



**January 1, 2023**

Melville United Church

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**Melville United Church**  
**January 1, 2023**  
**First Sunday after Christmas – New Year’s Day**

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Presiding today - Rev. Lynda Goy-Flint

### **Welcome**

I greet you in the name of the one born among us, who calls us sisters and brothers, Jesus Christ, Emmanuel.

We gather in community today – January 1, 2023 virtually and in person. We will continue to offer both in-person and on-line services with printed copies being distributed to those without internet access who are unable to attend in person. We encourage people to come out to worship in the sanctuary. There is ample room to socially distance, and you are welcome to wear masks or not as is comfortable for you.

We gather in these, the twelve days of Christmas, continuing to celebrate the miraculous birth of Jesus the Christ Child.

### **Announcements**

- **“MID-DAY MUSIC AT MELVILLE” presented and performed by pianist BRAD HALLS**  
Our *“Mid-Day Music at Melville”* concerts will take a two-week break over Christmas and New Years, and so there will be no performances on December 28 or January 4. The program returns on Wednesday, January 11, 2023 from 12 noon to 1:00 p.m. at Melville United Church in Fergus, when pianist Brad Halls will present a selection of music by celebrated Oscar and Tony Award winning composer Jule Styne. Enjoy his enduring songs *“Time After Time”*, *“Three Coins in the Fountain”*, *“I’ll Walk Alone”*, *“I’ve Heard that Song Before”*, *“People”* and many more.
- **Memory Angels:** Our Memory Angels will be displayed in the Sanctuary from now until January 8/23. Those who have had Angels in the past, can renew your Angel with a minimum donation of \$5, by contacting Patty Duncan. Those who are new to this, can have a handmade paper Angel, with an inscription on the skirt, dedicating this Angel in memory of your loved one, from you, for a minimum donation of \$5. The Angels stay at Melville safely packed away, throughout the year. These Angels bring comfort and meaning to the Melville families throughout Advent, knowing we are remembering our loved ones.
- As more and more people find their dollar shrinking, and having to decide between rent and three meals a day, the demand for food bank assistance rises. We ask you to prayerfully consider if you are able to **support the Food Bank**, either with a donation of food, or financially. Food bank use is up 35% over the last three years. The food bank has also calculated that a basket of food and goods that cost \$39.85 in 2021 now costs \$50.83, a 27.55% increase in one year. The Food Bank is asking for your financial support as they come to the end of the year.
- **Save your Used Stamps from Incoming Mail:** The holiday season is coming and you’ll be receiving cards, etc.. Cut off your used stamps, leaving a 1/2” border around them and give them to Marlene Tosh **or** put them in the Stamp Box on the shelf in the Cloak Room, where the Lift is on the main floor of the church. Marlene tidies them up and takes them to the Bible Society, to buy bibles. You can do this year-round!

- **Gifts with Vision: A Giving Catalogue from The United Church of Canada**
  - Give meaningful gifts that make a difference with [Gifts with Vision \(opens in a new tab\)](#)! Each year's gift catalogue gives a glimpse of the breadth of our Mission & Service ministries and programs.
  - *Gifts with Vision* has gift ideas to suit every interest, budget, and person. It's a great way to celebrate special occasions and honour loved ones!
  - The gift catalogue is updated online regularly, and is fully refreshed every fall. It is also distributed in print with *Broadview* magazine, and mailed to each pastoral charge.
  - **To order gifts, be inspired, or learn more, visit [GiftsWithVision.ca \(opens in a new tab\)](#) today!**
- **Melville council has commissioned a Halo study in conjunction with the Trinity Centres Foundation.** This study will look to anchor Melville in Centre Wellington and determine our value to the community, as event and program space, volunteer time and effort and community well being. This will serve as a snapshot of the value Melville brings to the community in terms we can share with local governments, charitable organizations and current partners. This will serve as the foundation for further efforts to make Melville a sustainable, energetic, and integral part of Centre Wellington. Please ask a council member if you have any questions.

I invite you to join us now for a time of worship and contemplation.

**Land Acknowledgement** *Peter Chynoweth, Gathering: Pentecost 1 2022, p.33. Used with permission.*

We acknowledge that this land on which we gather for worship is the traditional land of the people of Petun,

Haudenosaunee, (Hoe-day-no-show-nee)

Anishinabewaki,

Mississaugas of the Credit,

Odawa and

Mississauga nations. We acknowledge that we live on this land as people who have agreed to share the care and use of this land as a result of treaties—the Simcoe Patent-Treaty 4, 1793 and the Haldimand Treaty, 1784—that outline the rights and responsibilities associated with our place in this land. May we be people who remember this with thanksgiving and respect.

