

FAITH LUTHERAN CHURCH

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



FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT

December 21, 2025

10:00 AM

Pastor
Administrative Assistant
Music Director
Organist/Pianist
Sound Technicians
Church Office Email
Website
Facebook Page

Rev. Megan Floyd
Kalea Sanford
Debra Borton-McDonough
Bruce Williams
Cody Boyan & Raymond Herek
faith@faithlutheranokemos.org
www.faithlutheranokemos.org
facebook.com/faithlutheranokemos

WIFI: Faith Lutheran; Password: LutheranFaith

WELCOME STATEMENT

We, at Faith Lutheran Church, welcome you as God’s beloved child, “for in Christ Jesus... [we] are all children of God through faith.” (Galatians 3:26). No matter your age, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, race, ethnicity, marital status, neurodivergent status, faith background, political leanings, or mental, intellectual or physical ability – you are welcomed here just as you are. In this church, we commit to pursue gender and racial equity in all that we do, and to support one another as chosen family, being parents and siblings for each other regardless of who we have as biological family (Mark 3:31-35). For we are all one in Christ Jesus and rely on the unconditional nature of God’s love and grace to be our help and guide as we strive to serve our world.

For safety reasons, please do not allow your children to wander unsupervised past the coat racks or downstairs during the church service. Our nursery is open but not staffed. You are welcome to use it, but please do not leave your children unattended.

PRELUDE

“Creator of the Stars of Night”

arr. Richard Warner

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Please stand as you are able.

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

Pastor: Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God,
whose home is heaven and earth,
whose salvation is sure.

All: Amen.

Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.

Silence is kept for reflection.

Pastor: Long expected God,

**All: we confess that we look to ourselves
for the peace and security only you can provide.
We reach for swords and spears,
reluctant to release our grip on the ways of war.
We become impatient while waiting
and weary of keeping awake.
Free us from self-reliance,
and teach us to live in harmony with our neighbors.
Increase our trust in God's timing,
and awaken us to your advent among us,
that we may abound in the hope you have promised.**

All: Amen.

Pastor: God judges us not as we deserve,
but according to God's own righteousness.
† You are freed and forgiven,
saved by grace,
and ready to welcome the Savior.

All: Amen.

GATHERING HYMN: The Angel Gabriel from Heaven Came (ELW 265)



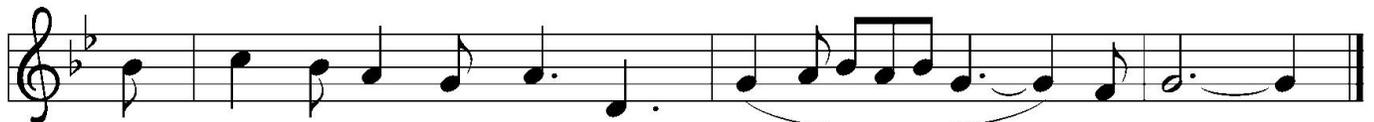
1 The an - gel Ga - bri - el from heav - en came,
2 "For know a bless - ed moth - er thou shalt be,
3 Then gen - tle Mar - y meek - ly bowed her head;
4 Of her, Em - man - u - el, the Christ, was born



with wings as drift - ed snow, with eyes as flame:
all gen - er - a - tions laud and hon - or thee;
"To me be as it pleas - eth God," she said.
in Beth - le - hem all on a Christ - mas morn,



"All hail to thee, O low - ly maid - en Mar - y,
thy son shall be Em - man - u - el, by seers fore - told,
"My soul shall laud and mag - ni - fy God's ho - ly name."
and Chris - tian folk through - out the world will ev - er say:



most high - ly fa - vored la - dy."
most high - ly fa - vored la - dy." Glo - ri - a!
Most high - ly fa - vored la - dy,
"Most high - ly fa - vored la - dy."

GREETING

Pastor: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

All: **And also with you.**

KYRIE



Leader

In peace, in peace, let us pray to the Lord.

Assembly

Lord, have mer - cy. Christ, have

For the reign of God, and for

mer - cy. Lord, have mer - cy.

peace through - out the world, for the u - ni - ty of all, let us pray to the

Lord. For your

Lord, have mer - cy. Christ, have mer - cy. Lord, have mer - cy.

peo - ple here who have come to give you praise, for the strength to live your

word, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mer-cy. Christ, have mer-cy. Lord, have

Help, save, and de-fend us, O God.

mer - cy. A - men.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Asst: Let us pray. Stir up your power, Lord Christ, and come. With your abundant grace and might, free us from the sin that hinders our faith, that eagerly we may receive your promises, for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

All: **Amen.**

The assembly may be seated.

