



Thomas A. Edison  
**Congregational Church**

*JULY 12, 2026*



# Order of Worship

## Seventh Sunday of the Growing Season

\*\* You are invited to stand  
(Please remember to silence your cell phone during the service.)

*When the prelude begins, let us quiet our hearts and conversation.*

### Church Bell Calls Us to Worship

### The Light of the World is Acknowledged in our Worship

"Jesus said: "I am the light of the world" (John 8:12). The presence of the light reminds us of Jesus' coming into our world and into our lives. The light is carried into the worship service as a symbol of Jesus' coming into the presence of the worshipping community.

During most of the time of our church year our congregation uses two candles on the altar to point out that Jesus was both a human being and God. The light of the world is among us today.

— adapted from <https://www.umc.org/en/content/ask-the-umc-why-do-we-light-and-extinguish-candles-during-worship>

### Prelude

#### Aria

by Noel Rawsthorne

### Call to Worship (responsively)

One: Good morning again God, we long for more of You than we currently have.

**All: Not more information about You — more of You.**

One: Deepen our roots.

**All: Stretch our faith past the places where it has stopped growing.**

One: God, cultivate in each of us a willingness to grow stronger in our faith and let us show the world our fruits of the spirit.

**All: Nurture us into people who actually looks more like Jesus of Nazareth and less like our own selves.**

One: Speak to us today,

**All: In song, in scared story, in silence and in this sacred space, Amen.**

~ slightly adapted from a prayer found @ <https://www.prayerforeverything.com/topics/spiritual-growth/prayer-life/prayer-for-spiritual-growth>

## Hymn of Praise

### **In the Bulb There is a Flower**

Words: Natalie Sleeth

Music: Natalie Sleeth

**In the bulb there is a flow-er; in the seed, an ap-ple tree;  
in co-coons, a hid-den prom-ise: but-ter-flies will soon be free!  
In the cold and snow of win-ter there's a spring that waits to be,  
Un-re-vealed un-til its sea-son, some-thing God a-lone can see.**

**There's a song in ev-ery s-ilence, seek-ing word and mel-o-dy;  
there's a dawn in ev-ery dark-ness, bring-ing hope to you and me.  
From the past will come the fu-ture; what it holds, a mys-ter-y,  
Un-re-vealed un-til its sea-son, some-thing God a-lone can see.**

**In our end is our be-gin-ning; in our time, in-fin-i-ty;  
in our doubt there is be-live-ing; in our life, e-ter-ni-ty.  
In our death, a res-ur-rec-tion; at the last, a vic-to-ry,  
Un-re-vealed un-til its sea-son, some-thing God a-lone can see.**

## Passing of the Peace

May the Pease of Christ be with you!

**And, also with you!**

## Gift of Music

**Dr. Dan Davis, Saxophone**

### **That Will Be Glory!**

by C. Austin Miles and Charles H. Gabriel

arr. by Brant Adams

## Prayer of Discipleship (responsively)

One: God, we come to You not because we have arrived at some high place spiritually,

**All: But because we have looked honestly at where we are and we know there is more.**

One: More depth, more surrender, more of You — and we are not there yet.

**All: We confess that we have let our faith become familiar in ways that have made it small.**

One: We have read the same passages without letting them read us.

**All: We have prayed words we have said so many times they stopped costing us anything.**

One: We have been near You without being close to You, and we are ready for that to change.

**All: Grow each of us in ways that are uncomfortable if that is what it takes.**

One: Loosen our grips on the things we have held more tightly than we have held You.

**All: Teach us to pray with honesty rather than performance.**

One: Let Your Word land in us differently — not as information to file away, but as a living thing that rearranges what it touches.

**All: Develop in us the “fruits of the Spirit” we are still missing.**

One: Where we are impatient, grow patience.

**All: Where we are proud, grow humility.**

One: Where our love has been selective, grow a love that looks like Yours — wide and costly.

**All: We are not asking for just a spiritual experience.**

One: We are asking for a spiritual life — one genuinely shaped by You, day after day.

