



## MESSIAH EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

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January 31, 2021

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Setting 3

Fourth Sunday after Epiphany

**PRELUDE**

In Thee Is Gladness

by J.S. Bach

### **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

#### **GATHERING**

God of power and might, you send prophets to your people,

**calling us back to your covenant, and teaching us your ways.**

In the fullness of time, you sent us your Son Jesus,

**teaching with such authority, that our eyes were opened to see your ways anew.**

Open our hearts and minds that we may understand

**and proclaim your teachings for all to hear.**

Lead us to serve you as you have served us,

**Let our worship grow us in faith and community that the world might know your love.**

#### **CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS**

*All may make the sign of the cross, the sign marked at baptism, as the presiding minister begins.*

Blessed be the holy Trinity, ✚ one God, whose voice is upon the waters, whose mercy is poured out upon all people, whose goodness cascades over all creation. **Amen.**

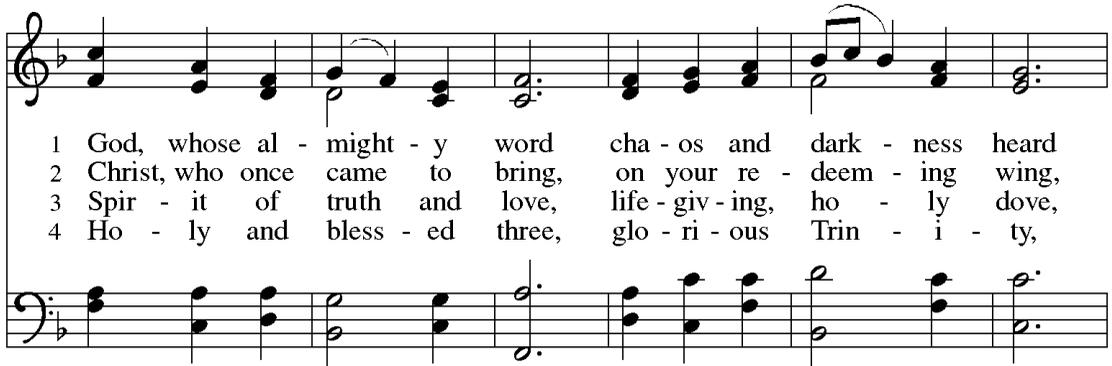
Let us confess our sin, trusting in the abundant grace of God.

*Silence is kept for reflection.*

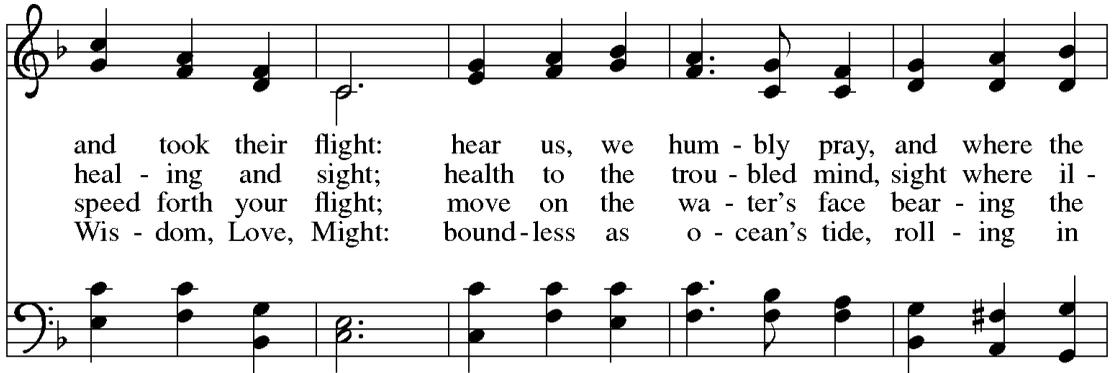
Holy God, **you search us and know us. You are acquainted with all our ways. We confess that our hearts are burdened by sin—our own sins and the broken systems that bind us. We turn inward, failing to follow your outward way of love. We distrust those who are not like us. We exploit the earth and its resources and fail to consider generations to come. Forgive us, gracious God, for all we have done and left undone. Even before the words are on our tongues, you know them; receive them in your divine mercy. Amen.**

