



January 29, 2023

FAITH LUTHERAN CHURCH

4515 Dobie Road
Okemos, MI 48864
517-349-0620

Fourth Sunday after Epiphany

To make disciples for Jesus Christ. . .

. . .we **Gather** in faith for worship, prayer,
study and fellowship

. . .we **Equip** the people of God with a faith
that works in real life

. . .we **Serve** the world in the name of Jesus Christ

Pastor:..... Ellen Schoepf
Music Director:.....Debra Borton-McDonough
Organist/Pianist:.....Bruce Williams
Church Secretary:..... Katie Love
Youth & Education DirectorPam Williams
Audio/Video Techs:Justin Brown & Zach Hereza
Pastor’s email:.....prellen@faithlutheranokemos.org
Church email:.....faith@faithlutheranokemos.org
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Introduction to the day

Who are the blessed ones of God? For Micah, they are those who do justice, love kindness, and walk humbly with God. For Paul, they are the ones who find wisdom in the weakness of the cross. For Jesus, they are the poor, the meek, the merciful, the pure in heart, the peacemakers, those who mourn, and those who hunger for righteousness. In baptism we find our blessed identity and calling in this countercultural way of living and serving.

ReconcilingWorks is delighted to celebrate with you this Reconciling in Christ (RIC) Sunday through *Created Whole*, the 2023 worship service! Reconciling in Christ (RIC) Sunday is an annual worship celebration created to share in the commitment our organization and partnering faith communities have in the ongoing work of welcome, inclusion, celebration, and advocacy for LGBTQIA+ people in the life of the church. We hope you enjoy *Created Whole*, as we join our 995+ partners across the United States and Canada through this celebratory service.

PRELUDE

“All Are Welcome”

arr. Ron Schmoltze

THANKSGIVING FOR BAPTISM

The assembly stands and faces the baptismal font.

You call us through the waters of baptism to be our authentic selves. You called us holy and set us on a path to manifest your revolution on Earth. Let us give thanks for the gift of baptism.

Blessed be the holy Trinity, + one God, fountain of living water, who is the source of breath and nourishment. **Amen.**

Water is poured into the font as the presiding minister gives thanks.

We praise you for the waters of life: for the streams and oceans, lakes and estuaries, and for the rain and snow that gives life to every living thing. From the waters above and the waters below, you made sacred our bond with water. Through the waters of the flood and the parting of the seas, you showed your promises to be true.

In the waters of baptism you claimed us and called each of us by our true name. Through baptism into the body of Christ, you transformed our lives and made us whole. Send now your Spirit to move in our midst and soak us with your gifts of mercy, love, and grace.

Amen.

GATHERING HYMN

Let Streams of Living Justice



1 Let streams of liv - ing jus - tice flow down up - on the earth;
2 For heal - ing of the na - tions, for peace that will not end,
3 Your ci - ty's built to mu - sic; we are the stones you seek;



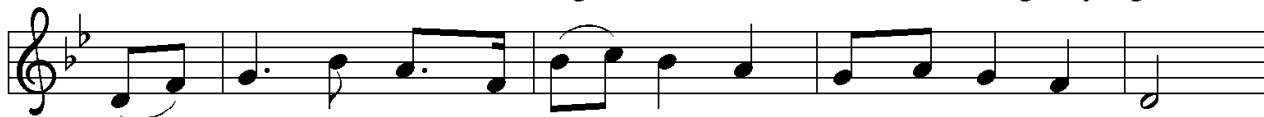
give free-dom's light to cap - tives, let all the poor have worth.
for love that makes us lov - ers, God grant us grace to mend.
your har - mo - ny is lan - guage; we are the words you speak.



The hun - gry's hands are plead - ing, the work - ers claim their rights,
Weave our var - ied gifts to - geth - er; knit our lives as they are spun;
Our faith we find in ser - vice, our hope in oth - ers' dreams,



the mourn - ers long for laugh - ter, the blind - ed seek for sight.
on your loom of time en - roll us till our thread of life is run.
our love in hand of neigh - bor; our home-land bright-ly gleams.



Make lib - er - ty a bea - con, strike down the i - ron pow'r;
O great weav - er of our fab - ric, bind church and world in one;
In - scribe our hearts with jus - tice; your way—the path un - tried;



a - bol - ish an - cient ven - geance: pro - claim your peo - ple's hour.
dye our tex - ture with your ra - diance, light our col - ors with your sun.
your truth—the heart of strang - er; your life—the Cru - ci - fied.