**All: Make us into people of faith who actually looks more like Jesus of Nazareth and less like our own selves. Amen.**

~ slightly adapted from a prayer found @ <https://www.prayerforeverything.com/topics/spiritual-growth/prayer-life/prayer-for-spiritual-growth>

## Prayers of the People

### Our Lord's Prayer (*unison*)

**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.**

### Song of Prayer Response

#### **Lord, Listen to Your Children Praying**

Words and Music: Ken Medema

**Lord, listen to your children praying,  
Lord, send your Spirit in this place;  
Lord, listen to your children praying,  
send us love, send us power, send us grace.**

### Today's Scripture

**Matthew 13:1-9**

#### Setting for the parables

**13** That day Jesus went out of the house and sat down beside the lake. <sup>2</sup> Such large crowds gathered around Him that He climbed into a boat and sat down. The whole crowd was standing on the shore.

#### Parable of the soils

<sup>3</sup> He said many things to them in parables: "A farmer went out to scatter seed. <sup>4</sup> As he was scattering seed, some fell on the path, and birds came and ate it. <sup>5</sup> Other seed fell on rocky ground where the soil was shallow. They sprouted immediately because the soil wasn't deep. <sup>6</sup> But when the sun came up, it scorched the plants, and they dried up because they had no roots. <sup>7</sup> Other seed fell among thorny plants. The thorny plants grew and choked them. <sup>8</sup> Other seed fell on good soil and bore fruit, in one case a yield of one hundred to one, in

another case a yield of sixty to one, and in another case a yield of thirty to one. <sup>9</sup> Everyone who has ears should pay attention.”

## **Matthew 13: 18-23**

### **Explanation of the parable of the farmer**

<sup>18</sup> “Consider then the parable of the farmer. <sup>19</sup> Whenever people hear the word about the kingdom and don’t understand it, the evil one comes and carries off what was planted in their hearts. This is the seed that was sown on the path. <sup>20</sup> As for the seed that was spread on rocky ground, this refers to people who hear the word and immediately receive it joyfully. <sup>21</sup> Because they have no roots, they last for only a little while. When they experience distress or abuse because of the word, they immediately fall away. <sup>22</sup> As for the seed that was spread among thorny plants, this refers to those who hear the word, but the worries of this life and the false appeal of wealth choke the word, and it bears no fruit. <sup>23</sup> As for what was planted on good soil, this refers to those who hear and understand, and bear fruit and produce—in one case a yield of one hundred to one, in another case a yield of sixty to one, and in another case a yield of thirty to one.”

~Common English Bible

### **Response to the Sharing of God’s Story**

The Story of God for the People of God!

**Thanks Be to God!**

### **Pastoral Words**

#### **Invitation to the Table / Blessing and Sharing of the Gifts**

*No matter who you are or where you are on life’s journey,  
you are welcome at this table.*

**Today’s breads: Garlic Tuscan, Brioche bread, English Breakfast bread with fruit and nuts, Brown Wheat Dinner Rolls, and on a clear plate is Gluten Free bread.**

## Communion

Dr. Dan Davis, Baritone

**Give to my Eyes, Lord**  
by Colin Coppen and Ronald Corp

## Invitation to the Offering

*What we give and the spirit with which we give it, enables this church  
to make a difference in the lives of all whom we touch.*

## Offertory

### **Morning Has Broken**

Scottish Traditional  
arr. by Carsten Gerlitz

## \*\* Doxology

**Praise God from whom all blessings flow;  
Praise Him, all creatures here below;  
Praise Him above, ye heavenly host;  
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.**

Tune: Thomas Ken, 1709

## Life of Our Church

**Quilting on Wednesday at noon**

**Faith Development will start back up late July.**

**Today's flowers are gifted to the church by  
Bob Cole and Buddy Conyers. Rick Hawk made  
the arrangement. We would like to thank them for  
this beautiful gift.**

**For next week's God's  
word:  
Matthew 13:24-30, 36-43**

### Birthday Celebration – Sunday, July 26th

If you are interested in helping with setting out the food and drinks for the Birthday Celebration, a Sign-up sheet is on the bulletin board. You will be responsible for setting up, serving and cleaning up after the Birthday Celebration.

### Summer Auction July 15th

Do you have anything around your house that you just don't want or need anymore? Something that is in good shape but is too good to throw out? Well, the Women's Fellowship would love to have it for their auction on July 15. The money that we make off the items goes to help fund the quilting ministry as well as other projects such as helping foster kids, helping people after natural disasters, contributing to animal shelters, etc. Please consider donating household items (not large lawn care items or tools, etc.). If you have anything you would like to donate, please bring it on Sunday, July 12 and place it on the table by the French doors or a few minutes before noon on Wednesday, July 15.