How vast is God's grace! Through the power and promise of ✚ Christ Jesus, our sins are washed away and we are claimed as God's own beloved. Indeed, we are forgiven. In the wake of God's forgiveness, we are called to be the beloved community living out Christ's justice and the Spirit's reconciling peace. **Amen.**

# God, Whose Almighty Word



1 God, whose al - might - y word cha - os and dark - ness heard  
2 Christ, who once came to bring, on your re - deem - ing wing,  
3 Spir - it of truth and love, life - giv - ing, ho - ly dove,  
4 Ho - ly and bless - ed three, glo - ri - ous Trin - i - ty,



and took their flight: hear us, we hum - bly pray, and where the  
heal - ing and sight; health to the trou - bled mind, sight where il -  
speed forth your flight; move on the wa - ter's face bear - ing the  
Wis - dom, Love, Might: bound - less as o - cean's tide, roll - ing in



gos - pel day sheds not its glo - rious ray, let there be light.  
lu - sions blind; oh, now to hu - man - kind let there be light.  
lamp of grace, and in earth's dark - est place let there be light.  
full - est pride, through the earth, far and wide, let there be light.



# CANTICLE OF PRAISE

Assisting minister



Glory to God in the highest, and peace to God's peo - ple on earth.

All



Lord God, heav - en - ly King, al - might - y God and Fa - ther,



we wor-ship you, we give you thanks, we praise you for your glo - ry.



Lord Je - sus Christ, on - ly Son of the Fa - ther, Lord God, Lamb of God,



you take a - way the sin of the world: have mer - cy on us;



you are seat - ed at the right hand of the Fa - ther: re - ceive our prayer.



For you a - lone are the Ho - ly One, you a - lone are the Lord,



you a - lone are the Most High, Je - sus Christ, with the Ho - ly Spir - it,



in the glo - ry of God the Fa - ther. A - men.

## Prayer of the Day

Compassionate God, you gather the whole universe into your radiant presence and continually reveal your Son as our Savior. Bring wholeness to all that is broken and speak truth to us in our confusion, that all creation will see and know your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

## First Reading: Deuteronomy 18:15-20

*Today's reading is part of a longer discourse in Deuteronomy, an updating of the law for the Israelite community as the people wait to enter the promised land. Here Moses assures the people that God will continue to guide them through prophets who will proclaim the divine word.*

[Moses said:] <sup>15</sup>The LORD your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among your own people; you shall heed such a prophet. <sup>16</sup>This is what you requested of the LORD your God at Horeb on the day of the assembly when you said: "If I hear the voice of the LORD my God any more, or ever again see this great fire, I will die." <sup>17</sup>Then the LORD replied to me: "They are right in what they have said. <sup>18</sup>I will raise up for them a prophet like you from among their own people; I will put my words in the mouth of the prophet, who shall speak to them everything that I command. <sup>19</sup>Anyone who does not heed the words that the prophet shall speak in my name, I myself will hold accountable. <sup>20</sup>But any prophet who speaks in the name of other gods, or who presumes to speak in my name a word that I have not commanded the prophet to speak—that prophet shall die."

Holy Scripture, Holy Word. **Thanks be to God!**

## Psalm: Psalm 111

*The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom. (Ps. 111:10)*

<sup>1</sup>Hallelujah! I will give thanks to the LORD with my whole heart,  
in the assembly of the upright, in the congregation.

<sup>2</sup>**Great are your works, O LORD, pondered by all who delight in them.**

<sup>3</sup>Majesty and splendor mark your deeds, and your righteousness endures forever.

<sup>4</sup>**You cause your wonders to be remembered; you are gracious and full of compassion.**

<sup>5</sup>You give food to those who fear you, remembering forever your covenant.

<sup>6</sup>**You have shown your people the power of your works  
in giving them the lands of the nations.**

<sup>7</sup>The works of your hands are faithfulness and justice; all of your precepts are sure.

<sup>8</sup>**They stand fast forever and ever, because they are done in truth and equity.**

<sup>9</sup>You sent redemption to your people and commanded your covenant forever;  
holy and awesome is your name.