LIGHTING ADVENT WREATH - FOURTH SUNDAY IN ADVENT: Joy

Pastor: In a world where so many are sorrowful,
God lights a candle of joy in our hearts.
We wait together for a Savior,
who will be Immanuel, Christ the Lord.
Hear the word of the Lord:

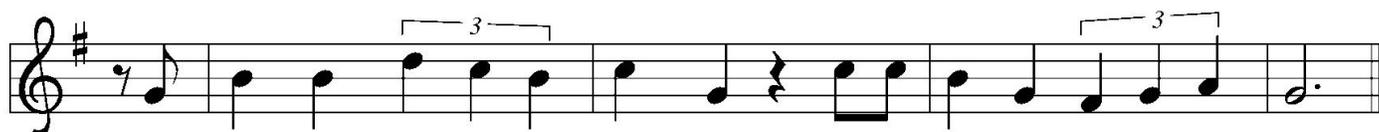
Asst: *"The Root of Jesse will spring up, one who will arise to rule over the nations; the Gentiles will hope in him."* Romans 15:12

The wreath is lit during the song.

CONGREGATIONAL HYMN: He Came Down (ELW 253 vs. 1,2,3,4)



- 1 He came down that we may have love; he came down that we may have love;
- 2 He came down that we may have light; he came down that we may have light;
- 3 He came down that we may have peace; he came down that we may have peace;
- 4 He came down that we may have joy; he came down that we may have joy;



he came down that we may have love;
he came down that we may have light; hal - le - lu - jah for - ev - er - more.
he came down that we may have peace;
he came down that we may have joy;

FIRST READING: Isaiah 7:10-16

An Israelite and Aramean military coalition presented a serious threat to King Ahaz of Judah. In response, Ahaz decided to secure his throne and kingdom by seeking Assyrian help. Isaiah reminds Ahaz that human attempts to establish security will fail. The prophet gives the sign that is the only source of true safety: Immanuel, God is with us!

¹⁰ The LORD spoke to Ahaz, saying, ¹¹ "Ask a sign of the LORD your God; let it be deep as Sheol or high as heaven." ¹² But Ahaz said, "I will not ask, and I will not put the LORD to the test." ¹³ Then Isaiah said, "Hear then, O house of David! Is it too little for you to weary mortals that you weary my God also?"

¹⁴ Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Look, the young woman is with child and shall bear a son and shall name him Immanuel.

¹⁵ He shall eat curds and honey by the time he knows how to refuse the evil and choose the good. ¹⁶ For before the child knows how to refuse the evil and choose the good, the land before whose two kings you are in dread will be deserted.”

Reader: The word of the Lord.

All: **Thanks be to God.**

PSALM: 80:1-7, 17-19

¹ Hear, O Shepherd of Israel, leading Joseph like a flock;
shine forth, you that are enthroned upon the cherubim.

² **In the presence of Ephraim, Benjamin, and Manasseh,
stir up your strength and come to help us.**

³ Restore us, O God;
let your face shine upon us, and we shall be saved.

⁴ **O LORD God of hosts,
how long will your anger fume when your people pray?**

⁵ You have fed them with the bread of tears;
you have given them bowls of tears to drink.

⁶ **You have made us the derision of our neighbors,
and our enemies laugh us to scorn.**

⁷ Restore us, O God of hosts;
let your face shine upon us, and we shall be saved.

¹⁷ **Let your hand be upon the one at your right hand,
the one you have made so strong for yourself.**

¹⁸ And so will we never turn away from you;
give us life, that we may call upon your name.

¹⁹ **Restore us, O LORD God of hosts;
let your face shine upon us, and we shall be saved.**

SECOND READING: Romans 1:1-7

Most of the Christians in Rome do not know Paul. In this letter's opening he introduces himself as an apostle divinely appointed to spread God's gospel. The gospel's content is the promised coming of Christ, and Paul's mission is to bring about the obedience of faith among all nations, including his Roman audience.

¹ Paul, a servant of Christ Jesus, called to be an apostle, set apart for the gospel of God, ² which he promised beforehand through his prophets in the holy scriptures, ³ the gospel concerning his Son, who was descended from David according to the flesh

⁴ and was declared to be Son of God with power according to the spirit of holiness by resurrection from the dead, Jesus Christ our Lord, ⁵ through whom we have received grace and apostleship to bring about the obedience of faith among all the gentiles for the sake of his name, ⁶ including you who are called to belong to Jesus Christ,

⁷ To all God's beloved in Rome, who are called to be saints:

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

Reader: The word of the Lord.