**Call to Worship:** *Leigh Sinclair, Gathering: Advent/Christmas/Epiphany, 2022-2023, p.38. Used with permission.*

Happy New Year to all of you!

**May each of us feel the Spirit filling us up  
with the hope we need for this coming year.**

May each of us feel the welcome of God's love!

**Thanks be to God!**

**Opening Prayer (in unison):** *Mary Parsons, Gathering: Advent/Christmas/Epiphany, 2022-2023, p.39. Used with permission.*

**God of stars and sages,**

**open our senses to know your presence**

**in the ordinary moments of our days.**

**Lead us into the gift of a new year full of hope and promise,**

**knowing your grace will guide us. Amen.**

**Hymn: Good Christian Friends, Rejoice**      OneLicense #A-740237

- 1 Good Christian friends, rejoice  
with heart and soul and voice!  
Give ye heed to what we say: News! News!  
Jesus Christ is born today.  
Ox and ass before him bow,  
and he is in the manger now.  
Christ is born today! Christ is born today!
  
- 2 Good Christian friends, rejoice  
with heart and soul and voice!  
Now ye hear of endless bliss: Joy! Joy!  
Jesus Christ was born for this!  
He hath opened heaven's door,  
and we are blest forevermore.  
Christ was born for this! Christ was born for this!
  
- 3 Good Christian friends, rejoice  
with heart and soul and voice!  
Now ye need not fear the grave: Peace! Peace!  
Jesus Christ was born to save!  
Calls you one and calls you all  
to gain his everlasting hall.  
Christ was born to save! Christ was born to save!

**Call to Reconciliation** *Thom M. Shuman, Lectionary Liturgies: Liturgy w/ communion for January 1, 2023 (First Sunday after Christmas - A)* <http://lectionaryliturgies.blogspot.com/>. Used with permission.

We know all that God has done for us, as well as all we could have done for others. Let us confess to God our failures and foibles, as we pray together our Prayer Seeking Forgiveness and Reconciliation,

**Prayer Seeking Forgiveness and Reconciliation (in unison)** *Thom M. Shuman, Lectionary Liturgies: Liturgy w/ communion for January 1, 2023 (First Sunday after Christmas - A)* <http://lectionaryliturgies.blogspot.com/>. Used with permission.

**We could proclaim your name, God of this holy season,  
but we spend too much time talking about celebrities.  
We could tell others about all your gracious deeds,  
but are comparing notes about the exploits of our favorite athletes.  
We could let your Word guide our lives,  
but instead we do what the politicians think is best.**

**Why?**

**Because we forget who we are called to be.  
But you remember, Faithful God.  
You remember that we put our trust in others, not you;  
you remember how we chase after idols, not follow you;  
you remember to save us in our distress,  
which is why you sent Jesus to us, our Saviour, our Redeemer.**

*Silence is kept*

**Words of Assurance** *Thom M. Shuman, Lectionary Liturgies: Liturgy w/ communion for January 1, 2023 (First Sunday after Christmas - A) <http://lectionaryliturgies.blogspot.com/>. Used with permission.*

In the silence, in the dreams, in the wonder, in the words,  
God comes to save us and have mercy on us.

**It is fitting that we offer our thanks and praise  
to the One who forgives us.  
Thanks be to God! Amen.**

### **Children's Ministry: Escape to Egypt**

Talk about the story of the escape to Egypt. How do you think Jesus' family would have been feeling? Sometimes in life things happen that make us feel scared, angry frustrated, and sad. Those feelings can be hard to cope with, but there are no bad or wrong feelings. Life may not be easy, but that's just the way it is. Naming things we are thankful for or counting our blessings can help us remember the ways God is acting in our lives, even when we're having difficult days.

Blessing Jars:

Take an empty jar, you can decorate it if you want. Each week name something you are thankful for. Write those things down on a piece of paper and put them in the jar. Then on New Year's Eve, at the end of 2023, your family can open the jar and read all the things you were thank for this year.