Text: William Whitla, b. 1934

Music: THAXTED, Gustav Holst, 1874–1934

Text © 1989 William Whitla.

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GREETING

May the grace of Jesus Christ, the love, mercy, and justice of God, and wisdom of the Holy Spirit be with you all. **And also with you.**

KYRIE

Refrain



Ky-ri - e e - lei - son, on our world and on our way.



Ky-ri - e e - lei - son, ev-'ry day.



- 1 For peace in the world, for the health of the church, for the
- 2 That we may live out your im - passioned re - sponse to the
- 3 For peace in our hearts, . . . for peace in our homes, . . for
- 4 For your Spir - it to guide; that you cen - ter our lives in the



u - ni - ty of all; for
hun - gry and the poor; that
friends and fam - i - ly; for
wa - ter and the word; that you



this ho - ly house, for all who wor-ship and praise,
we may live out truth and jus - tice and grace,
life and for love, for our work and our play,
nour-ish our souls . . . with your bod - y and blood,




let us pray to the Lord, let us pray to the Lord.


Refrain

CANTICLE OF PRAISE

Refrain



This is the feast of vic - t'ry for our God, for the




Lamb who was slain has be - gun his reign. Al - le - lu - ia.

1 Wor - thy is Christ, the Lamb who was slain, whose blood set us free to be



peo - ple of God. Pow - er, rich - es, wis - dom, and strength, and


hon - or, bless - ing, and glo - ry are his. This is the feast of



vic - t'ry for our God, for the Lamb who was slain has be - gun his reign. Al -



le - lu - ia. 2 Sing with all the peo - ple of God, and



join in the hymn of all cre - a - tion: Bless - ing, hon - or,



glo - ry, and might be to God and the Lamb for - ev - er. A - men.

Final refrain



This is the feast of vic - t'ry for our God, for the



Lamb who was slain has be - gun his reign. Al - le - lu - ia.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray. Loving Creator, you knit us together and created our innermost beings. You created us loved, worthy, and unique. You created us LGBTQIA+, BIPOC, neurodiverse, and physically diverse. Help us to find our wholeness in you and live into our divinely inspired purpose. Guide us to unfold your story of love. **Amen.**

FIRST READING: Micah 6:1-8

With the mountains and the foundations of the earth as the jury, God brings a lawsuit against Israel. God has “wearied” Israel with a long history of saving acts. God does not want or expect lavish sacrifices to attempt to earn divine favor. Rather God empowers the people to do justice, to love loyalty to God, and to walk shrewdly in God’s service.

A reading from Micah.

¹Hear what the LORD says:

Rise, plead your case before the mountains,
and let the hills hear your voice.

²Hear, you mountains, the controversy of the LORD,
and you enduring foundations of the earth;
for the LORD has a controversy with his people,
and he will contend with Israel.

³“O my people, what have I done to you?

In what have I wearied you? Answer me!

⁴For I brought you up from the land of Egypt,
and redeemed you from the house of slavery;
and I sent before you Moses,
Aaron, and Miriam.

⁵O my people, remember now what King Balak of Moab devised,
what Balaam son of Beor answered him,
and what happened from Shittim to Gilgal,
that you may know the saving acts of the LORD.”

⁶“With what shall I come before the LORD,
and bow myself before God on high?
Shall I come before him with burnt offerings,
with calves a year old?

⁷Will the LORD be pleased with thousands of rams,
with ten thousands of rivers of oil?
Shall I give my firstborn for my transgression,
the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?”

⁸He has told you, O mortal, what is good;
and what does the LORD require of you
but to do justice, and to love kindness,
and to walk humbly with your God?

The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

PSALM: Psalm 15

¹LORD, who may dwell in your tabernacle?
Who may abide upon your holy hill?

²**Those who lead a blameless life and do what is right,
who speak the truth from their heart;**

³they do not slander with the tongue, they do no evil to their friends;
they do not cast discredit upon a neighbor.

⁴**In their sight the wicked are rejected, but they honor those who fear
the LORD.**

**They have sworn upon their health and do not take back their
word.**

⁵They do not give their money in hope of gain, nor do they take bribes
against the innocent.

