May 25, 2025
MEDINA
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST. CONGREGATIONAL
META
MORPHOSIS
A W.I.S.E Series

Medina UCCC's WISE Covenant calls us to welcome, include, support, and engage those with neurodiverse mental health experiences. In *Metamorphosis*, we affirm that all people—regardless of ability—are created in God's image and called to ministry. As the Body of Christ, we walk together in love, breaking stigma and embracing each person's unique gifts. Through Scripture, we'll explore transformation, resilience, and God's work in every life.

******Those who are able please stand*

RINGING OF THE BELL

PRELUDE "America, the Beautiful" – arr. Tedd Smith — Cathy Fafrak, Piano

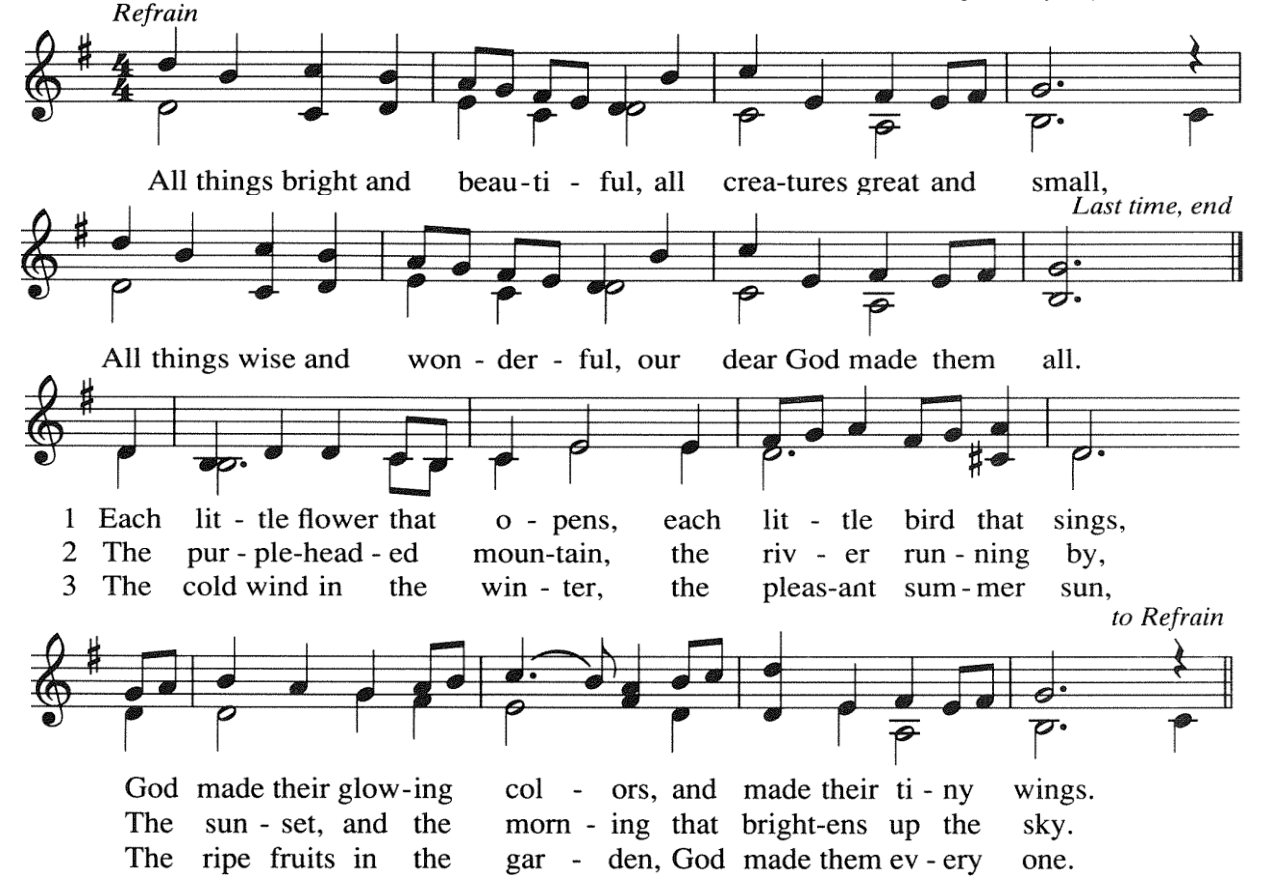
WELCOME

PASSING OF THE PEACE

***OPENING HYMN** **"All Things Bright and Beautiful"**

Cecil F. Alexander, 1848; alt.