### **Prayer/Blessing**

**Hymn: Joy Is Now in Every Place VU45**

- 1 Joy is now in every place,  
Christmas lightens every face;  
now be with us, in your grace,  
O hear us, bless us, holy Jesus.
- 2 May the star that shone that night,  
making your poor stable bright,  
fill our hearts with love and light,  
O hear us, bless us, holy Jesus.
- 3 Through the New Year let it stay,  
leading us upon your way,  
making Christmas every day,  
O hear us, bless us, holy Jesus.
- 4 Now and ever may we find  
your good news to fill our mind:  
peace and love to humankind,  
O hear us, bless us, holy Jesus.

**Prayer of Illumination** *Reprinted by permission of Westminster John Knox Press from **Feasting on the Word**<sup>®</sup>  
**Worship Companion: Liturgies for Year A, Volume 1.** Copyright 2013.*

Holy One,  
your Word comes to us:  
Jesus Christ, Immanuel.

Holy Word,  
you cross every border  
meant to shut you out.

*Matt. 2:14, 21*

Holy Wisdom,  
speak to us  
in the word read and proclaimed.

Hearing, may we dream your dreams  
and faithfully follow wherever you lead.  
In your triune name we pray. **Amen.**

*Matt. 2:13, 20, 22b*

**Scripture: Isaiah 63:7-9** *(The Inclusive Bible: The First Egalitarian Translation)*

*God's presence has saved us*

I will tell you of YHWH's unfailing love,  
and sing the praises of YHWH  
for all that YHWH did for us—  
the many good things done for the house of Israel,  
which God did with motherly compassion  
and many kindnesses.

For YHWH said, "Truly these are my people,  
children who will not be false to me"—  
and so God became their Liberator.

In all their distress, O God, you were distressed,  
and the angel of your Presence saved them;  
you redeemed them out of deep love  
and profound mercy;  
you lifted them up and carried them  
from time immemorial.

## **Ministry of Music**

**Scripture: Matthew 2:13-23** *(The Inclusive Bible: The First Egalitarian Translation)*

*The escape to Egypt*

After the astrologers had left, the angel of God suddenly appeared in a dream to Joseph with the command, "Get up, take the child and his mother and flee to Egypt. Stay there until I tell you otherwise. Herod is searching for the child to destroy him." Joseph got up, awakened Jesus and Mary, and they left that night for Egypt. They stayed there until the death of Herod, to fulfill what God had said through the prophet: "Out of Egypt I have called my Own."

Herod became furious when he realized that the astrologers had outwitted him. He gave orders to kill all male children that were two years old and younger living in and around Bethlehem. The age of the children was based on the date Herod had learned from the astrologers. Then what was spoken through the prophet Jeremiah was fulfilled:

"A voice was heard in Ramah

sobbing and lamenting loudly:  
it was Rachel weeping for her children;  
she refused to be consoled,  
for they were no more.”

After Herod’s death, the angel of God appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt with the command, “Get up, take the child and his mothers, and set out for the land of Israel. Those who had designs on the life of the child are dead.”

Joseph got up, awakened Jesus and Mary, and they returned to the land of Israel. Joseph heard, however, that Archelaus had succeeded Herod as rule of Judea, and Joseph was afraid to go back there. Instead, because of a warning received by Joseph in a dream, the family went to the region of Galilee. There they settled in a town called Nazareth. In this way, what was said through the prophets was fulfilled:

“He will be called a Nazarene.”

**Prayer** *Reprinted by permission of Westminster John Knox Press from **Feasting on the Word® Worship Companion: Liturgies for Year A, Volume 1.** Copyright 2013.*

Exalted God,  
even as the heavenly host sang of your glory  
in the night skies over Bethlehem;  
even as the star shone in the heavens,  
and sheep and cattle gathered in that light,  
so we gather,  
young and old together,  
to recount all that you have done for us  
in mercy and steadfast love.  
No tyrant’s threat or deadly act  
can destroy the dreams and visions  
you have placed within us,  
for you have drawn us close.  
With all creation,  
we praise you and exalt your name  
forever and ever. **Amen.**

May the words I speak and the reflection that we all share  
find a response that is worthy of you,  
most Just, most Loving, and most Compassionate God. Amen.  
*David Sparks, Summerland, B.C.*

### **Reflection: The Glimmer of Hope in the Midst of Tragedy**

Our gospel reading for this first Sunday after Christmas takes us on a circuitous journey. First, it skips ahead in Matthew’s gospel, to a point after the wise ones had left Jesus, when in our schema, we have not yet had the wise ones *arrive*. And then the Holy Family must journey far from Jesus’ birthplace of Bethlehem, to ensure the safety of the Christ Child.