<sup>10</sup>**The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom;  
all who practice this have a good understanding. God's praise endures forever.**

## Second Reading: 1 Corinthians 8:1-13

*Paul is concerned about the way some Corinthian Christians use their freedom in Christ as license to engage in non-Christian behavior that sets a damaging example to other, impressionable believers. Christians have a responsibility to each other that their behavior does not cause another to sin.*

<sup>1</sup>Now concerning food sacrificed to idols: we know that "all of us possess knowledge." Knowledge puffs up, but love builds up. <sup>2</sup>Anyone who claims to know something does not yet have the necessary knowledge; <sup>3</sup>but

anyone who loves God is known by him.

<sup>4</sup>Hence, as to the eating of food offered to idols, we know that “no idol in the world really exists,” and that “there is no God but one.” <sup>5</sup>Indeed, even though there may be so-called gods in heaven or on earth—as in fact there are many gods and many lords—<sup>6</sup>yet for us there is one God, the Father, from whom are all things and for whom we exist, and one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom are all things and through whom we exist.

<sup>7</sup>It is not everyone, however, who has this knowledge. Since some have become so accustomed to idols until now, they still think of the food they eat as food offered to an idol; and their conscience, being weak, is defiled. <sup>8</sup>“Food will not bring us close to God.” We are no worse off if we do not eat, and no better off if we do. <sup>9</sup>But take care that this liberty of yours does not somehow become a stumbling block to the weak. <sup>10</sup>For if others see you, who possess knowledge, eating in the temple of an idol, might they not, since their conscience is weak, be encouraged to the point of eating food sacrificed to idols? <sup>11</sup>So by your knowledge those weak believers for whom Christ died are destroyed. <sup>12</sup>But when you thus sin against members of your family, and wound their conscience when it is weak, you sin against Christ. <sup>13</sup>Therefore, if food is a cause of their falling, I will never eat meat, so that I may not cause one of them to fall.

Holy Scripture, Holy Word. **Thanks be to God!**

### Gospel Acclamation

Al - le - lu - ia. Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the  
words of e - ter - nal life. Al - le - lu - ia. Al - le - lu - ia.

### Gospel: Mark 1:21-28

*Forces that would bring death and disease have taken hold of a man, yet they recognize Jesus and know what his power means for them. Jesus commands these forces to leave and people are amazed at his authority.*

<sup>21</sup>[Jesus and his disciples] went to Capernaum; and when the sabbath came, he entered the synagogue and taught. <sup>22</sup>They were astounded at his teaching, for he taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes. <sup>23</sup>Just then there was in their synagogue a man with an unclean spirit, <sup>24</sup>and he cried out, “What have you to do with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are, the Holy One of God.” <sup>25</sup>But Jesus rebuked him, saying, “Be silent, and come out of him!” <sup>26</sup>And the unclean spirit, convulsing him and crying with a loud voice, came out of him. <sup>27</sup>They were all amazed, and they kept on asking one another, “What is this? A new teaching—with authority! He commands even the unclean spirits, and they obey him.” <sup>28</sup>At once his fame began to spread throughout the surrounding region of Galilee.

This is the Gospel of our Lord. **Praise to you, O Christ!**

### SERMON

# Signs and Wonders



- 1 Signs and won - ders lead the danc - ing from the heart God frees from fear:
- 2 Hope and free - dom join the cir - cle: Mar - y to the gar - den came,
- 3 Cast a - side all fear and hid - ing; hand in hand we dance the round.



wings of an - gels greet the mai - den, and God finds a dwell - ing here;  
saw the ra - diance of the mar - vel, heard the Ris - en call her name;  
God is with us, Christ, a - bid - ing, and the Spir - it's gifts a - bound.



bold - ly may we lift our hands, bow the head, and voice A - men;  
bold - ly may we heed Christ's call, step be - yond the gar - den wall:  
Called by God to ho - li - ness, let us bold - ly serve and bless;



thus does glo - ry shine at mid - night: o - pen hearts in - vite the star - light.  
beau - ti - ful the feet pro - ceed - ing with good news of death's de - feat - ing.  
and to hearts that sigh and hun - ger may our lives dance signs and won - ders.