ROYAL OAK 7.6.7.6. with refrain
English melody, adapt. Martin Shaw, 1915



***CALL TO WORSHIP**

We begin in Memorial.
Of the fallen who have preserved our union.
We are engaged in a divided time,
Not just as a society, but as individuals as well.
We must remember certain truths we hold as self-evident.
We are dying. We must try to stay alive.
Nothing lasts forever, but in the meantime
Let us practice at being alive.
There are many reasons why you are here:
Yet beauty, it needs no reason.

SPECIAL MUSIC "Family Prayer" – Michael McCabe & Sally S. Robinson — Alice Metzloff, voice
© 1995, Lorenz Publishing Corp.

SCRIPTURE Acts 16:9-15 (N.T. pg. 127) — Nick North, Liturgist

MESSAGE FOR THE WHOLE FAMILY OF GOD — Stacie Yates

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread and forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil, for thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Joys and Concerns
Pastoral Prayer

POET OF THE SEASON: Bright Eyes. *Bowl of Oranges. Track 9 on Lifted or The Story Is in the Soil, Keep Your Ear to the Ground. Saddle Creek Records, 2002*

So I dressed myself and left then, out into the gray streets
But everything seemed different and completely new to me
The sky, the trees, houses, buildings, even my own body
And each person I encountered, I couldn't wait to meet
And I came upon a doctor who appeared in quite poor health
I said, "There's nothing that I can do for you you can't do for yourself"
He said, "Oh yes you can, just hold my hand, I think that that would help"
So I sat with him a while, then I asked him how he felt
He said, "I think I'm cured
No, in fact, I'm sure of it
Thank you, stranger
For your therapeutic smile"