Those who do these things shall never be overthrown.

SECOND READING: I Corinthians 1:18-31

According to the world's standards of power and might, the message of the cross seems stupid and offensive. Yet this word reveals the paradoxical way God has chosen to work power and salvation through weakness, rejection, and suffering. Hence the message of the cross becomes true wisdom and power for believers.

A reading from 1 Corinthians.

¹⁸The message about the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. ¹⁹For it is written,

“I will destroy the wisdom of the wise,
and the discernment of the discerning I will thwart.”

²⁰Where is the one who is wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the debater of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world?

²¹For since, in the wisdom of God, the world did not know God through wisdom, God decided, through the foolishness of our proclamation, to save those who believe. ²²For Jews demand signs and Greeks desire wisdom, ²³but we proclaim Christ crucified, a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles, ²⁴but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. ²⁵For God's foolishness is wiser than human wisdom, and God's weakness is stronger than human strength.

²⁶Consider your own call, brothers and sisters: not many of you were wise by human standards, not many were powerful, not many were of noble birth. ²⁷But God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise; God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong; ²⁸God chose what is low and despised in the world, things that are not, to reduce to nothing things that are, ²⁹so that no one might boast in the presence of God. ³⁰He is the source of your life in Christ Jesus, who became for us wisdom from God, and righteousness and sanctification and redemption, ³¹in order that, as it is written, “Let the one who boasts, boast in the Lord.”

The word of the Lord. **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, al - le - lu - ia. Al - le - lu - ia.
Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

GOSPEL: Matthew 5:1-12

Jesus opens the Sermon on the Mount by naming those who are blessed in the reign of God.

The holy gospel according to Matthew. **Glory to you, O Lord.**

¹When Jesus saw the crowds, he went up the mountain; and after he sat down, his disciples came to him. ²Then he began to speak, and taught them, saying:

³“Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

⁴“Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.

⁵“Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth.

⁶“Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.

⁷“Blessed are the merciful, for they will receive mercy.

⁸“Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.

⁹“Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.

¹⁰“Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness’ sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

¹¹“Blessed are you when people revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. ¹²Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.”

The gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, O Christ.**

SERMON

Rich Weingartner

HYMN OF THE DAY

Blessed Are They

1 Bless-ed are they, whose spir - its are im - pove-rished,
2 Bless-ed are they, who hun - ger now for just - ice,
3 Bless-ed are they, who work for peace a - mong us,
4 Bless-ed are they, trans - gen - der, queer, our sib - lings,

They are se - cure in God's di - vine em - brace.
Their thirst for right - eous - ness will soon be quenched.
They will be named and called God's ve - ry own.
For they are all be - lov - ed of our God.

Bless - ed are they, who grive and mourn in sor - row,
Bless - ed are they, whose lives ex - ude God's mer - cy,
Bless - ed are they, who hurt while seek - ing just - ice,
Bless - ed are they, peop - le of ev - ery col - or,

They shall re - ceive God's com - fort, love, and grace.
For they will find God's mer - cy on them drenched.
God's love for them will be for - ev - er known.
They bear God's im - age and in - clus - ive love.

Text: Richard Weingartner, b. 1978

Music: Jean Sibelius, 1865-1957

Music in public domain in the USA, still under copyright in other countries.

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FINLANDIA

11 10 11 10 11 10

Bless - ed are they, the hum - ble, meek, and low - ly,
 Bless - ed are they, whose hearts are pure and hon - est,
 Bless - ed are you, who suf - fer hate for my sake,
 Bless - ed are they, who live God's grace and mer - cy,

They shall in - her - it Earth and home and place.
 For they shall see *God with us*, God en - fleshed.
 Re - joice, be glad, for great is your re - ward.
 God's love, God's peace, God's just - ice, God's sha - lom.

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CREED

Let us profess our faith:

We believe in one God, the Architect and Guardian, who, in the beginning, breathed life into the void, sprouting all that is seen and unseen.

We believe in Jesus Christ, that in order to reconcile the cosmos this God sent a piece of God's own self to be born human as kin to us all. And who, at the hands of political tyranny, was killed. He rose again to new life in love to return the world to God.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, who is one with the Creator and Savior. She is our guide and wisdom. She pours her spirit into apostles, prophets, teachers, healers, and listeners. We believe in the uniting of all Christians into the one body of Christ, and we believe in our return to God at the end. Amen.

