**Faith Journey in the Life Cycle**

For the Christian who accepts each moment of life as a sacred trust from God, there are many small, sometimes private, often communal events that are made significant as they are offered up to God who creates and redeems each one.

The prayers and services that follow in this section point to several such occasions. The birth or adoption of a child, the annual celebration of a baptismal anniversary, the anticipation and fear related to separation, a trip, or a move -- all of these are moments when family, friends and Christian community can be ministers in an event of significance during the faith journey of another Christian. The thanksgiving for a home may be a new experience for some Presbyterians but the custom is a time honoured occasion among many people who have recently brought their faith and culture to our country and Church.

A congregation may choose to renew its commitment to Christ and its purpose as a congregation through a Service of Covenant Renewal; an event most appropriate at the time of an anniversary or at the beginning of a new venture. A service of commissioning may be used to set apart teachers and officers for their task and to enlist the continuing support of the congregation.

**When Life Begins**

As each gift of life is received into family and church, let prayers of thanksgiving and intercession be offered for the child, the parent(s) and all whose lives are touched by the event. Some prayers will be offered informally by individuals in the presence of the parent(s) and child. A prayer may be included in the prayers of thanksgiving and intercession during worship on the following Sunday. On other occasions, a brief service may be held in the hospital soon after delivery, or in the living place with other members of the family when the newly born or adopted child has come home.

The resources provided may be adapted to different occasions. Sensitivity to the single parent family is essential. Prayers should be oriented to specific situations and persons.

Any service conducted by an ordained minister of the church should focus on adoration, thanksgiving and intercessions appropriate to the situation. At no time should the words or actions suggest to the family that a service of thanksgiving is a substitute for baptism.

**When Life Begins**

*A brief service for use in hospital or home may be outlined as follows.*

 Greeting

 Adoration

 Readings from Scripture

 Prayers of Thanksgiving

 Prayers of Intercession

 The Lord's Prayer

 Ascription of Glory

 Benediction

**Prayers And Readings**

**A Christian Greeting**

The Lord be with you.

**And also with you.** *Ruth 2:4.*

**A Prayer Of Adoration**

Gracious God:

like a mother who nurtures her children
you have cared for us;

like a father you have called us by name
and claimed us as your own;

you have loved us into being,

placed us in human families,

and blessed us on our journey.

By the presence of your Spirit
you confirm our joy in this moment.

You, O God, are the source of all life

and we praise your holy name;

through Jesus Christ our Saviour. **Amen.**

**Some Suggested Readings**

*A brief comment or a moment for silent reflection may follow the reading from Scripture*.

*Psalm* 8

*Psalm* 68:4-6b, 19, 35

*Psalm* 103:1-5, 13-14, 17-18, 22

*Psalm* 116:1-2, 5, 12-13, 18-19

*Deuteronomy* 6:4-9

*I Samuel* 1:9-11, 20-28, 2:26

*Mark 9:33-37*

*Mark 10:13-16*

*Luke 2:22-33, (34-35), 52*

**Thanksgiving After Delivery**

Gracious God, creator and sustainer of all:

we praise you for calling \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (and \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_)
to share in your creative action through the wondrous mystery of childbirth.

We give you thanks that \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ has been brought
safely through her time of pregnancy and labour. Strengthen her now that she might nourish and nurture this child, sharing with you in the joy of creative love.

We ask this in the name of the One who was born of a woman -- Jesus Christ our Redeemer.  **Amen**.

**A Prayer For Parents**

Gracious God, our creator, redeemer, and sustainer;

we thank you for the gift of this child

entrusted now to the care of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

May they be patient and understanding,

ready to guide, quick to forgive.

Through your grace given to them,

may this child know your love
and learn to love your world,

and the whole family of your children;

through Jesus Christ our Saviour. **Amen**.

a prayer for use by the parent(s)

Gracious God, giver of all life,

thank you for calling me *(us)*

to share in your work of creation,

and especially for your gift of this child, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

Fill me (*us*) with such faith and love

that *\_\_\_\_\_\_* may daily grow in grace

and live to serve you and your people,

through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

**A Prayer For The Home**

Lord Jesus Christ,

who shared in Nazareth the life of an earthly home:

dwell, we pray, in this home.

