

# The Nativity of Our Lord: CHRISTMAS EVE

8:30 p.m. Prelude Music | 9 p.m. Service of Holy Communion  
December 24, 2024



University Lutheran Church  
66 Winthrop Street, Cambridge, Mass.  
[unilu.org](http://unilu.org)

## **POINSETTIA AND GREENERY DEDICATIONS**

In memory of our parents by Gail and Ed Bucher.

In honor of Barbara Frank by Anne Howarth.

In memory of Jean & Howard Kohler and Betty & Edwin Schaeffer  
by K.C. Kohler.

In honor and memory of loved ones by Kurt and Carol Kohler.

In thanksgiving for our marriage by the Oberstadt-Petriks.

In thanksgiving for the life of Mark Howell by Chris Pollari and Ann Ferentz.

In memory of loved ones by Paul and Laurel Santmire.

In honor of loved ones by Helen Schwickrath.

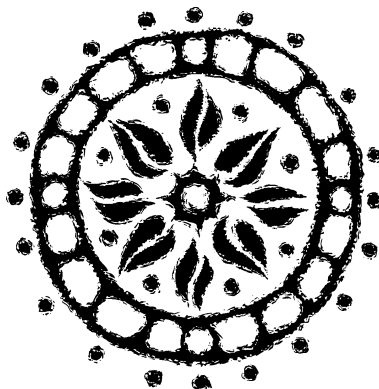
In thanks for medical professionals by Susan Worst.

In thanksgiving for the life of Paul Hanson by his family.

In thanksgiving for the lives of Bill and Jo Ann.

In thanksgiving for the lives of Thura and Marshall Bautz.

*Thank you to all those who have made these gifts!*



## **PRELUDE**

“God Rest Ye Merry, Gentlemen” — English Traditional Carol;  
arranged by Zach Smith

*Brass Quintet: Ali Lauer, Trumpet; Karen Sudbey, Trumpet;  
James Milner, E<sup>b</sup> Horn; Rick Ong, Trombone; Laura Tracey,  
Tuba*

“Christmas Canon” — Text from *Hamlet*, Act 1, Scene 1 by William  
Shakespeare (1564–1616); tune by Bruce Brolsma (b. 1948)

*Some say that ever 'gainst that season comes  
wherein our Savior's birth is celebrated,  
the bird of dawning singeth all night long:  
so hallow'd and so gracious is the time.*

*Lorraine Fitzmaurice, Imogene Stulken, & the UniLu Choir*

“Dona Nobis Pacem” — Traditional Melody; arranged by Ed  
Hirschman

*Brass Quintet*

Partita on “From Heaven Above to Earth I Come” — Tune attributed  
to Martin Luther (1483–1546); setting by John Eggert (1946–2022)

I; II; III (“*My heart for very joy must leap...*”); IV (“*Ah, dearest Jesus,  
holy Child...*”); V (“*How glad we'll be to find it so...*”); VI (“*Come here, my  
friends, lift up your eyes...*”); VII (“*Were earth a thousand times as  
fair...*”); VIII

*Imogene Stulken, organ; UniLu Choir*

“In the Bleak Midwinter” [CRANHAM] — Music by Gustav Holst  
(1874–1934); arranged by Jayan Nandagopan

*Brass Quintet*

*Der Dichter spricht* (“The Poet Speaks”) from *Kinderzenen* (“Scenes  
from Childhood”), Op. 15: No.13 — Robert Schumann (1810–1856)

*Kristian Kohler, piano*

“Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence” [PICARDY] — Traditional  
French Carol; arranged by Ran Whitley

*Brass Quintet*

## **GATHERING**

### **BELL**

**GATHERING HYMN** ELW 257 “O Come, O Come, Emmanuel”  
*(verses 1, 4, 5, 6, and 7)*

### **PROCLAMATION OF THE BIRTH OF CHRIST**

Many ages from the time when God created the heavens and the earth and then formed humankind in the image of God; long after the great flood, when God made the rainbow shine forth as a sign of the covenant; twenty-one centuries from the time the promise was given to Abraham and Sarah; thirteen centuries after Moses led the people of Israel out of Egypt and Miriam danced in freedom; eleven hundred years from the time of Ruth and the judges; one thousand years from the anointing of David as king, in fulfillment of the times and years and months and days discerned by the prophets; in the one hundred and ninety-fourth Olympiad; the seven hundred and fifty-second year from the foundation of the city of Rome; the forty-second year of the reign of Octavian Augustus; while the whole world enjoyed a span of peace, Jesus Christ, eternal God and Son of the eternal Father, desiring to reconcile the world to God by his most merciful coming, being conceived by the Holy Spirit and growing to term in the womb of his mother—now in our own times is the nativity of our Lord Jesus Christ, God made flesh.

**PROCESSIONAL HYMN** ELW 283 “O Come, All Ye Faithful”

### **WELCOME AND APOSTOLIC GREETING**

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all. **And also with you.**

## **PRAYER OF THE DAY**

Let us pray.

Almighty God, you made this holy night shine with the brightness of the true Light. Grant that here on earth we may walk in the light of Jesus' presence and in the last day wake to the brightness of Christ's glory; through your Beloved, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

## **WORD**

**FIRST READING** Isaiah 9:2–7

A reading from Isaiah.