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Trusting in God's extraordinary love, let us come near to the Holy One in prayer.

Prayers of intercession are prayed. After each petition, the assembly responds as indicated.

We pray for our pastors ... our LGBTQIA+ siblings. Merciful God, **send wholeness to our church.**

We pray for change. ... celebrate the stunning beauty in all you have made. Merciful God, **send wholeness to your people.**

We pray for the sustainability of our Earthly home. ... poor and marginalized communities. Merciful God, **send wholeness to our Earth.**

We pray for our siblings ... We pray that your hand of justice intercedes for us. Merciful God, **send wholeness to the nations.**

We pray for those that have chaos swirling with them. ... We pray for your mercy, love, and healing to care for them. Merciful God, **send wholeness to your children.**

We pray that our faith community ... in our own family and community. Merciful God, **send wholeness to us.**

We pray for LGBTQIA+ saints, ... even when the world told them to hide. Merciful God, **receive our saints in peace.**

The presiding minister concludes the prayers, and the assembly responds:

Receive the prayers of your children, merciful God, and hold us forever in your steadfast love; through Jesus Christ, our holy wisdom. **Amen.**

PEACE

The peace of Christ be with you always. **And also with you.**

OFFERING

“For Everyone Born”

(Brian Mann, arr. Tom Trenney)

Chancel Choir

Please stand if you are able.

OFFERING PRAYER

Let us pray. God of all creation, you have given us life, love, compassion and hope. We offer the gifts of our very beings to your holy calling. Strengthen us through these gifts to be the arms of mercy and justice for the world. **Amen.**

DIALOGUE

The Lord be with you. **And also with you.** Lift up your hearts. **We lift them to the Lord.** Let us give thanks to the Lord our God. **It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

PREFACE

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God, for you sent your child to be the guide and life for the world, through him you showed us how to love and be loved, how to enact justice and pray for peace. And so, with the glorious company of the saints, with earth and sea and stars, with the choirs of angels and all the hosts of heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow'r and might,
 heav-en and earth are full of your glo - ry, full of your glo-ry. Ho -
 san - na, ho - san - na, ho - san - na in the high -
 est. Bless-ed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Ho -
 san - na, ho - san - na, ho - san - na in the high - est.

THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE

Holy, just, and merciful God. In the intersection of the waters above and the waters below, you created life out of the void. **We thank you for the gift of creation.**

Through Miriam and Moses, you led your people from oppression into liberation. **We thank you for your gift of liberation.**

You sent the prophets to call us to love and not hate, and guide us to your faithfulness in your promises. **We thank you for your promise to love.**

In the intersection of the divine and humanity, you made us whole through Jesus Christ. **We thank you for the gift of Christ.**

In the night in which he was betrayed, our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks; broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying: Take and eat; this is my body, given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it for all to drink, saying: This cup is the new covenant in my blood, shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sins. Do this for the remembrance of me.

With this holy sustenance we are made new creatures in the covenant of your son, Jesus Christ. Together, as we partake in this meal, we remember his life, death, and resurrection, and await a new and unending life in you. **Come, Lord Jesus.**

Please send your Spirit to this place, to this meal, and to your church. May her life-giving wisdom be upon us now, and renewed and nourished in your holy promises, lead us to be creators of justice, wholeness, and freedom. **Come, Holy Spirit.**

With the birds of the air and fish in the sea, with the flora and fauna, with saints of all time and space, we praise you always, O God, blessed Trinity, to the very end of the age. **Amen.**

LORD'S PRAYER

Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us.

Our Creator in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kin-dom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil. For the kin-dom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and forever. Amen.