Give to \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, and \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ the grace to serve each other as you have served.

Grant that by deed and word they may be witnesses to your saving love among those with whom they live.

May all who live here learn to live as members of your kingdom on earth.

We ask this in your holy name. **Amen**.

**A Prayer For Use When A Child Has A Disability**

O God, creator of us all:

we give you thanks for this child
committed now into our care.

Grant to us hearts that are understanding and accepting;

give to us the gifts of courage and patience
to face the challenges ahead.

In the midst of our disappointment and fear,

may your love for us show forth in our love for them.

Help us to create an atmosphere in which *\_\_\_\_\_\_* may live a life of dignity and worth.
Through Jesus Christ, who shared our human

journey and strengthens us on the way.  **Amen**.

**A Prayer For An Adopted Child**

Gracious God:

you have adopted us as your children

calling us the heirs of your kingdom.

We rejoice in your loving kindness.

We give you thanks for \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
who has come to bless this family

and for \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
who have welcomed *\_\_\_\_\_\_\_* as their own.

By the power of your Holy Spirit

fill their home with love, trust, and understanding,

that they may grow together in faith and maturity,
through Jesus Christ our Saviour.  **Amen**.

The Lord's Prayer

**Our Father in heaven,**

 **hallowed be your name,**

 **your kingdom 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 kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours**

 **now and forever. Amen**

**An Ascription Of Glory**

All glory be to you, O God,

whose power working in us is able to accomplish abundantly

far more than we can ask or imagine.

Glory be to you, O God,

from generation to generation,
in the church and in Christ Jesus,

for ever and ever.  **Amen**. *Based on Eph. 3:20*.

**A Benediction**

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ,

the love of God,

and the communion of the Holy Spirit

be with all of you. **Amen**. *II Cor. 13:13*.

**OR**

The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord be kind and gracious to you.

The Lord look upon you with favour

and give you peace. **Amen**.  *Num. 6:24-26, TEV.*

**The Anniversary Of A Baptism**

As the implications of Christian discipleship unfold throughout life, it is good to remember and celebrate with thanksgiving the gift of baptism. The anniversary of one's baptism can be marked in many different ways appropriate to the age and life circumstances of the person. The congregation in which the person worships needs to be sensitive to these opportunities to mark and celebrate the growth in Christian maturity that was initiated at the time of baptism.

Children baptized as infants are not likely to recall their experience of baptism unless we provide opportunities for them to do so. Choose baptismal certificates which provide space for recording information about the people and events associated with the day. Involving children significantly in baptismal celebrations within the congregation is another way to inform them about their own baptism. Another is to observe the anniversary of a baptism around the table at home. Here, a candle given at the time of baptism can be a useful symbol.

Light the candle before a family meal. Recall what the person's baptism was like. Talk a bit about the meaning of baptism. Explain why a candle is used as a symbol for Christ or read one or more of *John 8:12-13; John 1:1-5, 9-13; Matthew 4:14-16*. Join hands for the following prayer.

**Thanksgiving For Baptism**

Blessed are you, gracious God, creator of the universe;
from the beginning of time you have called people
to be your children and to serve you in the world.

Blessed are you, O God, redeemer of the world;
for by your Spirit and the sign of water,
you have called us and signed us
as your children.

We give you thanks and praise on this day as we remember
the time when you claimed \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ as your own through baptism.

By your grace, may *\_\_\_\_\_\_\_* continue
to live and grow in your love.
Help all in this family to come closer to you
and to each other
by faith, prayer, and service.

All glory be to you, O God,

and to Jesus Christ our Saviour,

and to the Holy Spirit,

one God, now and forever. **Amen**.

**Occasional Prayers**

**At A Time Of Separation**

Let us ask God to bless us at this time of separation.