All: **Thanks be to God.**

CHILDREN'S SERMON (Noisy offering for Faith Youth Ministry)



Please stand as you are able.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION



Hal-le, hal - le, hal - le - lu - jah. Hal - le, hal - le, hal -
- le - lu - jah. Hal - le, hal - le, hal - le -
lu - jah. Hal - le - lu - jah. Hal - le - lu - jah.

GOSPEL: Matthew 1:18-25

Matthew's story of Jesus' birth focuses on the role of Joseph, who adopts the divinely-begotten child into the family of David and obediently gives him the name Jesus, which means "God saves."

Pastor: The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew.

All: **Glory to you, O Lord.**

¹⁸ Now the birth of Jesus the Messiah took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been engaged to Joseph, but before they lived together, she was found to be pregnant from the Holy Spirit. ¹⁹ Her husband Joseph, being a righteous man and unwilling to expose her to public disgrace, planned to divorce her quietly. ²⁰ But just when he had resolved to do this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, "Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife, for the child conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. ²¹ She will bear a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins." ²² All this took place to fulfill what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet:

²³ "Look, the virgin shall become pregnant and give birth to a son, and they shall name him Emmanuel,"

which means, "God is with us." ²⁴ When Joseph awoke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him; he took her as his wife ²⁵ but had no marital relations with her until she had given birth to a son, and he named him Jesus.

Pastor: The Gospel of the Lord.

All: **Praise to you, O Christ.**

The assembly may be seated.

SERMON

Pastor Megan Floyd

Please stand as you are able.

HYMN OF THE DAY: No Wind at the Window (ACS 906)



1 No wind at the win - dow, no knock on the door;
 2 "O Mar - y, O Mar - y, don't hide from my face.
 3 This child must be born that the king - dom might come:
 4 No pay - ment was prom - ised, no prom - is - es made;



no light from the lamp - stand, no foot on the floor;
 Be glad that you're fa - vored and filled with God's grace.
 sal - va - tion for man - y, de - struc - tion for some;
 no wed - ding was dat - ed, no blue - print dis - played.



no dream born of tired - ness, no ghost raised by fear:
 The time for re - deem - ing the world has be - gun,
 both end and be - gin - ning, both mes - sage and sign;
 Yet Mar - y, con - sent - ing to what none could guess,



just an an - gel and a wom - an and a voice in her ear.
 and . . . you are re - quest - ed to . . . moth - er God's Son."
 both . . . vic - tor and . . . vic - tim, both . . . yours and di - vine.
 re - plied with con - vic - tion, "Tell . . . God I say yes."

APOSTLES CREED

Pastor: Joining the saints from every time and place, let us confess our faith.

All: **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

Dona nobis pacem (ELW 753) *Sung in unison.*

1 *Canon*



Do - na no - bis pa - cem, pa - cem. Do - na no - bis pa - cem.

2



Do - na no - bis pa - cem. Do - na no - bis pa - cem.

3



Do - na no - bis pa - cem. Do - na no - bis pa - cem.

Asst: In our waiting and watching, we come to you in prayer, O God, trusting your promise to renew the church, the nations, and the whole creation. *A brief silence.*

...God of grace,
All: **Your mercy is great.**

Pastor: Draw near to us, O God, as we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in your mercy through Jesus Christ, Emmanuel.

All: **Amen.**

Repeat "Dona nobis pacem", sung as a round.

PEACE

Pastor: The peace of Christ be with you always.

All: **And also with you.**

The assembly may be seated.

OFFERING

"Waiting for Bethlehem's Light" Dale Peterson; arr. Dale Peterson & Charles McCarta
Chancel Choir; Gwynne Kadfrofske, flute

LITURGICAL HAND WASHING

Pastor and assisting ministers sanitize and wash their hands.

"I wash my hands in innocence, and go around your altar, O Lord, singing aloud a song of thanksgiving, and telling all your wondrous deeds." – Psalm 26:6

Please stand as you are able.

OFFERING RESPONSE: As the Grains of Wheat (ELW 465)

Refrain



As the grains of wheat once scat-tered on the hill were
gath-ered in - to one to be - come our bread; so may all your peo-ple from
all the ends of earth be gath-ered in - to one in you.

1 As this cup of bless-ing is shared with - in our midst,
2 Let this be a fore - taste of all that is to come when

Refrain

may we share the pres - ence of your love.
all cre - a - tion shares this feast with you.

OFFERING PRAYER

Asst: Nourishing God,
you are water in the wilderness and streams in the desert.
Through this meal, satisfy our parched places,
that we may rejoice and be for the world
signs of your kingdom come.

All: **Amen.**

GREAT THANKSGIVING

Pastor: The Lord be with you.

