

**December 4, 2025**

Dear Ones,

Every week the Prayers of the People are a combination of prayers written for that particular week, taken from the resource *Sundays and Seasons*, and ongoing prayers which remain basically the same from week to week. These include the prayers for our church leadership, those on our prayer list, the birthday prayer, etc. This week we are adding a new one, which comes from a resolution passed at Diocesan Convention in October. The form we use this Sunday will be different from the one we use going forward (because I misread the instructions!), which goes like this:

*We pray for all those impacted by the imperfect systems meant to care for children who cannot remain with their families of origin. We pray especially for these children, and for judges and social workers, foster and biological families, school and community members, that healing and peace may be found.*

In my time as an elementary school substitute teacher, I encountered several foster kids. Their stories were heartbreaking, but I saw the positive difference being placed with a foster family that loved them and helped them heal made. We have members of our own congregation who have experience in the foster care system, both as children and adults. We, as their church family, are part of that system of loving them into wholeness.

The person who sponsored the resolution that led to this initiative will be familiar to some of you: Matthew Simpson, who was with us occasionally as a deacon a few years ago. He and his husband have become foster parents and are passionate about helping the Episcopal Diocese of Maine become more aware of the challenges that system faces, as well as the blessings they have experienced as they have brought children into their lives.

How can we as a congregation better support foster children and families in the Oxford Hills area? I welcome your thoughts.

In the meantime....*keep the faith*,  
Nancy+

#### **THIS SUNDAY'S READINGS**

Isaiah 11:1-10 \* Psalm 72: 1-7, 18-19 \* Romans 15:4-13 \* Matthew 3:1-12

#### **CREATION CARE TIPS**

Happy Advent!

Most of us have things to do today, planning what to buy for Christmas meals, parties, or gift-giving, or just the everyday work we do. At this time of year, we all seem busier. But a really special event is about to take place, and all of us will be better off if we take a few minutes throughout each day to focus on it. The most special gift ever will arrive!! -- again -- ready to enter every waiting heart!!! So to focus on what we can be thankful for, I'm offering a poem that reminds us that GOD made this beautiful Earth, and even during the holidays ahead, we need to respect and care for it.

*I sing the almighty power of God, that made the mountains rise,  
That spread the flowing seas abroad and built the lofty skies.  
I sing the wisdom that ordained the sun to rule the day;  
The moon shines full at His command, and all the stars obey.*

*I sing the goodness of the Lord, that filled the Earth with food:*

*He formed the creatures with His word, and then pronounced them good.  
Lord, how thy wonders are displayed, where'er I turn my eye,  
If I survey the ground I tread or gaze upon the sky!*

*There's not a plant of flower below, but makes thy glories known;  
And clouds arise, and tempests blow, by order from thy throne;  
While all that borrows life from thee is ever in thy care,  
And everywhere that I could be, thou, God, are present there.*

How far did you read before you said to yourself, "That's a hymn!"?  
I'd guess the first two words of the first and second verses gave it away. In case I've piqued your interest, here's the info you're looking for: The poem was written by "Uncle" Isaac Watts and put to the tune "Forest Green." It's hymn 398 in the 1982 Hymnal.

Let's all take a few moments to reflect on all the blessings God has bestowed on us. Yes, even the tempests -- and snowstorms -- and even the icky creepy-crawly creatures that God formed and called good.

– Patty Watts, Christ Church Earth Keeper

**Hurt not the earth—neither the sea—nor the trees. Revelation 7:3**

***THIS SATURDAY (12/6) 12:30 pm –JOIN US FOR ANOTHER GATHERING TO MAKE DRAFT DODGERS/ DOOR SNAKES. A great opportunity to learn some basics of sewing, especially mending.***



### **CALENDAR HIGHLIGHTS**

SUN:	9:30 AM	Sunday School
	10:15 AM	Eucharist
WED:	9:00 AM	Eucharist/Bible Study
THU:	9:00 AM	Christ Church Book Group/Zoom
	7:15 PM	Zoom Compline

### **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**Blue Christmas Service** Wednesday, December 17 at 4:30 here at Christ Church.

**The Greening of the Church for Christmas** will be on December 21<sup>st</sup>.

**Christmas Flowers** if you would like to contribute toward the flowers for our Christmas Eve service, please use the envelope found on the table with the service leaflets. If you would like your donation to be in honor or memory of someone, please print the name on the envelope.

**Christmas Eve Worship, 4:15 PM** Carol sing begins at 4:00.

Is anyone interested in another service? It could be an outdoor service in the early evening; a "midnight" mass at 11 PM or on Christmas morning? Let Nancy know.

**Pot Luck Breakfast Church, December 28** For the first Sunday after Christmas we will gather downstairs for breakfast church. Bring something breakfast-y to share. Looking for volunteers to coordinate 1) set up; 2) kitchen duty (including dishes); 3) clean up (putting tables and chairs away, etc)

**New Year's Eve** Any interest in a New Year's Eve game night? Speak to Nancy Moore.

For ongoing and up-to-date information about diocesan activities and news, as well as news from other congregations, sign up for **the DioLog**. <https://episcopalmaine.org/newsletter/>

### **MINISTRIES LIST**

	<b><u>This week:</u></b>	<b><u>Next week:</u></b>
Lector 1:	Mary Bickford	Rosemary Laban
Psalmist:	Bella Long	Malaikah Mulandi
Lector 2:	Bruce Watts	Michelle Christoph
Acolyte:	Patty Watts	Doug Wall
Euch. Minister:	Peter Hammond	Tom Knight
Shepherd:	Sue Glines	David Mering
Usher:	Mary Bickford	Peter Bickford
Altar Guild:	Jen Lehr	Mary B & Michelle C
Coffee Hour:	Holly Stuhr	Kathy L & Fran M
Counter:	Jeff Stuhr	Carolyn Tanner
Closer:	Tom Knight	Nancy Mering