**Blood Drive – August 2<sup>nd</sup> –  
The bus will be in front of the church  
from 9:00 AM – 12:00 PM.**

### Parking for Sunday Service or Faith Development

Please Park on church side on Llewellyn Dr. and Menlo Rd. If able we are allowed to park in the back of Covenant Presbyterian Church parking lot.

**Enter Off of Marlyn. This is to make room for emergency vehicles if needed to come into the neighborhood.**

**Sign-up sheet is on the bulletin board to donate flowers to enhance our Sunday Service.**

**We are looking for Volunteers for Greeters and for Ushers. Sign-up sheets are on the bulletin board, or you can go to the website “Signup Genius” if interested.**

**Free magazines are available behind the kitchen door next to the library shelves. Donations are welcome.**

## **Benediction (responsively)**

Our worship has ended, but now our life of service begins!  
Go from this space, for you and I are the body of Christ, and all of creation awaits us. So, live passionately, love faithfully, and celebrate every moment of your life from now until the finale. Our God of relentless, amazing, creative, and hopeful grace goes with us! Amen. **Amen.**

~ Adapted from The Rev. Michael S. Piazza

## **The Light of the World is Shared with the World at the end of our Worship**

At the end of the service, the light is carried out into the world to show that Jesus Christ is for all people everywhere; This symbolizes the light of Jesus Christ going out into the world where believers are to serve.”

— adapted from <https://www.umc.org/en/content/ask-the-umc-why-do-we-light-and-extinguish-candles-during-worship>

## **Postlude**

### **Fanfare on” Austrian Hymn”**

by Joseph Haydn  
arr. by Gordon Young

## Time with our Children

### Letting it Grow

Matthew 13:1-9, 18-23

By Dr. Dan Wuori

I like to plant things this time of year – especially flowers. So, if you'll watch your feet, I'm going to plant a few right now. (Toss several seeds on the floor around the children's feet.)

Great! Be careful not to step on them and when we come back next week, I think we'll have some big, beautiful flowers growing right here! (Ideally the children will recognize the error in this method – leaving seeds exposed on an indoor floor – and point it out. Depending on the group's response, however, you may need to stop here to question them about whether the seeds will actually grow – and why not.)

You may be right. You know different types of flowers grow best in different places, but I'm not sure of any that just grow on the floor (Why? What is the floor lacking? e.g. nutrients, water, room for roots, etc.)

How about this? (Bring out cup/jar of dirt.) What if we planted them here instead?

Yes, I think this is a much better place. The dirt will protect the seeds and give them all the right nutrients...and room to grow strong roots.

In today's Gospel, Jesus tells us a parable. That's a story that helps teach us a lesson.

In this parable he talks about planting seeds as a way to help us understand the way to be closest to God.

He tells us that when people hear God's word but don't try to understand it (or maybe just don't listen), that's almost the same as planting a seed in a place that it will never grow.

What about people who really hear God's word and show that they understand it? People who live by God's rules – following the commandments and showing kindness to one another? Can you guess what Jesus tells us happens to those seeds?

You're right! Jesus tells us that those seeds have been planted in just the right soil – and that they'll grow and grow.

So today Jesus uses a story about seeds to help us remember to open our ears and our hearts to God. Will you do that this week?

Good. Let's pray.

Dear God,

Help us to hear Your words and understand Your ways. Plant Your seeds in our hearts and let them grow and grow .Amen.

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## July Faith and Wellness Newsletter

“But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ”  
2 Peter 3:18

### July is UV awareness month

UV rays are the root cause of most skin cancers. It is important to protect your skin year-round. Follow these important tips:

#### Practice Safe Sun:

- Seek shade, remember the sun's rays are strongest during 10 am. And 2 pm.
- Wear Sun-Protective clothing such as lightweight, long-sleeved shirts, pants, a wide-brimmed hat and sunglasses with UV protection.
- Apply sunscreen to all exposed skin. Follow all directions regarding reapplying. Water resistance and an SPF of 30 or higher is recommended.