Text: Susan Palo Cherwien, b. 1953

Music: FREU DICH SEHR, *Trente quatre psaumes de David*, Geneva, 1551

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## Apostles' Creed

I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried; he descended to the dead.\* On the third day he rose again; he ascended into heaven, he is seated at the right hand of the Father, and he will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

## Prayers of Intercession

*The prayers are prepared locally for each occasion. The following examples may be adapted or used as appropriate.*

Guided by Christ made known to the nations, let us offer our prayers for the church, the world, and all people in need.

*A brief silence.*

For all who share the gospel and proclaim freedom in Christ throughout the world: prophets, teachers, pastors, deacons, and lay leaders; for the church and its ministries, let us pray.

**Have mercy, O God.**

For all God's works in creation: plants and animals, water and soil, forests and farms; and for those tasked with protecting our natural resources and all that exists, let us pray. **Have mercy, O God.**

For government and leaders: cities and nations, rescue professionals and legal aid attorneys, elected officials and grassroots organizers; for all responsible for the well-being of civil society, let us pray.

**Have mercy, O God.**

For those who suffer in mind, body, or spirit: those who are sick and hospitalized, those living with HIV/AIDS, those struggling with mental illness, those who are hungry or homeless, and all in any need (*especially*); for caregivers, hospice workers, and home health aides, let us pray. **Have mercy, O God.**

For the concerns of this congregation: those who travel, those absent from worship, those celebrating birthdays or anniversaries; for the people of God in this place and for other needs in our community; especially we pray for Rolland, Donna, Betty, Gene and Gloria, as well as Donna, Denise, Bill, Dawn, Dorothy, Erin, Stephani, Karla, Orin, Danielle, Krista, Betty, and Meghan. We ask your blessing on those serving in the military, particularly, Alex, Ben, T.J., Vicki, Jeremy, Daniel, Miranda, and Luke, and for Kaylie as she completes her seminary studies, let us pray. **Have mercy, O God.**

*Here other intercessions may be offered.*

For the covenant God made with us in the waters of baptism, in thanksgiving for the baptized who have died in the Lord, let us pray. **Have mercy, O God.**

**P:** Merciful God, hear the prayers of your people, spoken or silent, for the sake of the one who dwells among us, your Son, Jesus Christ our Savior. **Amen**

**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 trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.**

## PEACE

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

## OFFERING

### SPECIAL MUSIC

"Healer of our every ill" by Marty Haugen, arranged by Daniel McKinney. Performers are Daniel and Lori McKinney.

### Offering Prayer

O God, receive these gifts as you receive us: like a mother receives her child, with arms open wide.

Nourish us anew in your tender care, and empower us in faithful service to tend to others with this same love, through Jesus Christ, our saving grace. **Amen.**

## BLESSING

God the creator strengthen you; Jesus the beloved fill you; and the Holy Spirit the comforter ✚ keep you in peace. **Amen.**

### You Servants of God

1 You ser - vants of God, your Mas - ter pro - claim, and pub - lish a -  
2 As - cend - ed on high, al - might - y to save, yet still he is  
3 Sal - va - tion to God who sits on the throne! Let all cry a -  
4 Then let us a - dore and give him his right, all glo - ry and

broad his won - der - ful name; the name, all - vic - to - rious, of  
nigh, his pres - ence we have. The great con - gre - ga - tion his  
loud and hon - or the Son. The prais - es of Je - sus the  
pow'r and wis - dom and might, all hon - or and bless - ing, with

Je - sus ex - tol; his king - dom is glo - rious and rules o - ver all!  
tri - umph shall sing, as - crib - ing sal - va - tion to Je - sus, our king!  
an - gels pro - claim, fall down on their fac - es, and wor - ship the Lamb.  
an - gels a - bove, and thanks nev - er ceas - ing, and in - fin - ite love!