There are a couple of elements of this story to lift up. The first is that Jesus’ family has to flee Bethlehem and Judea because of the wrath of Herod. Herod is clearly upset and enraged by the threat to his power, the threat to the life he has cultivated and known for the years of his reign. He is only king at the pleasure of the Roman Empire—a sort of vassal king who must tow the line with Rome and stay on the good side of the Roman governor, Quirinius. His rule is circumscribed, and he

does not have all the power that Jewish kings of yore enjoyed. Now, the very continuation of his reign is challenged by this baby. Even aristocrats from far off places have travelled far to see him, and to pay him homage, bringing him gifts, and in all these actions, treating Jesus like a king ruling over *them*.

It is too much for Herod, and he lashes out in response. This child cannot be allowed to steal the limelight, this child cannot be allowed to undermine Herod's tenuous position, this child cannot be allowed to live. And so he tells his soldiers to make a thorough search for children two years and under living in and around Bethlehem, and to put them to death. As Herod sees it, this is the only way to protect his rule and the life he has come to know.

In the way of communication that God has established with Joseph, an angel comes to him in a dream and tells him that he must gather up his family immediately and flee to Egypt. Now Egypt has not typically been a place of refuge and sanctuary for Jewish people, but it has moved from rule by pharaohs to rule by the Roman Empire, and so in a twist has become the safest place for this Jewish family, and especially Jesus, to be.

The second thing to lift up is that Jesus is only saved because Joseph is so obedient to the call of his God. He wastes no time getting the family away, not asking questions, not wondering about the legitimacy of this communication from an angel of God. And when, having lived as refugees in Egypt for a time, Joseph is visited by an angel again, who tells him that Herod is dead, and it is safe to return to Judea, Joseph again obeys God's call and returns to the land of his own people.

Joseph is aware, though, that while Herod might be gone, he has left a son, Archelaus, who is at least as power-hungry and cruel as his father. Archelaus' reach, however, is not as great as his father's; and so, following the warning of a dream, Joseph settles his family in a Jewish area north of Judea, Galilee. And we might have expected that this child, to whom significant foreigners have bent a knee, would be raised in one of the cities of Galilee, Tiberius or Sepphoris. But this is not so. Instead, the family settles, and Jesus is raised, in a little backwater town called Nazareth.

So what are we to make of this story on the first Sunday after Christmas, a pause between the anticipation and excitement of Christmas, and the celebration of the new year? Maybe this has been a bit of a low time, knowing that Christmas did not work out as planned because of weather and the difficulty of gathering people together. It has been quite a week, and after a couple of years of not being able to gather, having to cancel Christmas again, may just feel like another blow. Some people have been able to gather in the quiet days since Christmas, but others simply cannot get home, and so the waiting to be together, to truly celebrate this holiday with loved ones, continues even longer.

So where is the Good News in this story often called the Slaughter of the Innocents? Where do we find God in this horrendous act of cowardice? While nothing diminishes the pain and agony of the deaths of little children, God is at work in the dreams of Joseph, and in Joseph's unquestioning, uncomplaining obedience to the commands directed to him. Despite the fact that they ripped the Holy Family out of the bosom of their community, and return them only much later, God is watching over his beloved child, Jesus.

Not only is Jesus saved, but he has experienced more of what it is like to be human—fleeing the known and trusted, for an unknown place of sanctuary, with essentially the clothes on his back. And travelling again as the poor and downtrodden, to a new life in Galilee. As commentator Diane G. Chen puts it, "Even as a baby, Jesus faced rejection and was rescued. He was a saved Saviour, a delivered Deliverer."

So what can we take from this understanding of Jesus? It can bring us even more comfort that God is prepared to go to any lengths to be with us and for us. And it brings us instruction that to be saved, we must be as obedient as Joseph. It may not be the life we had planned. It may not be the comfort of family and friends, a community of familiarity that we might wish. We may not get to see those we would love to see, but God is with us in the midst of whatever chaos and uncertainty, disappointment and fear that we experience. God, in the person of Jesus has been there too, and knows what it is like to have plans changed and hopes dashed.

We no doubt find the ways this has come about to be horrible, unsettling, dismaying. And it is. A friend of mine has this to say about such situations: we may not be able to avoid the storms of life, but we can learn to dance in the rain.

May you dance through the difficulties and disappointments of the last weeks, of day-in and day-out life, trusting that while it might not be the way you had hoped, there will be blessing in it. May you dance in the rain.