#### Early Detection:

- Perform a skin self-examination using the **ABCDE** assessment

- 1) **A-Asymmetry**. One half of the spot is unlike the other half
  - 2) **B is for Border**. The spot has an irregular, scalloped, or poorly defined border
  - 3) **C is for Color**. The spot has varying colors from one area to the next, such as shades of tan, brown or black, or areas of white, red or blue.
  - 4) **D is for Diameter**. While melanomas are usually greater than 6 millimeters, or about the size of a pencil eraser, when diagnosed, they can be smaller.
  - 5) **E is for Evolving**. The spot looks different from the rest or is changing in size, shape, or color.
- See your dermatologist at least once a year.

Please fill out the enclosed questionnaire and return it to Lori McMullen RN-FCN. This information will help her better serve you as your FCN.

**Blood pressure clinic will be on July 12<sup>th</sup>.**

**Dear worshipers,**

We invite your child to join us for Faith Formation learning in Cathy's Place at Thomas Edison Congregational Church. Your children will learn about Jesus through age-appropriate faith activities, songs, prayers, Bible stories, games, and arts & crafts.

**July class curriculum Faith Formation**

**July 12<sup>th</sup> – Seventh Sunday of the Growing Season. Matthew 13:1-9**

Lori McMullen RN-FCN

**Thank you for visiting Thomas A. Edison Congregational Church**

**To learn more about our church and to make a donation, please scan the QR code below.**



*Scan me!*

**Place your phone camera over the QR code to scan. Then scroll down to where it says donate and follow the instructions. You can use either your credit/debit card or your bank account. There is a way to communicate with the staff through the website. Send us a message.**

**Thank you.  
Council Corner**

Council has approved replacement of the folding chairs in the Fellowship Hall. A task force has researched and found chairs to

meet our needs. The fully upholstered stacking chairs will improve comfort and aesthetic appeal to the space that is used both for worship services and fellowship events.

We would like to purchase 50+ chairs at a cost of approximately \$60 per chair. If you are interested in purchasing one or more chairs **In Memory Of** or **In Gratitude For**, please fill out a form and return it to the church along with a check made out to TAECC.

We hope to have the chairs delivered sometime in the fall and will recognize and dedicate them during one of our Sunday worship services.

Make check payable to TAECC and the number of chairs x \$60.00

A picture of the chair and additional forms will be in the Fellowship Hall.



**As of July 10, 2026  
12 Chairs have been  
bought towards the 50  
Chairs that we would like to  
order.**

**Thank you.**

## Biggest Food Drive Yet!

**Date:** July 4, 2026 at 5:13:32 PM CDT

**To:** Margaret Vincent <[margaretqvincent@gmail.com](mailto:margaretqvincent@gmail.com)>

Happy 4<sup>th</sup> of July everyone. Yes, it is a hard day to feel too celebratory, while thousands of immigrants are being taken off the streets, and thrown into concentration camps all around this country. The more we learn of them, the more we know for sure they are one of the biggest disgraces of our country's history. Those becoming rich off these camps are a special kind of evil.

ICE has been in the Palm Beach Blvd neighborhoods morning, noon and night this last week. Our legal observers are trying to keep up with them. ICE and our local law enforcement greatly outnumber the observers. ICE has threatened our people with arrest and has blocked legal observers with their cars so that their cohorts cannot be followed. They are taking pictures of anyone who shows up at a detention stop and even took pictures of their children this week.

One 8-year girl got off her bus from summer school on Thursday, only to find ICE going after a young man in her apt complex. She ran home. The sight of these huge men with guns, going after people who have done nothing criminal, in her complex is very frightening. Her mother is afraid to meet her at the bus stop, due to ICE presence. Who would take care of her children if she was taken, she said. Oh, and the tow truck business is booming; ICE has them on standby. They stopped many work trucks this week well into the night.

If you want to see some of the detentions, follow **Unidos Immokalee on FB**. They post many sightings, warnings, videos, etc. of the daily atrocities. So many people have been taken just this week. We are getting more and more calls from ICE widows with young children needing our help. Last night I took food, diapers, and formula to a new young woman I will call A. A has a 4-month-old baby boy, and a 1 ½ year old boy. Her husband was taken 2 months ago and is in Guatemala. She would like to return there but has no money for the trip. She is stuck; trapped in a small bedroom with her children all day and night, sharing a bathroom and small kitchen with another family. She is very sad, probably depressed.