All: **And also with you.**

Pastor: Lift up your hearts.

All: **We lift them to the Lord.**

Pastor: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

All: **It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

PREFACE

Pastor: 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,
through our Savior Jesus Christ.
You comforted your people with the promise of the Redeemer,
through whom you will also make all things new
in the day when he comes to judge the world in righteousness.
And so, with all the choirs of angels,
with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven,
we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

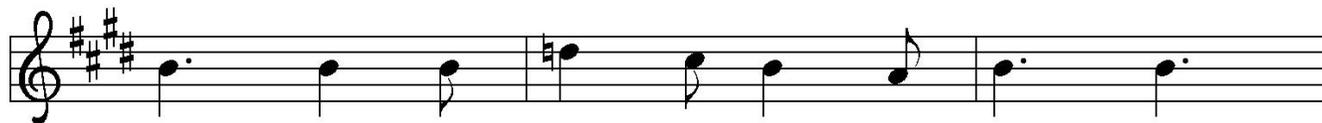
HOLY, HOLY, HOLY



Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly are you, God of pow - er and



might; heav - en and earth are filled with your



glo - ry. Ho - san - na in the high - est.



Bless - ed is the one who comes in your name. Ho -



san - na in the high - est, ho - san - na in the high - est.

THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE

Pastor: 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 sin.
Do this for the remembrance of me.

LORD'S PRAYER

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

All: **Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kin[g]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[g]dom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and forever. Amen.**

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

Pastor: Here is life! God is with us!
Come, receive what God has promised.

The assembly may be seated.

All are invited to come to the table to receive what the Lord offers. If, however, you would prefer not to receive communion, you may still come to the table for a blessing.

Gluten-free wafers are available upon request when you come to receive communion at the altar rail.

Our trays have wine (darker liquid) in the outer part of the tray, and grape juice (lighter liquid) in the center. Please choose whichever you prefer. Drop your empty cup in one of the baskets on the stands.

If it would be easier for you to have communion brought to you, please let an usher know and we will be happy to serve you at your seat.

If you have any further questions, please ask an usher.

LAMB OF GOD



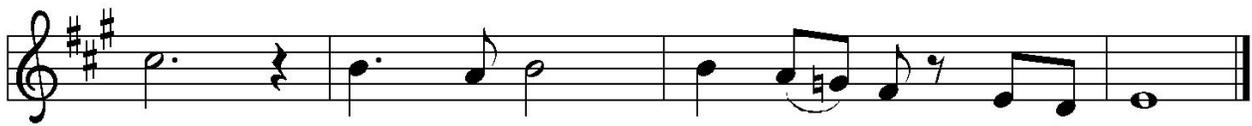
Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world; have



mer-cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the

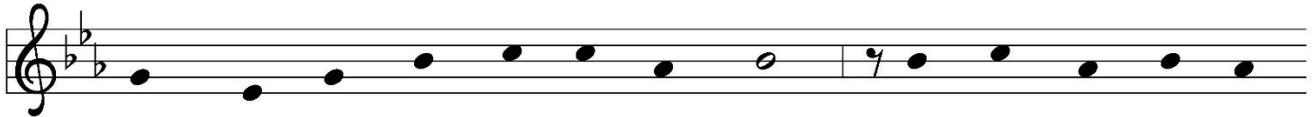


world; have mer-cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the

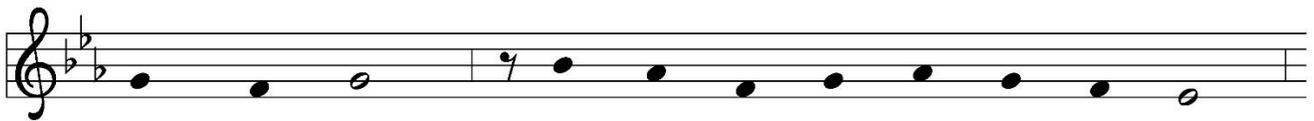


world; grant us peace, grant us peace, Lamb of God.

COMMUNION SONG: Creator of the Stars of Night (ELW 245)



1 Cre - a - tor of the stars of night, your peo - ple's ev - er -
2 When this old world drew on toward night, you came; but not in
3 At your great name, O Je - sus, now all knees must bend, all
4 Come in your ho - ly might, we pray, re - deem us for e -
5 To God the Fa - ther, God the Son, and God the Spir - it,



last - ing light, O Christ, re - deem - er of us all,
splen - dor bright, not as a mon - arch, but the child
hearts must bow: all things on earth with one ac - cord,
ter - nal day; de - fend us while we dwell be - low
Three in One, praise, hon - or, might, and glo - ry be



we pray you hear us when we call.
of Mar - y, bless - ed moth - er mild.
like those in heav'n, shall call you Lord.
from all as - saults of our dread foe.
from age to age e - ter - nal - ly. A - men.