Gracious God, look upon us in your love and grant us your blessing. Be with \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ as *­*they leaves us and with those of us who remain. You know how mixed our feelings are at this time. Help us to remember that we are always united to one another always in your love, through Jesus Christ our Redeemer. **Amen**.

*The family may then join hands and say together one of the following benedictions.*

THE MIZPAH

May the Lord watch between you and me, when we are absent one from the other.  **Amen**. *Gen. 31:49*.

**OR**

THE AARONIC BLESSING

The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord be kind and gracious to you.

The Lord look upon you with favour

and give you peace. **Amen**.*Num. 6:24-26****,*** *TEV.*

**On A Birthday**

Gracious God, the birth of your Son Jesus Christ brought great joy to Mary and Joseph. We give you thanks for \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ whose birthday we celebrate today. May they continue to grow in faith, hope, and love; through Jesus Christ our Saviour. **Amen**.

**On The Anniversary Of A Marriage**

On this our special day, O God, we remember with thanksgiving our vows of love and commitment to you and to each other through our marriage. We pray for your continued blessing. May we learn through our sorrows and our joys and discover new riches in our life together; through Jesus Christ our Redeemer.  **Amen**.

**Thanksgiving For A New Pet**

Gracious God;

you are creator of all things --

birds and animals, trees and flowers,
mountains and seas, and all people.
We praise you for your mighty works.

And now, we give you thanks and praise for our new pet, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, which has been given into our care.
May we find joy in \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, take good care of them,
play with them, and love them.
May we honour you through our care of this your creature.
We pray in the name of the One who cared for all,
Jesus Christ our Saviour. **Amen**.

**Before Leaving On A Holiday**

God of work and play, of labour and of rest:

bless to us this holiday, we pray.

May our journey be in safety;

may we be a joy to people we meet;

may we be refreshed in the goodness of your creation;

may we be renewed in body, mind, and spirit;

through Jesus Christ, our Saviour and our Guide.  **Amen**.

**At The Beginning Of A New Job**

Lord Jesus Christ:

you knew the satisfactions and responsibilities
of human work
and hallowed it forever
in a carpenter's shop in Nazareth.

Today, as \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ begins this new job,
may *\_\_\_\_\_\_* be a blessing to others
by living and working to the honour and
glory of your holy name. **Amen**.

**At The Beginning Of A New School Year**

At the beginning of a new school year, O God, we offer
thanks and praise for the gift of new beginnings and for the opportunity to learn, to explore, and to wonder. We pray for teachers, students, and staff that this year might be
rewarding for all. Be with us as we face the challenges of
new tasks, the fear of failure, the expectation of family, friends and self. In our learning, may we grow in service to others and in love for your world; through Jesus Christ our Saviour. **Amen**.

**At The Beginning Of Retirement**

Eternal God, you hold the times and seasons in your hands. We give you thanks for the years and the challenges we have known and for the assurance of your divine presence in times of both joy and sorrow. Continue, we pray, to grace our days and our journey through life as we retire from one form of service and seek new ways to honour you and those who are companions on the way. As in times past, there will be days of delight and days of difficulty. May each new day be received as a sacred trust and lived to your glory, through Jesus Christ our Saviour.  **Amen.**

**OR**

Gracious God, I give you thanks
for the days and years of life which bring me to
another conclusion and a new beginning.

For the treasury of experiences that have enriched life
and for many memories,
I give you thanks.

For work to do and tasks accomplished,

for joys and pains
that have been woven into the fabric of my years,
I praise you.

Now, as I enter this new time of my life,
I seek again the guidance of your Holy Spirit.
May days no longer filled with old obligations,
be free for new activities and associations.
May fears and uncertainties about the future

be transformed into quiet confidence

as a new style of living becomes familiar.

Continue I pray, the assurance of your presence
on the daily walk of life.