In life, in death, in life beyond death, God is with us. We are not alone. Thanks be to God. Amen.

**Hymn: Unto Us a Boy Is Born**      **VU54**      **OneLicense #A-740237**

- 1 Unto us a boy is born!  
    King of all creation,  
    came he to a world forlorn,  
    the Lord of every nation,  
    the Lord of every nation.
  
- 2 Christ from heaven descending low  
    comes, on earth a stranger;  
    ox and ass their owner know,  
    becradled in the manger,  
    becradled in the manger.
  
- 3 Herod then with fear was filled:  
    'A prince,' he said, 'in Jewry!';  
    all the little boys he killed  
    at Bethlem in his fury,  
    at Bethlem in his fury.
  
- 4 Now may Mary's son, who came  
    so long ago to love us,  
    lead us all with hearts aflame  
    unto the joys above us,  
    unto the joys above us.
  
- 5 Omega and Alpha he!  
    Let the organ thunder,  
    while the choir with peals of glee  
    doth rend the air asunder,  
    doth rend the air asunder.

## Joys and Concerns

### Preparation for Prayer

Let us practice the art of Praying with our Eyes Wide Open, that in seeing the world and those within it we are called to tend we may be *opening the eyes of our hearts to all in need around us* (Lamont Koerner '81 MDiv God Pause for Thursday, September 16, 2021 from Luther Seminary):

**Prayers of the People** Reprinted by permission of Westminster John Knox Press from *Feasting on the Word<sup>o</sup> Worship Companion: Liturgies for Year A, Volume 1*. Copyright 2013, alt.

[A time of silence follows each petition.]

God of steadfast love,  
we thank you in this joyful Christmastide  
for all the blessings we enjoy:  
the shelter of home and the comfort of family and friends;  
the company of the faithful with whom we celebrate Christ's coming;  
and for your love, which shines as a light in the darkness.  
For these and many other blessings besides, we offer our thanks  
and praise . . .

God of mercy,  
in this holy season, there are people in need of your tender mercies:  
we pray for those who are ill and for those who are recovering;  
for those whose sadness is made heavier  
by memories of Christmases past or by some present pain.  
We pray for those who do not have enough:  
enough food, enough money, enough companionship, enough hope.  
Because there is not yet peace on earth,  
we pray for those in harm's way.  
Protect them from war, violence, and cruel oppression.  
For these and many other needs, we offer our intercessions . . .

God of hope,  
through long ages, you have given to your people dreams  
and a vision of the time when there will be no more war,  
no more pain or sorrow, no more death.  
We pray this day for the time to be fulfilled,  
when we will be reconciled to one another,  
to all creation,  
to you.  
Fill us with hope as we wait upon your coming realm.  
Give us the will to work for justice and peace  
and the courage to follow you into every place.  
We thank you for dreamers and visionaries  
who respond with imagination and joy  
to what you are doing in the church and in the world,  
as we remember them before you . . .

As a new year dawns, we know that all our times are in your hand.

We entrust ourselves and those we love to your care.  
In Christ's name we pray. **Amen.**

**Lord's Prayer**      Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name.  
Thy kin-dom 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 kin-dom, the power, and the glory forever and ever. Amen.

### **Minute for Mission: A Step Toward Peace**



Leila presses carob paste thanks to new grinding equipment provided by Mission & Service partner the Department of Service to Palestinian Refugees.

*Credit: DSPR*

One thing we can do to promote peace is share what we have. Your generosity through Mission & Service supports economic development programs that offer micro-loans, business training, and support to purchase equipment. One place your donations matter is in Palestine.

Palestinians' freedom of movement in the West Bank is restricted by physical barriers like the Separation Wall, checkpoints, and roadblocks, and bureaucratic ones like permits and closure of areas. The Israeli occupation has confiscated more than 100,000 hectares of land from Palestinian farmers to build illegal settlements, bypass roads, and the Separation Wall. Checkpoints, roadblocks, and crop destruction create challenges for farmers attempting to reach their land and their markets.

Leila Basheer is a 46-year-old mother of five who lives in a village in the West Bank in Palestine. Her husband is in poor health. Since she was a child, Leila has been preserving carob paste, which helps with upset stomach. Four years ago, as her family struggled, she decided to sell her carob paste. But processing it by hand is labour-intensive, so she turned to the Department of Service to Palestinian Refugees for help. The Department is supported by your Mission & Service donations.