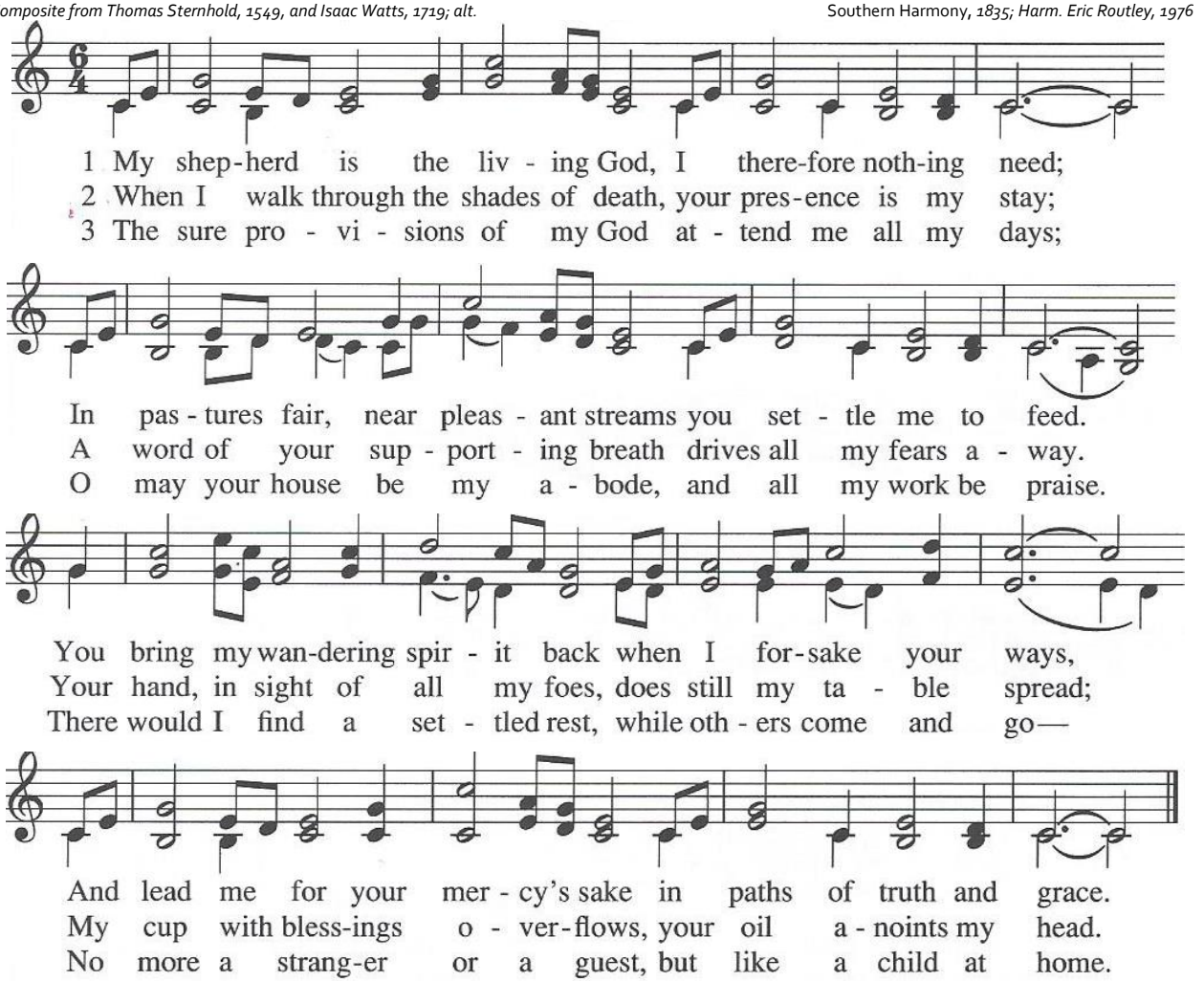
COMMUNAL PRAYER

Holy One,
Presence is power.
We know this. Yet how often we are removed from the moment.
We are removed from being fully present to ourselves and our neighbor.
There are so many voices yelling. There is the white noise of anxiety and pressure and opinions every which way.
Help us listen to the bass notes of your love and our values.
All thanks and praise to you, our Still-Speaking God,
Who was and is now and forever shall be. Amen.

SERMON "Conversion" The Rev. Dr. Luke Lindon

HYMN **"My Shepherd Is the Living God"** CONSOLATION C.M.D.

Composite from Thomas Sternhold, 1549, and Isaac Watts, 1719; alt. Southern Harmony, *1835; Harm. Eric Routley, 1976*



INVITATION TO GENEROSITY

UCC Medina
@uccmedina

venmo

There is an offering plate if you feel led to deposit your envelope or an offering there. You can also give through our Realm app or get the link to give by texting UCCMEDINA to 73256. You can also give through VENMO. Thank you for your prayerful consideration!

Offering Invitation (Adapted from Warsan Shire's poem "Atlas")

Yesterday, I held a map and asked,
Where does it hurt?
It answered,
Everywhere.
May our giving in whatever way we are led,
Be a balm.