Enrich my life within your community of covenant people,
that I may continue to worship and serve you

in the church, all the days of my life;

through Jesus Christ my Saviour. **Amen.**

**For Reconciliation In Relationships**

**God of love and peace:**

**forgive us as we seek to forgive each other for all the hurt we have brought into our lives. Let your healing love rest upon the wounds we have caused by our anger, pride or neglect. Deepen our love in a new understanding for each other and for you. We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ who bore on the cross our discord and our grief. Amen.**

**For Home and Family**

**Loving God:
who made all people of the world to be one human family,
and who desires that we live together in harmony,
grant that our home,
by its worship and its witness,
may help to hasten the day when your will is done on earth
as it is in heaven;
for the sake of Jesus Christ. Amen.**

**A Blessing**

**May the God of hope**

**fill us with all joy and peace in believing,**

**so that we may abound in hope**

**by the power of the Holy Spirit. Amen.** *Rom. 15:13*.

**Grace at Meals**

Blessed are you, O God, ruler of the universe;

you have created the fruit of the vine,

you bring forth bread from the earth,

we give you grateful thanks. **Amen.**

 *Based on a Jewish blessing*.

Give thanks to God,

whose loving mercy endures forever. **Amen.**

The eyes of all look to you, O God,

 and you give them their food in due season.

You open your hand,

 satisfying the desire of every living thing.

Thanks be to you.  **Amen.** *Based on Ps. 145:15, 16.*

**Moving and Journeying**

In this era of extreme mobility, Christians need to be reminded that the God of the Exodus still goes with us and before us into the unknown. It is important for the congregation to give thought to the means by which it says good bye to its members, helps them to settle quickly into another faith community, or offers supportive care to those who must travel frequently throughout the world. A few suggestions follow.

The "blessing on the way" of a family or individual leaving the congregation is best celebrated as part of the Sunday service immediately before the move. A brief statement may inform the congregation of who is going, where and why. There may be some expression of appreciation for gifts and life in the congregation. The right hand of fellowship may be offered by minister and officers during the service. The prayer that follows may be offered during a time of special recognition or included in the prayers of the people.

**Prayer Of Thanksgiving And Intercession**

Gracious God:

we give you thanks and praise for your gift to us of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, and \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ in the time they have been with us. For their love and presence and faithful service, we are grateful. By the power of your Spirit, be with them as they leave us and bless them on their way. Continue to guide, protect and uphold them in their new home and congregation. Help us to remember that we are united to one another always in your love, made known to us through our Redeemer, Jesus Christ.  **Amen**.

**The Blessing**

*The congregation may say or sing the Aaronic Blessing:*

**The Lord bless you and keep you.**

**The Lord be kind and gracious to you.**

**The Lord look upon you with favour**

**and give you peace. Amen.** *Num. 6:24-26, TEV.*

**A Prayer For Travellers**

O God, whose glory fills the whole creation
and whose presence is with us wherever we go:

preserve all those who travel,
and especially \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.
Surround them with your loving care;
guide them as they venture into

new and unknown places;
protect them in every danger
and sustain them until their journey's end;

through Jesus Christ our Saviour. **Amen**.

**Thanksgiving For A New Home**

It is appropriate to begin life in a new home by offering praise and prayers to God. The service should happen as soon as possible after a family or individual has moved in. Members of the congregation, the elder of the household, friends and neighbours may be invited. The worship leader is advised to consult with members of the household regarding their specific expectations related to the prayers.

The prayers which follow are examples of what may be offered by the worship leader, elders or others assembled. When few are in attendance, it may be desirable to move from room to room throughout the house while appropriate prayers are made. Bidding prayers and an extended time for silent prayer may be appropriate.

The lighting of candles may be an appropriate symbol of the presence of the spirit of Christ. A candle may be lit in each room or one large candle may be lit in relation to saying the sentences before the benediction.

Hymn books or song sheets should be supplied. It is not necessary for the singing to be accompanied.

A meal or light refreshments may be served after the service. It is an opportunity to enjoy favourite ethnic dishes and to share them with friends in the congregation.