I could tell you many more sad stories, but how about a few uplifting ones for a change. Yesterday I took a little friend, V, to the dentist. She had an infected and abscessed wisdom tooth. We had to find someone to see her on a holiday Friday at 2 pm! First Street Family Dentistry told us to come as soon as we could. We were thrilled when we got there and found that they all spoke Spanish! One of the women asked me how I know V. I told her what we are doing in the communities, because of ICE actions. She had no idea this was going on in her own town. She was shocked.

After the dentist pulled V's tooth, I tried to pay the almost \$400 dental bill. They would not let me pay! I count this as a real-life miracle! How kind and generous was that?! I

expected nothing from them and had told them I would pay. Just fitting her in at the last minute was a big enough miracle to make me happy. I also consider the fact that V's 1 year old daughter let me hold her (for almost an hour, without crying!) as another miracle! Her daughter had never let me hold her before this. Side note, for the ladies – in my mind (girl math), I made \$400 dollars that day; \$400 that I could now use to buy diapers, formula, and food!

Volunteers are making food and diaper deliveries daily, and last night was another pop-up distribution in an apt. complex. I saw many happy faces. The kids were thrilled with the books, ice cream, and popsicles. I even saw one little boy kiss a roll of toilet paper. Yes, he kissed it and was very content. Not a package, but one roll of toilet paper.

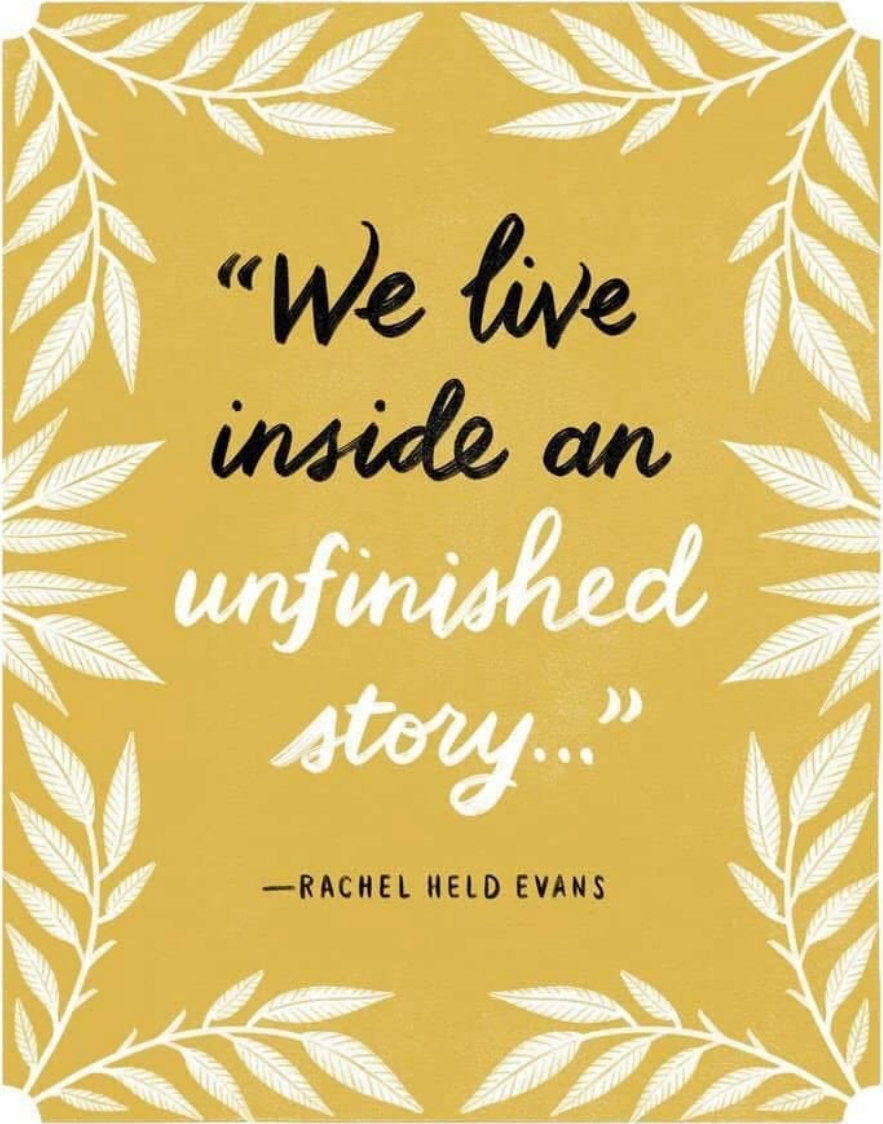
Oh, one more happy story. Our little baby with the cleft lip and palate, has started to gain weight! He is up to over 9 lbs. now! He looks healthier. One of our most wonderful volunteers, a Nurse Practitioner, has been visiting him weekly (in between her job, and her legal observer duties). Don't we know the best people!! As my friend Hillary says, and she is one of the best ever, we are honored to be able to help these people.