***Doxology** *(words, Ruth Duck, ©2005, GIA Publications)*

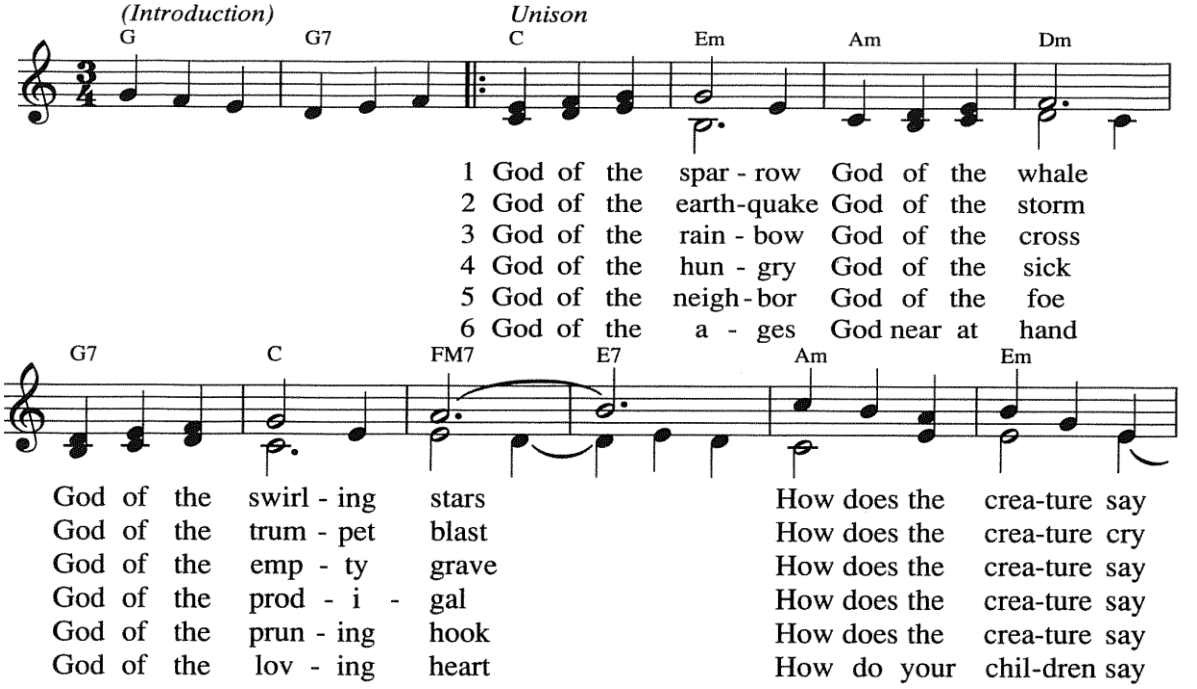
Praise God, the Source of life and birth; Praise God, the Word, who came to earth;
Praise God, the Spirit, holy flame; All glory, honor to God's Name! Amen.

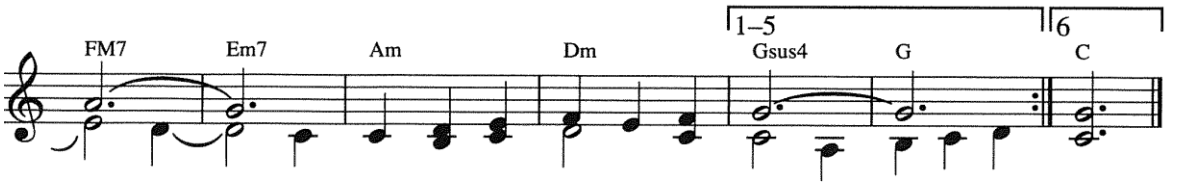
***Give Thanks**

Gracious Mystery, May we open our hearts to you and to our neighbor. May our giving be guided to where you need it the most. To your glory and to help our neighbor, whom we often struggle to love, But you delight in our attempt. Thank you for guiding our footsteps and being a lamp to our path. Amen.

***SENDING HYMN** **"God of the Sparrow, God of the Whale"** ROEDER 5.4.6.7.

Jaroslav J. Vajda, 1983; © 1983 Jaroslav J. Vajda *Carl F. Schalk, 1983; © 1983 by G.I.A. Publications, Inc.*





Awe	How does the	crea-ture say	Praise	
Woe	How does the	crea-ture cry	Save	
Grace	How does the	crea-ture say	Thanks	
Care	How does the	crea-ture say	Life	
Love	How does the	crea-ture say	Peace	
Joy	How do your	chil-dren say		Home.

***ANNOUNCEMENTS**

***BENEDICTION**

May you go in memory,
In Presence,
and in the love of Christ.
Go, for this service has ended,
and our service now begins. Amen!

***CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE "God Be with You"**

God be with you 'til we meet again; By His counsels guide uphold you;
With His sheep securely fold you; God be with you 'til we meet again.

***POSTLUDE** All Things Bright and Beautiful – arr. Anna Laura Page Cathy Fafrak, Organ

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THE PILGRIM MESSENGER
MAY 25, 2025

"Welcoming, Loving, Serving, Where God Has No Limits.

More Than Church On Sunday!"