“As I made some profit from local sales, I decided to expand. DSPR helped me buy grinding equipment that made making the paste much easier,” she says.

“The grinding equipment helped me increase my income by 40 percent. I look forward to buying a second grinding machine, this time to produce tomato paste,” says Leila.

Every step we take to support families like Leila’s brings us a step closer to peace and justice. Thank you for your generosity through [Mission & Service](#).

**Offering Invitation** *Reprinted by permission of Westminster John Knox Press from **Feasting on the Word**<sup>®</sup> Worship Companion: Liturgies for Year A, Volume 1. Copyright 2013.*

All creation teems with the abundance of  
God’s provision:  
mountains and hills, fruit trees and cedars,  
creeping things and flying birds!  
Our own lives bear witness to the abundance of  
God’s love and mercy,  
for God has lifted us up and carried us in our need.  
In joyful praise,  
we offer to God a portion of all we have received.

**Offering Hymn: In the Bleak Midwinter**

**VU55 v.4**

**What can I give him, poor as I am?  
If I were a shepherd, I would bring a lamb;  
if I were a wise one, I would do my part;  
yet what I can I give him - give my heart.**

**Offering Prayer (in unison)** *Reprinted by permission of Westminster John Knox Press from **Feasting on the Word**<sup>®</sup> Worship Companion: Liturgies for Year A, Volume 1. Copyright 2013.*

**In this gifting season, O God,  
we are grateful for the gift of your dear Son,  
our Savior, Jesus Christ.  
Receive, we pray, these offerings we bring.  
May they be used in the service  
of your grace and truth  
dwelling among us.  
In Christ’s holy name we pray. Amen.**

**Hymn: Joy to the World**      **VU59**

- 1      Joy to the world! the Lord is come:  
        let earth receive her King!  
        Let every heart prepare him room,  
        and heaven and nature sing, and heaven and nature sing,  
        and heaven, and heaven and nature sing.
  
- 2      Joy to the earth! the Saviour reigns:  
        let all their songs employ,  
        while fields and floods, rocks, hills and plains  
        repeat the sounding joy, repeat the sounding joy,  
        repeat, repeat the sounding joy.

- 3 No more let sins and sorrows grow,  
nor thorns infest the ground:  
he comes to make his blessings flow  
far as the curse is found, far as the curse is found,  
far as, far as the curse is found.
- 4 He rules the earth with truth and grace,  
and makes the nations prove  
the glories of his righteousness  
and wonders of his love, and wonders of his love,  
and wonders, wonders of his love.

**Commissioning and Blessing** *Spill the Beans Resources Team, spill the beans: worship and learning resources for all ages, Issue 33, p. 45. Copyright 2019.*

May we take a step  
into the new year  
carrying the hope  
of a God who crosses borders  
and finds God-self  
in a new place,  
a new possibility,  
a new challenge  
and new ground.  
May we,  
with all the faith and hope we have,  
join God there.

**Blessing** *Reprinted by permission of Westminster John Knox Press from Feasting on the Word® Worship Companion: Liturgies for Year A, Volume 1. Copyright 2013.*

May God the Creator,  
Christ the Savior,  
and the Holy Spirit, our Advocate,  
guard your going out and your coming in;  
and be your strength and help  
in every time of need.

**Household Prayer: Morning** *Reprinted by permission of Westminster John Knox Press from Feasting on the Word® Worship Companion: Liturgies for Year A, Volume 1. Copyright 2013.*

Creator God,  
as I begin this day,  
open my eyes, my ears,  
all my senses  
to the beauty around me.  
Help me to see how mountains and trees  
rise up in praise of you.  
Help me to hear how the birds of the air,  
the whales in the deep,  
and the wild animals on the ground

sing your praises.  
Help me to join another,  
or many others,  
in praise of your glory  
not only today,  
but even forever. Amen!

**Household Prayer: Evening** *Reprinted by permission of Westminster John Knox Press from **Feasting on the Word**<sup>®</sup>  
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Loving God,  
as the evening comes,  
and with it the moon and shining stars,  
I know that you are the Light  
in every darkness.  
Shine, then, upon anyone who is troubled this night.  
Shine, then, upon the troubles I have known.  
Help me to put my trust in you,  
for I am your child,  
and you have come to help me;  
you help all whom you have drawn close.  
I pray in the name of Jesus Christ,  
my brother and Savior. Amen.