**An Order**

**Greeting**

Peace be to this house and all who live in it.

Peace to all who enter or go from it.

The peace of God and of our Saviour Jesus Christ

abide here continually.  **Amen.**

**OR**

"Behold, I stand at the door and knock;" says the Lord,

"if anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in. . . ." *Rev. 3:20, RSV.*

The Lord be with you.

**And also with you.** *Ruth 2:4.*

Let us pray.

**Prayer Of Adoration**

Gracious God:

you lived among us in the person of Jesus of Nazareth,
sharing the joy of an earthly home.

By the presence of your Spirit,

you confirm our joy in this celebration.

We offer you our praise and thanks.

Be in this space;

be in the activities that will take place here;

be with the people who live here and those who will visit;

through Jesus Christ our Saviour. **Amen**.

A HYMN OF PRAISE

**A Reading From The Old Testament**

*One of the following may be read:*

*Psalm* 100

*Psalm* 103:1-5, 19-22

*Psalm* 146

*Deuteronomy* 6:4-9

A HYMN

A READING FROM THE NEW TESTAMENT

*Matthew* 7:24-29

*I Corinthians* 13

*Ephesians* 3:14-19

*I John* 4:11-21

the witness to scripture

A HYMN

**The Prayers**

*These or other prayers of blessing, thanksgiving and dedication may be offered.*

Gracious God, giver of life and love:

bless this home, we pray,

that it may be a sign of your kingdom.

Bless those who dwell here

that they may live together in joy and peace.

Bless all who visit this house;

bless the work and the play that will be encompassed by these walls;

bless the love and the nurturing which will happen here.

We offer to you, O Lord, our thanks that\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_(and\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ etc.)

*has/have* a new place in which to
create a home,

share love,
welcome friends,
and experience the presence of your Holy Spirit.
May they dwell here with a continuing assurance
of your love and care.

May the living room be a centre of peace and joy
where friendship and hospitality are welcome guests.

May the dining room be a place for sharing meals
with gratitude and praise.

May meals prepared in the kitchen
be food for both body and spirit,
seasoned with love and laughter.

May the family room offer space for
entertainment, recreation, and conversation
that reflects the holy playfulness
of your creative work.

May rest and renewal bless each bedroom
and may love hallow their walls.

May this child's room be a place where peace and rest are found, that \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ may always awake with joy to a new day of Christian life and service.

May the bathroom be a place where waters of cleansing and refreshment are daily reminders of baptism into Christ.

*Similar prayers may be added concluding with:*

Build up this home in love, O God;

be present in this house.

**Our Father in heaven,**

 **hallowed be your name,**

 **your kingdom 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 kingdom, the power and the glory are yours**

 **now and for ever. Amen.**

HYMN

**Benediction**

Unless the Lord builds the house,

those who build it labour in vain.

 *Ps. 127:1*.

**OR**

Jesus Christ is the light of the world.

Let the light of Christ shine in this home.

**AND**

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ,

the love of God,

and the communion of the Holy Spirit

be with all of you. **Amen.** *II Cor. 13:13.*

**Teachers, Leaders, Officers**

**A Service of Commissioning**

The following service may be adapted as a service of commissioning for teachers, leaders, or officers in the congregation. The minister, an elder or other person appointed will lead. The service may be used at a special service or on Sunday morning after the sermon.

*Those to be commissioned will stand before the leader who will say:*

The Lord continues his ministry

in and through the church.

All Christians are called

to participate in the ministry of Christ.

As his body on earth

we all have gifts to use

in the church and in the world

to the glory of Christ, our King and Head. *Living Faith* 7.2.1.

God calls some of us to a ministry of teaching (*administration*, *music*, *management*, etc.) within the church, to the nurturing of Christian faith among children, young people and adults and the building up of the household of God.

As you prepare to take on the responsibility of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ in this congregation, do you accept this task willingly, as a calling from God?

 **We do**.

Do you commit yourself to carry it out with enthusiasm and perseverance?

