity

Sunday, January 19, 2025

(* indicates the assembly stands)

Gathering

Prelude	<i>"Allabreve in D"</i>	J.S. Bach
Words of Welcome & Service Announcements		
*Hymn 886	<i>"Oh, for a Thousand Tongues to Sing"</i>	
*Dialogue and Opening Prayers (see page 4)		
Anthem	<i>"Hands Across the Universe"</i>	D. Childs

Word

First Reading		Deuteronomy 6:4-9
Psalm 131 (see page 5)		<i>(assembly sings refrain)</i>
Second Reading		1 Peter 1:3-9
*Gospel Acclamation	<i>"Alleluia"</i>	p. 124
*Gospel Reading		John 11:17-26
Sermon		
*Hymn of the Day 247	<i>"Come Now, O Prince of Peace"</i>	
*Nicene Creed		p. 126
*Prayers of Intercession		(see page 6)
*Peace		

Thanksgiving

*Canticle of Thanksgiving		p. 219
*Prayer (from Bose community)		
*Lord's Prayer (<i>Our Father, who art in heaven...</i>)		p. 221

Sending

General Announcements

*Blessing

*Hymn 641

"All Are Welcome"

*Dismissal

A: Thanks be to God.

Postlude

"Fantasia in G"

J.S. Bach

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The Week of Prayer for Christian Unity is an ecumenical Christian observance in the Christian calendar that is celebrated internationally, between January 18 and 25. Each year, Christians from different parts of the world prepare resources to be used. This year they are from the community of Bose, an ecumenical monastery of brothers and sisters in northern Italy.

The theme this year is "belief", and there is a focus on the Creeds. Rev. Lee will be introducing St Matthews to a United Church Creed, and Pastor Sebastian will introduce First United to Luther's Small Catechism's exposition of the Apostles' Creed.

Another distinctive feature of this year's worship is the inclusion of texts by early Christian writers, most notably in the prayers of intercession. For the sisters and brothers of Bose, these writers are a living source for their shared life.

(<https://www.weekofprayer.ca/2025-wpcu-resources/>)

Dialogue and Opening Prayers

P: Christ is in our midst.

A: He was. He is. And always shall be.

P: Let us pray.

A: Kyrie, eleison! Lord, have mercy!

P: O Creator and Guardian of every spirit, who multiply the human family upon earth, let all the peoples know that you are God alone, and Jesus Christ is your Son, and we all are your people, the flock of your pasture.

A: Kyrie, eleison! Lord, have mercy!

P: Lord, we pray to you: be our help. save those who are afflicted among us, have mercy on the wretched. Show your face to those in need.

A: Kyrie, eleison! Lord, have mercy!

P: O Lord, faithful throughout all generations, righteous in your judgments, merciful and compassionate, forgive us our transgressions, cleanse us with your Truth, and guide our steps to walk in holiness and righteousness.

A: Kyrie, eleison! Lord, have mercy!

P: Lord, make your face to shine upon us in peace for our good, give concord and peace to us and to all that dwell on the earth. Grant to our rulers wisdom and intelligence, direct their counsel so that they may administer their authority in justice and in peace.

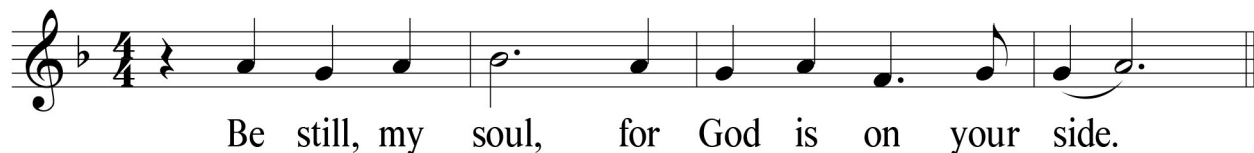
A: Kyrie, eleison! Lord, have mercy! Amen.

(Clement of Rome [c. 35-99 A.D.])

Church Fire Plan For everyone's awareness, a copy of the Church Fire Plan for safe exit from the Sanctuary appears in the back of the worship books. Please take a moment to review for your own safety. The AED and a first aid kit are in the hallway by the office.

Psalm 131

Refrain:



¹O LORD, I am not proud; I have no ^l haughty looks.

I do not occupy myself with great matters, or with things that are too ^l hard for me.

Refrain

²But I still my soul and make it quiet, like a child upon its ^l mother's breast;
my soul is quiet- ^l ed within me.

Refrain

³O Israel, wait up- ^l on the LORD,
from this time forth for- ^l evermore.