Live streaming of the 10:30 a.m. Sanctuary service is available at www.uccmedina.org/live

May 25 thru June 1, 2025
WEEK AT A GLANCE

Sun 8:15 am Chapel Worship
9:00 am Gathering Worship
10:30 am Sanctuary Worship
10:30 am Summer Jesus Vibes
10:30 am Teen Church (Last one 'til fall)

Mon **MEMORIAL DAY / OFFICE CLOSED**

Tues

Wed 10:30 am Quilters
6:30 pm Gathering Band Rehearsal

Thurs 6:30 pm Bible Study
Fri
Sat
Sun 8:15 am Chapel Worship
9:00 am Gathering Worship
10:30 am Sanctuary Worship
10:30 am Summer Jesus Vibes

THE CHURCH OFFICE WILL BE CLOSED ON MONDAY, MAY 26TH IN OBSERVANCE OF MEMORIAL DAY

SUMMER MUSIC

Here at UCC, the chancel, bell, and children's choirs break for the summer. This is where we need you! Summer is a great time to showcase one of your musical talents for the anthem. Individuals, groups, ensembles, dancers, kids, singers, instrumentalists, pets (just kidding about pets), You can perform your selection at the 8:15 or 10:30 service or both. So, dust off those accordions, recorders, and ukuleles and share your talent or have your child share theirs! The sign up and details are hanging on the bulletin board in the East Room Hallway. See Tracy Gabrielsen if you have any questions.

Worship Highlights: 8:15, 9 & 10:30 am

Scripture: Acts 16:9-15

Sermon: "Conversion": The Rev. Dr. Luke Lindon

Communion Table: The flowers on the communion table today are given by Greg & Barb Shaffer in memory and honor of their loved ones.

STRENGTHEN THE CHURCH OFFERING - JUNE 8th

Strengthen the Church Offering supports the expansion of ministry and growth of UCC local congregations. Your support of this offering will help the UCC fulfill its commitment to creating a just world for all by investing in new ministries and practices that meet the emerging needs of local communities. As God calls our congregations to be the church in new ways, your generosity will plant new churches, awaken new ideas in existing churches and develop the spiritual life in our youth and young adults. We hope you will continue to sustain this work by giving generously to this offering on Pentecost, June 8th.

MAY MONTHLY DONATION

We will be collecting **personal hygiene items.** These items will be used to stock up the local pantries. Please place your donations for the Mission Team in the marked bins across from the elevator by the Mission table. Thank you for your generosity!

MEN'S BREAKFAST

Just a reminder: the next Men's Breakfast will be on Monday, June 2nd at Buehler's River Styx at 8:00 am. All men of the church are invited. We hope to see you there!

EAGLE SCOUT PROJECT

My name is Josh Swantek. I am an eighth-grade student at Buckeye Jr. High School and a member of Boy Scout Troop 500. During my four years in Boy Scouts, I have earned 36 merit badges. In my Troop, I have served as Librarian, Outdoor Ethics Guide, Troop Guide, Instructor, Patrol Leader, and Quartermaster. I have also attended the National Youth Leadership Training program and hope to return in 2026 as a staff member. My current rank is Life Scout, and I am working on attaining the rank of Eagle Scout. One thing that I need to do to reach this goal is to complete a service project.

The service project that I am working on is to build a table to house all the donations that come into the church for the Mission Team. It will be a permanent fixture and will replace the existing plastic table opposite the elevator in the welcoming area. The table will have space to display information about our church's missions and will have space to collect and store the items that the Mission Team collects. I thought to start this project:

- To increase the safety of the collection area by reducing the number of obstacles at the bottom of the steps in the donation area.
- To improve the overall organization of the collection space.
- To improve the appearance of the donation area.

Before I can begin building the storage unit, I need to raise money to purchase supplies. Based on my planning budget, I expect the cost to be $900. Any funds that I raise beyond what is needed to complete this project will be directed to the church. If you would consider helping me with this part of my project, I would very much appreciate it. If you would like to help me raise money for this project, please send a check to the church payable to "Boy Scout Troop 500" and write "Joshua Swantek Eagle Project" in the memo line. Please either send this to the church office, or to my home at 898 Bunker Hill, Medina, OH 44256. If you would like a receipt for your donation, we will work with the church to ensure that one is provided for you. Thank you for your consideration!

Very Sincerely, Joshua Swantek

A QUICK MESSAGE FROM YOUR MISSION TEAM!

Meijer is helping to support Feeding Medina County by offering *$10 Meijer Simply Give* donation cards which can be purchased at the time of checkout through the end of June. If purchased on June 14th it is a double donation day!!