 **We do**.

Do you acknowledge your dependence on God's strength and guidance?

 **We do.**

The congregation will please stand.

These teachers, leaders and officers will carry God's lively Word in a special way to those whom they serve in the name of Christ. Do you promise to support them in their task, to pray for them, and to recognize their contribution to God's work in this community?

 **We do.**

Learning in the church is not limited to a few children, youth and adults. It is the responsibility of all of us to grow in grace and in the knowledge of God as well the skills we need to fulfill our tasks. As children, youth and adults,

will you commit yourselves to take advantage of the learning opportunities provided by this congregation?

 **We will.**

May God bless and strengthen us as we seek to do as we have promised.

**Covenant Renewal**

There are times in the life of every congregation when it is appropriate to affirm the covenant of baptism as a community of faith. This of course happens at each celebration of the eucharist and at each baptism of an individual. However, the action of the congregation can be given more intentional focus through a service of Covenant Renewal.

Covenant Renewal may be a focal point on several occasions: when there has been no baptism in the congregation for a year or more; in a time of political or social crisis; at a time of critical decision-making or conflict within a congregation; the beginning of a major project such as building or after a trauma such as a fire. These are exceptional circumstances.

Ordinary times of great celebration and thanksgiving are also appropriate for covenant renewal in the congregation. These include Easter, Pentecost, anniversaries and other days of special significance.

The Covenant Renewal follows the sermon and includes a confession of faith.

**An Outline**

 Invitation

 Affirmation of Faith

 Covenant Renewal

 Prayer

 The Peace

**Covenant Renewal**

**An Order**

*The Covenant Renewal will normally follow the sermon as a response to the Word proclaimed and in preparation for the Great Thanksgiving at the Lord's Table.*

*A minister of Word and Sacraments, an elder or other representative of the congregation may lead the service. A large pitcher filled with water may be brought forward as the minister and other leaders take their positions at the baptismal font.*

*Bold face type indicates the words of the people. The leader begins by saying:*

Christian friends,

let us remember our baptism and be thankful.

*Holding the pitcher high, water is poured into the font, so that the congregation may see and hear it.*

*The leader continues:*

Jesus Christ has chosen us

and in baptism has joined us to himself.

He calls us to be the church

which is his body.

He has formed us into one family

sharing a common faith and hope.

As the people of God, let us confess the faith of the church.

Do you believe in God the Father?

**I believe in God, the Father almighty,**

 **creator of heaven and earth**.

Do you believe in Jesus Christ?

**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.**

Do you believe in the Holy Spirit?

**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.**

In baptism we are set apart for discipleship.

It requires commitment

and looks toward growth in Christ.

**What is born may die.**

**What is grafted may wither.**

In order that we may live

and continue to grow in Christ

let us be open to God's grace

and renew with God the covenant

made at our baptism.

Do you intend to be faithful to

the covenant God made with you at baptism;

to live among God's people;

to grow in knowledge and understanding of God's Word;

to share in the Lord's Supper;

to engage in prayer;

to give witness to the good news in Christ

by word and deed;

to share responsibility and exercise your rights as members of this congregation,

and to seek after justice and peace in all the earth?

**We do, trusting in God's help and guidance**.

Let us pray together.

**Blessed be God forever and ever.**

**By God's great mercy**

**we have been born anew to a living hope**

**through the resurrection of Jesus Christ**

 **from the dead,**

**and to an inheritance**

**which nothing can destroy or wither.**

**It is kept for us in heaven,**

**and will be revealed at the end of time.** *Based on*

**We rejoice with a joy too great for words.***I Peter 1:3-5.*

**Loving God, keep us faithful and active**

**in Christ's church;**

**send us out into the world**

**to share your love and justice.**

**May we continue to be yours forever,**

**daily growing in your grace,**

**ever increasing in your Holy Spirit**

**until we come to your glorious kingdom.** **Amen**.

Remember your baptism and be thankful.

The peace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all.

**And also with you.**

*The congregation may exchange a sign of peace. The service continues.*