

## Live from St. John's – A Thursday Evening Prayer Service

### Call to Worship

Leader: Look around at this wondrous world!

**People: God's mighty acts in creation are magnificent!**

Leader: Look around at the diversity of God's people!

**People: Diversity is to be celebrated for we have much to learn from each other.**

Leader: Come, let us offer praise and prayer to God.

**People: Let us celebrate all God's goodness, for even in the midst of the horrible storm, God is with us. AMEN.**

### Opening Prayer

**All: Lord of diversity and union, we call upon you this evening to open our hearts to your love, our ears to your words, our eyes to see the needs of those both near and far, and our spirits to do your will. Be with us and give us courage and inspiration for the future of your world, O Lord. AMEN.**

### Prayer of Confession (Exodus 32, Matthew 22, Philippians 4)

**All: God of mercy, in our impatience for answers, we sometimes turn to idols of our own making and forget our covenant with you. Passionate for what is right, we wrong those with whom we differ. Pleased at the invitation to your banquet, we fail to arrive with humility and thanksgiving. Forgive us when our faith is weak and our zeal too strong. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.**

### Words of Assurance (Philippians 4, Psalm 106)

Leader: Do not worry; the Lord is near. God hears our prayers with compassion and with abundant, steadfast love.  
Rejoice, for in the name of Jesus Christ, we are forgiven!

### Passing of the Peace (Philippians 4)

Leader: Let your gentleness be known to everyone,

**People: and the God of peace will be with you.**

Leader: The peace of Christ be with you.

**People: And also with you.**

Leader: Let us greet one another with a sign of God's peace.

## Guided Meditation

### “The Gift of the Incarnation”

*(adapted from Radical Amazement by Judy Cannato)*

#### Evening Prayer

Leader: Gracious Lord, your faithful community has gathered this day. We desire your healing mercies in our lives and in the lives of friends and family. Those who are lost, alienated, alone; who suffer from illnesses, who mourn, who feel hopeless are in our hearts this day. We bring to you names of these dear ones as we pray this morning. Let us lift up names of those who suffer from all forms of pain and alienation.

*[Here the congregation may offer in silence prayers of concern for people and situations.]*

**People: Lord, in your never ending mercy, hear our prayers. We also gather as a community in support of each other. We come to celebrate the wondrous events in our lives and in the lives of family and friends. Let us lift up names of those who rejoice in the many blessings brought to them.**

*[Here the congregation may offer in silence prayers of joy for people and situations.]*

**People: Lord, in your great goodness, hear our prayers of joy.**

Leader: For all these things, both sorrowful and joyful, we rejoice that God continues to be with us. Let us resolve to focus our lives on God’s loving and healing presence and become bearers of God’s good news through our words and our actions of love and mercy.

In Jesus’ name, we pray. AMEN.