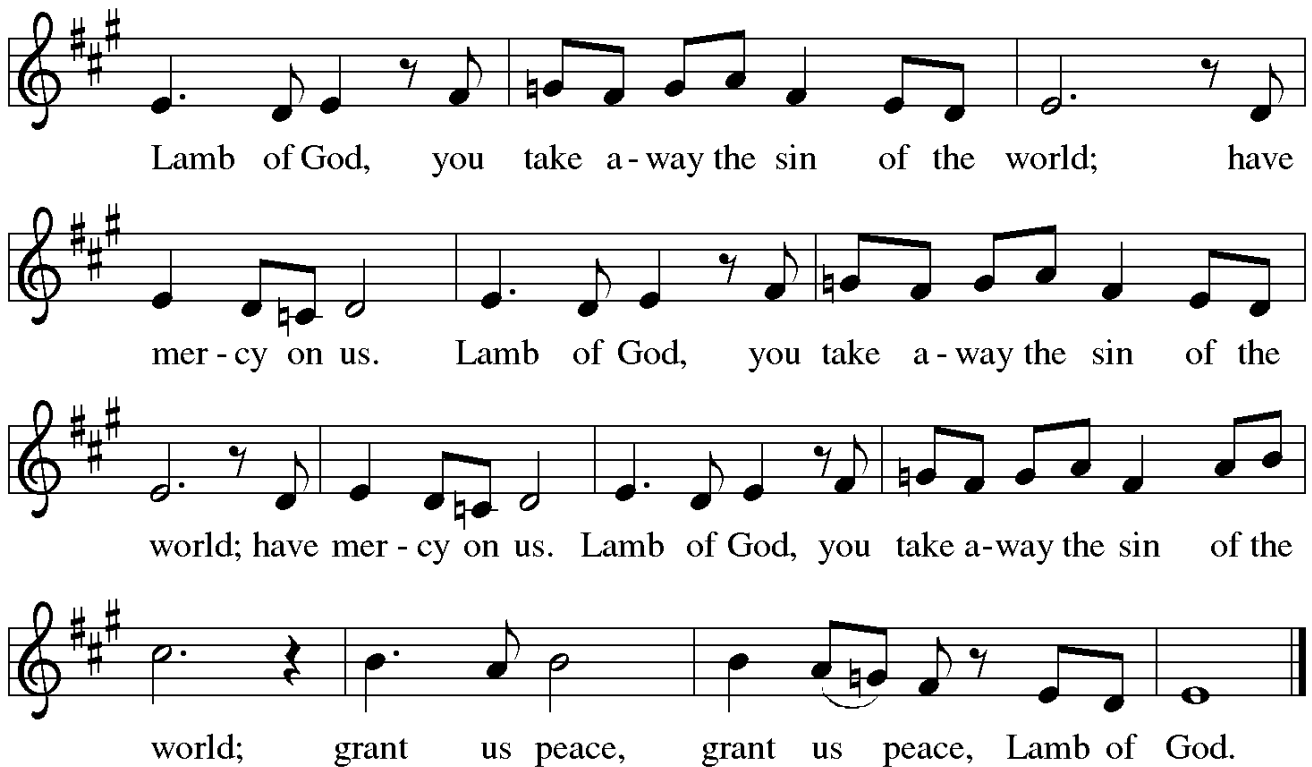
INVITATION TO COMMUNION

Come you who are weak and weary, come you who are persecuted and abandoned, come you who are cast to the margins, come you who search for love and wholeness. Come if you are LGBTQIA+ or an ally. Come as you are for yours in the kin-dom of God. These are the gifts of God given for the people of God and all are welcome at this table. **Thanks be to God.**

COMMUNION

The body of Christ, given for you. The blood of Christ, shed for you. Amen.

COMMUNION SONG



Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world; have
mer - cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the
world; have mer - cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the
world; grant us peace, grant us peace, Lamb of God.

INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC

“Soul, Adorn Yourself With Gladness”

arr. Aaron D. Miller

Please stand if you are able.

The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in his grace. **Amen**

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

We give thanks to you, God of mercy and love. We thank you for the nourishment that sustains our living spirits. We ask that you guide us and bless us on our journey to strive for peace, justice, and wholeness for all. In the sacred name of the redeemer, we pray. **Amen.**

BLESSING

May the God of creation bless you and claim you,
May the Savior give you peace and wholeness,
And may the Spirit guide you and lead you to mercy + and justice.
Amen.

SENDING SONG

Go, My Children, with My Blessing



- 1 "Go, my chil - dren, with my bless - ing, nev - er a - lone.
- 2 "Go, my chil - dren, sins for - giv - en, at peace and pure.
- 3 "Go, my chil - dren, fed and nour - ished, clos - er to me.



