

ROCKLAND Gathering & announcements**PRELUDE****A Word of Hope**

from xxx: pause, listen, and reflect

*Pause Breathe deeply. Clear your mind. Listen. Allow God's presence to fill your heart... Take in these **words of hope** for today...*

***Listen** from Mr. Rogers: 'It's not so much what we have in this life that matters. It's what we do with what we have. The alphabet is fine, but it's what we do with it that matters most. Making words like "friend" and "love" that's what really matters.' D365.org July 6, 2016*

PRELUDE*The Light of Christ is present with us...****CALL TO WORSHIP***from AWA 2016, 163***Pastor**

One: From our busy lives, God calls us together to worship and to pray.

ALL: We are here, Holy One!

ONE: From different places, Christ calls us to gather, to love, and to live.

ALL: We are here, blessed Jesus!

ONE: From unexpected journeys, the Spirit calls us into unity to serve and to grow.

ALL: We are here, Holy Spirit!

One: Come! Let us worship and sing praises forever!

ALL: We will praise the Lord as long as we live!

HYMN** *Lord I Lift Your Name on High #2088OPENING PRAYER****Liturgist**

One: The Lord be with you. **ALL: And also with you.** One: Let us pray together . . .

Loving God, from the very beginning you have journeyed with your people.

Journey with us, this day, as we learn what it means to follow you. Open our ears to your holy word. Open our hearts to your love and compassion. Open our hands to receive your grace and to share it with others. Enable us to faithfully claim the name, "Christian," as we strive to follow the ways and teachings of Jesus, the Christ. Empower us with your Holy Spirit, as we worship you and serve one another. In your holy name, we pray. Amen.

(AWA 2016, 164)

HYMN** *Shout to the Lord #2074PSALTER**Psalm 121 (left/**right**), Response 2**#844****PRAYER SONG***Where the Spirit of the Lord Is***#2119**

PRAYER FOR GOD’S PEOPLE, CHURCH & WORLD # xxx PASTOR

After each joy: “Hear our praise, O Lord!” After each concern: “Hear our prayer, O Lord!”

THE LORD’S PRAYER

OFFERING ... God calls us to share what we have— placing God at the center of our lives. So let us offer a portion of our gifts back to God, and may these simple gifts bring an abundant blessing to the world.

***DOXOLOGY,...**

#70

PRAYER OF Thanksgiving

God of mercy, we bring these gifts to you in thankfulness for all that you have done for us. May our gratitude turn into acts of mercy and justice, and may these gifts help our neighbors both near and far.. Amen.

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION OF SCRIPTURE (in unison): LITURGIST

Gracious God, may we receive your holy word with open and loving hearts, that our lives, and the lives around us, may be transformed. Amen.

SCRIPTURE

A Prayer Colossians 1:1-8

A Lesson in Love John 3: 1-17

WITNESS TO THE WORD *FOOTSTEPS: A Love Connection* Rev. Patricia Abell

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

‘We Believe’

*** HYMN ‘**

They’ll Know We Are Christians

#2223

***BENEDICTION** Now, as we go... let us Go to... Live in hope,
love with mercy, & serve in our calling as one of God’s precious disciples...
AND *May the Holy Trinity, the three-in-one God, bless you and keep you, now and forever.*

*** RESPONSE: *Blest Be the Ties That Bind v1 #557***

Carrying The Light of Christ into the world...

POSTLUDE

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION OF SCRIPTURE (in unison): **LITURGIST**

Gracious God, may we receive your holy word with open and loving hearts, that our lives, and the lives around us, may be transformed. Amen.

SCRIPTURE A Prayer

HB 1434

Colossians 1:1-8 Common English Bible (CEB)

1 From Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by God's will, and Timothy our brother.

²To the holy and faithful brothers and sisters in Christ in Colossae.

Grace and peace to you from God our Father.

³We always give thanks to God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, when we pray for you. ⁴We've done this since we heard of your faith in Christ Jesus and your love for all God's people. ⁵You have this faith and love because of the hope reserved for you in heaven. You previously heard about this hope through the true message, the good news, ⁶which has come to you. This message has been bearing fruit and growing among you since the day you heard and truly understood God's grace, in the same way that it is bearing fruit and growing in the whole world. ⁷You learned it from Epaphras, who is the fellow servant we love and Christ's faithful minister for your sake. ⁸He informed us of your love in the Spirit.

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This is the Word of the Lord. **ALL: Thanks be to God!**

A Lesson in Love

John 3:1-17

HB1282

John 3:1-17 Contemporary English Version (CEV)

3 There was a man named Nicodemus who was a Pharisee and a Jewish leader. ²One night he went to Jesus and said, "Sir, we know that God has sent you to teach us. You could not work these miracles, unless God were with you."

³ Jesus replied, “I tell you for certain that you must be born from above before you can see God’s kingdom!”

⁴ Nicodemus asked, “How can a grown man ever be born a second time?”

⁵ Jesus answered:

I tell you for certain that before you can get into God’s kingdom, you must be born not only by water, but by the Spirit. ⁶ Humans give life to their children. Yet only God’s Spirit can change you into a child of God. ⁷ Don’t be surprised when I say that you must be born from above. ⁸ Only God’s Spirit gives new life. The Spirit is like the wind that blows wherever it wants to. You can hear the wind, but you don’t know where it comes from or where it is going.

⁹ “How can this be?” Nicodemus asked.

¹⁰ Jesus replied:

How can you be a teacher of Israel and not know these things? ¹¹ I tell you for certain that we know what we are talking about because we have seen it ourselves. But none of you will accept what we say. ¹² If you don’t believe when I talk to you about things on earth, how can you possibly believe if I talk to you about things in heaven?

¹³ No one has gone up to heaven except the Son of Man, who came down from there. ¹⁴ And the Son of Man must be lifted up, just as that metal snake was lifted up by Moses in the desert. ^[Numbers 21.4-9] ¹⁵ Then everyone who has faith in the Son of Man will have eternal life.

¹⁶ God loved the people of this world so much that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who has faith in him will have eternal life and never really die. ¹⁷ God did not send his Son into the world to condemn its people. He sent him to save them!

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The Word of God for the people of God.

ALL: Thanks be to God!

Come Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful and kindle in us the fire of your love. Send forth your Spirit and you shall renew the face of the earth. O God, who by the light of the Holy Spirit did instruct the hearts of your faithful, grant that by this same spirit, we may be truly wise and ever enjoy your consolations through Christ our Lord. Amen... May the words of my mouth and the meditations of all our hearts be pleasing (in your sight) to you O Lord ... our rock and redeemer of all. AMEN.

Witness to the Word: *FOOTSTEPS: A Love Connection*

Grace and peace to you and thanks be to God! There are so many reasons to give thanks to God. Let me share just two with you.

First and foremost, this is a day I have eagerly awaited... to come alongside and journey together. It has been a long time coming...filled with waiting and waiting, and more waiting. We had a short, sweet taste on June 12th (music festival) & 18th (ice cream social). As with most sweet things, it left me wanting more...and so here we are together at last.