Text: Charles Wesley, 1707–1788, alt.  
Music: LYONS, attr. Johann Michael Haydn, 1737–1806

## DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Be the light of Christ.

**Thanks be to God.**

**POSTLUDE**

Praise Be to You, Lord Jesus Christ

Samuel Scheidt

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Messiah Lutheran Church  
12/31/2020

	Actual Dec-20	Actual Jan - Dec 20	Budget Jan - Dec 20
Revenue	\$23,003.70	\$165,974.38	\$148,260.00
Expenses	<u>12,621.41</u>	<u>155,605.85</u>	<u>164,630.34</u>
Surplus (Deficit)	<u>\$10,382.29</u>	<u>\$10,368.53</u>	<u>-\$16,370.34</u>
Reserve Balance	<u>\$80,666.36</u>		

**Members, Friends, and Family for Whom We Pray**

**Members of Messiah:**

Rolland Christenson, Donna Forsberg, Walli Ellis, Betty Peterson, Gloria and Gene Holdsworth

**Friends of Messiah**

Donna Stejksal	Daniels' friend	Karla Goewert	Friend of Kirsten Bruce
Denise	Pari Ford's mother	Orin Shogren	Har's brother
Bill Stephenson	Joy Janis's brother	Danielle	Robbie Peterson's
Dawn	Sharon Hoffman's Daughter	VanDeVyvere	granddaughter
Dorothy Carmichael	Friend of Messiah	Krista Bahler	Betty Peterson's Niece
Erin Erb	Friend of Sherry Peterson	Betty Finney	Sharon Hoffman's friend
Stephani White	Betty Holcombe's daughter	Meghan Presley	John & Margaret Presley's daughter

**Serving the U.S.A.**

Alex Klapp	Betty Russin's grandson	Vicki Charboneau	Elaine Eller's granddaughter
Ben Youngquist	S Hoffman's nephew	Jeremy Guy	Hensley's son-in-law
T.J. Paulsen	Barb Malm's child		

**Serving the U.S.A. Overseas**

Daniel & Miranda Norland	Randy/Gretchen's son & wife
Luke Hammontree	Daniel's grandson

**Seminary**

Kaylie Ines

**Please pray for all affected by Covid-19:** Healthcare workers/administration/staff, residential staff and residents, those who seem unaffected and those who are currently aware they are infected and are fighting the virus. Also, we pray for all who are being negatively affected by the virus and it's social disruption.

### **WIDER CHURCH NEWS: BY JEANNE AHLERS**

On January 28, Jews around the world celebrated trees on a holiday called *Tu B'Shvat* -- "The New Year for Trees." Why would anyone choose to celebrate trees in the dead of winter? Trees look almost lifeless and certainly don't provide any benefits. But this irony gives the holiday its meaning.

While the winter landscape looks dreary, and there are no leaves, flowers or fruit, it isn't the whole story. Beneath the frozen ground, life is beginning anew. The winter rains are absorbed in the tree's roots, and new sap begins to flow. The process of life is beginning again. Spring will bring new buds and blossoms, and in the summer and fall we'll enjoy the fruits.

In the same way, our lives have seasons that feel and look like winter. But in these times, God is at work beneath the surface, and life is pouring through our veins. In time, even though things seem hopeless now, our dreams will be resurrected and new blessings will appear. Looking at a winter landscape that includes the coronavirus pandemic and its effects -- sickness, unemployment and isolation -- we can remember that God is at work behind the scenes and spring is on the way.

Biblical prophecy includes trees. Micah 44 promises that the people of Israel will once again sit under the fig tree. Isaiah 27:6 promises that Israel will blossom and fill the world with fruit.

Christians and Jews share a common heritage. These Jewish teachings belong to us too.

### **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**All Committees** will need to meet in the next month. Please let Pastor know when so that Zoom or in-person can be set up.

Please **pray for Bethany College, the students, faculty, administrators, and staff**, that all remain healthy and mindful of best health practices, that learning be deep and strong, and that all might live into their vocation.

Please pray for **USD 400 and all teachers, students, administrators, and staff**, that they might remain healthy and mindful of best health practices, that learning be deep and strong, and the all might benefit from the community of learning.

**JANUARY 31, 2021**  
**FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY**



*Jesus casts out unclean spirits.*

## DAILY BIBLE READINGS

These passages are related to the Lectionary texts for this Sunday.