Wak - ing, sleep - ing, I am with you, you are my own.
Here you learned how much I love you, what I can cure.
Grow in love and love by serv - ing, joy - ful and free.



In my love's bap - tis - mal riv - er I have made you mine for - ev - er.
Here you heard my dear Son's sto - ry, here you touched him, saw his glo - ry.
Here my Spir - it's pow - er filled you, here my ten - der com - fort stilled you.



Go, my chil - dren, with my bless - ing, you are my own."
Go, my chil - dren, sins for - giv - en, at peace and pure."
Go, my chil - dren, fed and nour - ished, joy - ful and free."

Text: Jaroslav J. Vajda, b. 1919, alt.

Music: AR HYD Y NOS, Welsh traditional

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DISMISSAL

Go now in wholeness to love and deliver the justice of God.

OK, we will! Thanks be to God!

POSTLUDE

"Fugue in C Major"

Dietrich Buxtehude

WORSHIP SERVICE CREATED BY:

Created Whole is a worship experience cultivated by Rev. A.J. Houseman (she/her) in partnership with ReconcilingWorks. Pastor A.J. is the called pastor and host of the podcast TEN FOOT POLE: Conversations about the Uncomfortable Bible. Pastor A.J. loves to talk about the Bible and how through learning its original languages and contexts, we can fully live into our calling from God as whole, loving, and unique children of God. She has a degree in finance and economics from the University of Northern Iowa and a masters of divinity from United Lutheran Seminary. She has served in various ministries in Iowa, Maryland, Pennsylvania, and New Jersey. She currently lives in Summerville, South Carolina with her wife, Carley, and their daughter, Finley.



Offerings

1/15

Loose Cash	\$ 10.00
General Fund	<u>\$ 4,100.00</u>
Subtotal	\$ 4,110.00
Vanco	
General Operating	\$ 475.90
Pantry Fund	<u>\$ 151.00</u>
Total	\$ 4,736.90

1/22

Loose Cash	\$ 40.00
General Fund	\$ 1,375.00
Building Rental	\$ 100.00
Pantry Fund	\$ 205.00
Parish House	\$ 25.00
Subtotal	\$ 1,745.00
Vanco	
General Operating	\$ 2,665.90
Building	\$ 25.00
Total	\$ 4,435.90

Altar Care: Brenda Kopf
Lay Assistant: Rich Weingartner
Nursery: Open
Coffee Hour: John & Phylis Schleicher

Reader: Warren Heilman
Ushers: Walter & Brenda Kopf
Greeter: Mike Eschelbach
Acolyte: Open

Year to Date	1/1/22 -12/31/22
Income	\$318,610.00
Expenses	<u>\$316,697.00</u>
Net Income (Loss)	\$ 1,913.00

ANNUAL MEETING

The Annual Meeting will be held today following worship.

**Sunday, February 5th - All Church Potluck & Movie
hosted by Green Team**

*There will be a signup sheet in the Narthex for the
potluck/movie event*

**Soup/Chili Cookoff & Movie
sponsored by the Green Team**

Due to the fact that our Fellowship Hall has been transformed into a Free Store for Knob Hill residents, we have **moved our Potluck/Movie event to Sunday,**

February 5th. So, we have decided to make this event a **Soup/Chili Cookoff!** We invite you to bring a pot of your favorite soup or chili recipe. We also invite you to bring quarters (or quiet money if you wish) and we will use that as a method of voting for the best soup or chili represented! The winning soup or chili recipe will then be published in the newsletter and all of the money collected will go toward the Food Pantry Project. The Green Team will provide drinks, cornbread, crackers, and cookies.

Following the luncheon, we will show the movie, *Merchants of Doubt*. The U.S. scientific community has long led the world in research on public health, science, and other issues affecting the quality of life among people.

In the book, *Merchants of Doubt*, historians Naomi Oreskes and Erick Conway explain how a small group of high-level scientists, with extensive political connections, ran effective campaigns to mislead the public and deny well-established scientific knowledge over four decades. In seven compelling chapters addressing tobacco, acid rain, the ozone hole, global warming, and DDT, Oreskes and Conway roll back the rug on this dark corner of the American scientific community, showing how the ideology of free market fundamentalism, aided by a too-compliant media, has skewed public understanding of some of the most pressing issues of our era. This book has been made into the documentary we will screen.