Refrain

Psalm refrain music: J. Sibelius, public domain

Leading Worship Today

Guest minister: Rev. Hoeun Lee (First United Church, Waterloo)

Diaconal Minister of Music: Deacon Scott Knarr

Lector: Bob Loeb sack

Choral Scholars: Nicole Hamilton, Hannah Swiderski, Sarah Hu-A-Kam, Dylan Siebert, Drew Aarssen

Broadcast: Andrew Weber

Building Monitor: Steve Dickin (519-580-8407)

Prayers of Intercession

P: Let us pray.

For all things were made out of nothing, and their being would again sink into nothing, if the Author of all things did not hold it by the hand of governance. (*Gregory the Great [c. 540-604]*)

Lord of life, we receive all creation from your hand and by your providence. Teach us to live in your world with care and justice for all that you have created.

A: We believe, help our unbelief.

P: I call this faith: the intelligible light which by grace dawns in the soul, that supports the heart, and grants the gift of hope. (*Isaac of Nineveh [7th century]*)

Loving God, grant us the gift of hope in abundance in a world troubled by strife and discord.

Strengthen your people afflicted by apathy and division.

A: We believe, help our unbelief.

P: What wonder then, if, coming to God, we first of all profess that we believe, seeing that, without this, not even common life can be lived. (*Rufinus of Aquileia [c. 344-411]*)

Merciful God, forgive us for the times we have failed to live a common life as Christians. Draw us more deeply to one faith in you so that we may witness to the world.

A: We believe, help our unbelief.

P: Let faith prevail: faith that leads the mind to trust, faith that does not come from human logic, but is the fruit of the Holy Spirit. (*Basil of Caesarea [c. 330-378]*)

O heavenly Comforter, we pray that we may trust more in the gift of your wisdom rather than the cleverness of our thinking.

A: We believe, help our unbelief.

P: His light appeared and made the darkness of the prison disappear and hallowed our birth and destroyed death, loosing those same fetters in which we were enchained. (*Irenaeus of Lyon [c. 135-198]*)

Compassionate Lord, lead us to work together so that wherever there is darkness and oppression, suffering and injustice, we may bring your light and freedom.

A: We believe, help our unbelief. Amen.

Worship Notes

In our prayers George, Anneke, Judy, Clare, Yvonne, Jeanette, Meaghan, Henry, Grace, Maureen and John.

Important Information for today's worship

- **Offering:** Please place your offering in one of the offering plates in the Narthex (entranceway) upon entering. The offering plates will be presented at the High Altar during the service.
- **The Peace:** We support people's choices for passing of the peace.
- **Exiting:** At the end of the service, please remain in place until the end of the postlude.
- **Please join us for Fellowship Time** after worship in the Community Hall. Use any of the staircases (Narthex, west stair tower, parking lot tower) to go down.
- **Downstairs Washrooms** can be accessed via any of the staircases. There is one wheelchair accessible washroom, and the rest are all-gender washrooms. A further all-gender washroom is also available via the west stair tower door (front left of the Sanctuary) on the same level. Turn right at the hallway.

General Announcements

Pulpit Exchange Today! For this year's "Week of Prayer for Christian Unity" we welcome Rev. Hoeun Lee, minister of First United Church (Waterloo), to lead worship at St. Matthews. Pastor Sebastian is leading at First United.

Church Breakfast Group - We meet next on Tuesday, January 21, 2025 at 9:00 a.m. at Kypreos Restaurant, 305 Lancaster St. W. Kitchener. Attendees will order from the menu and pay for their own meals. Everyone is welcome. We will begin the new year with a topic that sometimes seems uncomfortable but is very important to think about and discuss with family members. Michelle Glendenning and Andrea White from Henry Walser Funeral Home will be our guest speakers and will share information about fu-

neral planning and services. They are also very willing to answer questions about their experiences with changing traditions ie. Waterloo Region is now a multi /no faith community, no formal service but rather a celebration held in a restaurant type venue, having a service or celebration months after the death, no observance of any kind, 'green funerals'...Please RSVP to the January event by clicking the button below or contacting Gary Schlueter, Willi Bauer or Sue Parker. Looking ahead, on Tuesday, February 18 our speaker will be Shawn (we are on a first name basis!) from Hopespring Cancer Support Centre which is now situated in St. Matthews Church. On Tuesday, March 18 Father Toby Collins from St. Mary's Roman Catholic Church, our downtown neighbour will speak to us about Tiny Home Takeout, their innovative program that provides high quality meals based on 'Grab a Bite. Give if You Can.'

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