<b>Sunday</b>	<b>Mark 1:21-28</b>	<b>Jesus teaches in the synagogue</b>
<b>Monday</b>	<b>Deuteronomy 18:15-20</b>	<b>A new prophet like Moses</b>
<b>Tuesday</b>	<b>1 Corinthians 8:1-13</b>	<b>Love builds up others</b>
<b>Wednesday</b>	<b>Acts 16:16-40</b>	<b>Paul and Silas in prison</b>
<b>Thursday</b>	<b>Exodus 15:22-27</b>	<b>Bitter water made sweet</b>
<b>Friday</b>	<b>1 John 4:1-6</b>	<b>Testing the spirits</b>
<b>Saturday</b>	<b>Psalm 111</b>	<b>Praise for God's wonderful works</b>
<b>Sunday</b>	<b>Mark 1:29-39</b>	<b>Jesus heals many people</b>

## SCRIPTURE VERSE FOR THIS WEEK

*They were all amazed, and they kept on asking one another, "What is this? A new teaching—with authority! He commands even the unclean spirits, and they obey him."* **Mark 1:27 (NRSV)**

## PRAYERS AND BLESSING

### **A Prayer for the Week:**

Dear God, lead us to trust in your reign of justice and mercy that heals the wounded and lifts up the lowly through Jesus Christ, the Holy One of God. Amen.

### **Mealttime Prayer:**

Loving God, help us to be mindful of your goodness, including this gift of food. Amen.

### **A Blessing to Give:**

May the Holy One of God, our Lord Jesus Christ, give you faith, hope, and love.

## HYMN OF THE WEEK

*God, Whose Almighty Word*

## WEEKLY MILESTONES CARING CONVERSATIONS

Take a moment to tell or think about a recent mountain high and/or valley low in your life.

Discuss in your home, small group, or use for personal reflections:

- Think or tell about a time you were jealous.
- How is the feeling of jealousy harmful to you and others?
- What difference does it make that Jesus has power over unclean spirits (like jealousy) in our lives?

## DEVOTIONS

Read: Mark 1:21-28.

In the Gospel of Mark, this is Jesus' first recorded act in public ministry. It sets the direction and tone for Mark, and it is a doozy. In our modern world where data and verifiable research is relied on more than speaking about spirits—unclean or not—the narrative can lead to many understandable questions. However, the conclusion is clear: Jesus speaks and acts with an authority not experienced by the people in the Capernaum synagogue. All the people were amazed. The unclean spirits know who Jesus is, the Holy One of God. In Jesus' kingdom, such knowledge is not enough. He silences the unclean spirits. Jesus will be gathering followers like Simon Peter, Andrew, James and John (vv. 14-20) who will worship, serve, and place their trust in Jesus. He comes with the message and authority of God. Jesus presents the reign of God that breaks down barriers. He brings God's purity and holiness to people and places not reached before. It's the ministry and the message that will not be silenced. Jesus brought life-changing experiences to the people.

What life-changing experience have you had? *Pray:* **Almighty God, help us to witness to and be followers of your reign of love, reconciliation, and healing through Christ our Lord. Amen.**

## SERVICE

In 1 Corinthians 8, it was not good enough that people had the right information, even the right understanding of the Christian faith. They needed to act out of love because "Knowledge puffs up, but love builds up." Think of someone with whom you have differing opinions. Pray that you may be able to see beyond your differences and reach out to the other person with a spirit of love and a listening ear.

## RITUALS AND TRADITIONS

February 2 is the Church festival day for the "Presentation of the Lord." The festival recalls that forty days after his birth, Jesus was presented at the temple in Jerusalem. This festival is also known as "Candlemas" because of the tradition of blessing candles for use throughout the coming year. This is associated with Simeon's words about Jesus being "a light to reveal God to the nations." Choose a new candle to light and use this year as part of your devotions. Then end with this prayer: **Lord God, thank you for giving us Jesus as a bright light in our lives. Bless us as we gather around this candle this year. May it remind us that Jesus is with us. Amen.**

In addition to *Taking Faith Home*, celebrate milestones in your daily life as an effective faith formation tool. Go to: [www.milestonesministry.org](http://www.milestonesministry.org)