Please stand as you are able.

Pastor: May the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ
strengthen you and keep you in his grace.

All: **Amen.**

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Asst: God our host,
at this table you have fed us with joy and gladness.
Send us forth, eager to share the feast,
welcome the stranger,
and bear good fruit in the name of Jesus.

All: **Amen.**

BLESSING

Pastor: May God who comes among us,
Father, ✝ Son, and Holy Spirit,
grant you patience in waiting, peace in the darkness,
and good news to share today and always.

All: **Amen.**

SENDING SONG: Joy to the World (ELW 267)



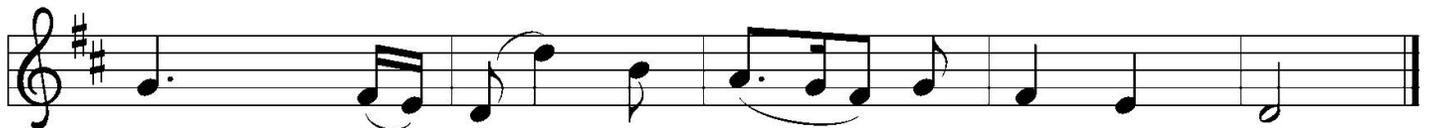
1 Joy to the world, the Lord is come! Let earth re -
2 Joy to the earth, the Sav - ior reigns! Let all their
3 No more let sin and sor - row grow nor thorns in -
4 He rules the world with truth and grace and makes the



ceive her king; let ev - 'ry heart pre - pare him
songs em - ploy, while fields and floods, rocks, hills, and
fest the ground; he comes to make his bless - ings
na - tions prove the glo - ries of his righ - teous -



room and heav'n and na - ture sing, and heav'n and na - ture
plains re - peat the sound - ing joy, re - peat the sound - ing
flow far as the curse is found, far as the curse is
ness and won - ders of his love, and won - ders of his



sing, and heav'n, and heav'n and na - ture sing.
joy, re - peat, re - peat the sound - ing joy.
found, far as, far as the curse is found.
love, and won - ders, won - ders of his love.

DISMISSAL

Asst: Go in peace, keep awake!

All: **Thanks be to God!**

POSTLUDE

"Comfort, Comfort, Now My People"

arr. Gerald Near

CHURCH CALENDAR

Sunday, December 21

Worship Service@10am: **Fourth Sunday of Advent**

Monday, December 22

Scouts @7pm in Sunday School/Room

Tuesday, December 23

No Bible Study

There will also be no Bible Study on December 30th

Wednesday, December 24

Christmas Eve Service @4pm

Christmas Eve Service @8pm

Thursday, December 25

Merry Christmas!

Sunday, December 28

Worship Service@10am: **Lessons & Carols**

FAITH VOLUNTEERS

December 21

Greeter(s): John & Phylis Schleicher
Usher(s): Brenda Kopf/John Backman
Coffee Hour: Jack & Natalie Dingedine
Counters: Kathy Mace/Kay Hillberg
Noisy Offering:
Acolyte:
Reader: Heidi Nussdorfer
Lay Assistant: Harold Sollenberger
Altar Care: Heidi Bowers

December 28

Greeter(s): Janet Boyer
Usher(s): Randy Royalty/Ken Milne
Coffee Hour: Angie & Ray Herek
Counters: Randy Royalty
Noisy Offering: Matt Schnizlein
Acolyte:
Reader:
Lay Assistant: Ray Herek
Altar Care: Elaine Harrison



We invite you to hold these people in your prayers each day this week.

We pray for all longing for sustainable housing, secure employment, access to medical care, and overall health and wellness, especially **Sue, Troy, Krista**, Eric, Beth, Logan, Garrett, Melinda, Rick, Kathy, Grace, Marj, Kate, and Marla.

We pray for all those in military service, especially those connected to our community: Alex, Braxton, Joey, Jon, Landon, Hannah, Joe, Reuben, Lane, and Aiden.

We pray for the larger church, especially our synod prayer partner, Trinity Lutheran in Midland, their pastor, Rev. Jeffrey Gramza and our companion synods in Papua New Guinea and Honduras.

****New additions to our prayers are listed in bold; names will remain on the printed list for six weeks. Please contact the church office or Pastor Megan to add or reinstate names to the prayer list.***

Prayer Partners Letter

We are participating in this activity and would love you to add your signature. The letter is located on the table under the bulletin board entitled "Prayer Partners."