UPCOMING JUNE DONATION OF THE MONTH:

- Bags of sugar, creamer cups, to-go coffee cups with lids, and canned meals with pull tabs (ex: SpaghettiOs or soups)

UPPER ROOMS AVAILABLE

Our church receives bi-monthly editions of "The Upper Room", a daily devotional. Feel free to take one home with you to enrich your prayer life. Large print copies are available, as well. Look for them near the tower entrance and the chapel lobby.

IT'S A PARTY!
CHOIR, BELLS, and BAND!

WHEN? Saturday, June 7 @ 5:00 p.m.
WHERE? Pam and Harry's
6480 Livia Lane, Medina 440-479-6814
Pam and Harry will supply meat, buns, soft drinks, and utensils. Let's potluck the rest. We hope to be outside, so you might want to bring a lawn chair. Families welcome! Please sign up on the bulletin board by the East Room.

The deadline for submission of articles for NEXT Sunday's Messenger is this Sunday at 11:30 am
Please submit articles to the church office at office@uccmedina.org
CHURCH OFFICE HOURS: 9 am – 3 pm MONDAY THRU THURSDAY; FRIDAY 9 am – 12 pm

PASTORAL STAFF

Rev. Dr. Luke Lindon, Senior Minister - luke@uccmedina.org
Rev. Meghan Malone, Associate Pastor of Youth & Mission - meghan@uccmedina.org
Karen Brocco-Kish, Visitation Pastor – karen@uccmedina.org

OFFICE STAFF

Cindy Korecky, Office Manager - office@uccmedina.org
Pete Metzloff, Church Treasurer - pete@uccmedina.org

PROGRAM STAFF

Stacie Yates, Director of Christian Education – stacie@uccmedina.org
Tracy Gabrielsen, Director of Music – tracy@uccmedina.org
Cathy Fafrak, Organist & Office Assistant – cathy@uccmedina.org
Jennifer Vilimonovic, Director of Hobby Horse Preschool and Children's Choir – jen@uccmedina.org
Jack Sharpe, Maintenance & Custodian

May 25, 2025
Sixth Sunday after Easter

Acts 16:9-15

Disciples Together

We gather together to ask the Lord's blessing … such is the opening line to the treasured Dutch hymn that was translated into English in the late 1890s.

Since then, U.S. congregations have traditionally sung these words during the season of Thanksgiving, as it captures so beautifully the image of scattered and busy families gathering around a warm and welcoming table to break bread together.

There's perhaps no better way to strengthen the bonds of humanity with this fractured world than by slowing down and sitting down to a table to share a meal with another.

Yet studies show that those meaningful meals have fallen by the wayside. Gone are the Sunday roasts that filled grandma's kitchen with heavenly smells. Gone are the suppers where families sat down and talked to one another rather than texting others. Gone are many of the beloved church dinners as the saints who cooked and cleaned are now serving at the heavenly banquet with cheerful and glad hearts.

One of the key components of following Jesus is that we are not meant to go through this life alone. We were meant to be disciples together. Jesus illustrated this for us when early in the training of his disciples he sent them out in pairs to heal in his name. And he showed us the power there was in the sharing of the common cup. Something that Paul continued to do as he traveled sharing the news of Jesus.

It was outside of a city gate, we are told, that Paul went to the river to pray. He attracted the attention of a group of women who, after conversations with the apostle, were then baptized in the river. One of the women, Lydia, a dealer of purple cloth which was an expensive and a much-coveted item, invited Paul to stay at her home to share a meal and talk some more.

When was the last time we were intentional about inviting someone to join us for a time of fellowship — the new widow, the divorced parent or the single person who often feels forgotten amid all the couples?

In Dietrich Bonhoeffer's book, "Life Together," the German theologian noted that there is an amazing blessing of "being able to gather with other believers." As many, he observed, walk a lonely road "in the isolation of infirmity and age." Bonhoeffer then added, "it is grace, nothing but grace, that we are allowed to live in community."

My friends, we are called to be disciples together, always remembering that it is nothing but grace that allows the blessed community that we all need to be formed.

Life-giving God, may we become disciples of love, reaching out to the lost and the lonely. May we slow down and set our tables once again, inviting all to share more than a meal, but to share in the sustaining beauty of community. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.