Please consider helping us continue to serve these people.

**Thanks so much!**  
**Margie and the SWFL Coalition for Democracy**

## **ITEMS THAT WERE COLLECTED FOR FAMILIES**

5 Bags of Maseca Corn Meal  
96 Rolls of Toilet Paper  
23 Bars of Soap  
5 Large Tubes of Toothpaste  
2 Large Bottles of Liquid Soap  
6 Packages of Wet Wipes  
106 Rolls of Paper Towels  
651 Diapers  
\$475.00 in Gift Cards



*“We live  
inside an  
unfinished  
story...”*

—RACHEL HELD EVANS

Religion should open your heart...  
Not close your mind.



Love differently.



**Cards can be sent to the following:**

**General Dozier  
Barrington Terrace, of Ft. Myers  
9731 Commerce Center Ct., Room #326  
Fort Myers, Fl. 33908**

**Mr. Bill Persons  
Calusa Harbour Assisted  
Living – 2525 First St  
Ft Myers, Fl. 33901  
Room 233**

## **PRAYER LIST**

### **Our Church Members:**

Jean Lindenlaub; Liz Lloyd; General Dozier; Jean Long;  
Phyllis Contino; Sharlene Dozier; Barbara Buch; Patti Seebock.

### **Friends & Family:**

Betty Denson; Jim Martin (Teri Martin's husband); Michele Baron (friends of Rod Schaffter and Carol Skaza); Fred & Natalie Johnson (friend of Rod Schaffter & Carol Skaza); Bob Mesce (brother of Patti Seebock); Tom Simpson (brother of Kathy Bolen); Dwight Brzinski (friend of Pat Jessie); Christopher Smith and Darwin Solorzono – missing at sea (friends of Mark Rosandich); Edward Yergeau (brother of Roger Yergeau); Ben Collens - stationed in Qatar (friend of Martha Jean Long); Jennifer McMullen & family (Lori McMullen extended family); Renee Imm (friend of Sandy Cole); Fay Lombardo (friend of Sandy Cole); Cara (Jean Long's daughter); Tasha (friend of Jackie Sellers).

**No matter who you are, or where you are on life's journey,  
you're welcome here at Edison Congregational Church.  
Welcome home!**

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Website:	<a href="http://www.edisonchurch.com">www.edisonchurch.com</a>
Facebook:	<a href="https://www.facebook.com/EdisonChurch">Facebook.com/EdisonChurch</a>
Email Pastor:	<a href="mailto:Pastorjim@taecc.com">Pastorjim@taecc.com</a>
Email Office:	<a href="mailto:Admin@taecc.com">Admin@taecc.com</a>
Office Phone:	239-334-4978
Office Hours:	Monday-Friday 9 AM – 2 PM
Mailing:	1619 Llewellyn Dr., Ft. Myers 33901

Pastor Jim can be reached at the office  
or on his cell phone at 502-494-6649 (voice & text).

***Our Church Staff***

*Senior Minister – Rev. Jim Harper, III*  
*Associate Minister – Rev. Anton Pierce*  
*Administrative Assistant – Cindy Wilson*  
*Distinguished Director of Sacred Arts – Alena Michel*  
*Faith Community Nurse – Lori McMullen*  
*Pianist - Stephen Brittain*

*Your gifts are deeply appreciated and enable this ministry to continue. Our church retains the right to redirect donations to the area of greatest need.*



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