<sup>2</sup>The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who lived in a land of deep darkness—on them light has shined. <sup>3</sup>You have multiplied exultation; you have increased its joy; they rejoice before you as with joy at the harvest, as people exult when dividing plunder. <sup>4</sup>For the yoke of their burden, and the bar across their shoulders, the rod of their oppressor, you have broken as on the day of Midian. <sup>5</sup>For all the boots of the tramping warriors and all the garments rolled in blood shall be burned as fuel for the fire. <sup>6</sup>For a child has been born for us, a son given to us; authority rests upon his shoulders; and he is named Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. <sup>7</sup>Great will be his authority, and there shall be endless peace for the throne and dominion of David. He will establish and uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time onward and forevermore. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this.

Word of God, word of life.

**Thanks be to God.**

# PSALM ELW 267 "Joy to the World"

1 Joy to the world, the Lord is come! Let earth re -  
 2 Joy to the earth, the Sav - ior reigns! Let all their  
 3 No more let sin and sor - row grow nor thorns in -  
 4 He rules the world with truth and grace and makes the

ceive her king; let ev - 'ry heart pre - pare him  
 songs em - ploy, while fields and floods, rocks, hills, and  
 fest the ground; he comes to make his bless - ings  
 na - tions prove the glo - ries of his righ - teous -

room and heav'n and na - ture sing, and heav'n and na - ture  
 plains re - peat the sound - ing joy, re - peat the sound - ing  
 flow far as the curse is found, far as the curse is  
 ness and won - ders of his love, and won - ders of his

and heav'n and na - ture sing, and

sing, and heav'n, and heav'n and na - ture sing.  
 joy, re - peat, re - peat the sound - ing joy.  
 found, far as, far as the curse is found.  
 love, and won - ders, won - ders of his love.

heav'n and na - ture sing,

Text: Isaac Watts, 1674–1748  
 Music: AN'TIOCH, English melody, 18th cent.; arr. Lowell Mason, 1792–1872

## SECOND READING Titus 2:11–14

A reading from Titus.

<sup>11</sup>The grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all, <sup>12</sup>training us to renounce impiety and worldly passions and in the present age to live lives that are self-controlled, upright, and godly, <sup>13</sup>while we wait for the blessed hope and the manifestation of the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ. <sup>14</sup>It is Jesus Christ who gave himself for us to redeem us from all iniquity and purify for himself a people of his own who are zealous for good deeds.

Word of God, word of life.

**Thanks be to God.**

## GOSPEL ACCLAMATION ELW 275 “Angels, from the Realms of Glory” (*verses 1 and 2 before the Gospel; verses 3 and 4 after the Gospel*)



- 1 An - gels, from the realms of glo - ry, wing your flight o'er all the earth;
- 2 Shep-herds, in the fields a - bid - ing, watch - ing o'er your flocks by night,
- 3 Sa - ges, leave your con - tem - pla - tions, bright - er vi - sions beam a - far;
- 4 All cre - a - tion, join in prais - ing God, the Fa - ther, Spir - it, Son,



once you sang cre - a - tion's sto - ry, now pro - claim Mes - si - ah's birth:  
God with us is now re - sid - ing, yon - der shines the in - fant light.  
seek the great de - sire of na - tions, you have seen his na - tal star.  
ev - er - more your voic - es rais - ing to the e - ter - nal Three in One.

*Refrain*



Come and wor - ship, come and wor - ship, wor - ship Christ, the new - born king.

## **GOSPEL** Luke 2:1–20

The holy gospel according to Luke.

**Glory to you, O Lord.**

<sup>1</sup>In those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered. <sup>2</sup>This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. <sup>3</sup>All went to their own towns to be registered. <sup>4</sup>Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was descended from the house and family of David. <sup>5</sup>He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. <sup>6</sup>While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. <sup>7</sup>And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

<sup>8</sup>Now in that same region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. <sup>9</sup>Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. <sup>10</sup>But the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid, for see, I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: <sup>11</sup>to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. <sup>12</sup>This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger.” <sup>13</sup>And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying,

<sup>14</sup>“Glory to God in the highest heaven,  
and on earth peace among those whom God favors!”

<sup>15</sup>When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, “Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us.” <sup>16</sup>So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph and the child lying in the manger.



<sup>17</sup>When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child, <sup>18</sup>and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them, <sup>19</sup>and Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. <sup>20</sup>The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, just as it had been told them.

The gospel of the Lord.  
**Praise to you, O Christ.**

**GOSPEL ACCLAMATION** ELW 275 “Angels, from the Realms of Glory” (*verses 1 and 2 before the Gospel; verses 3 and 4 after the Gospel*)



- 1 An - gels, from the realms of glo - ry, wing your flight o'er all the earth;
- 2 Shep-herds, in the fields a - bid - ing, watch - ing o'er your flocks by night,
- 3 Sa - ges, leave your con - tem - pla - tions, bright - er vi - sions beam a - far;
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once you sang cre - a - tion's sto - ry, now pro - claim Mes - si - ah's birth:  
 God with us is now re - sid - ing, yon - der shines the in - fant light.  
 seek the great de - sire of na - tions, you have seen his na - tal star.  
 ev - er - more your voic - es rais - ing to the e - ter - nal Three in One.

*Refrain*



Come and wor - ship, come and wor - ship, wor - ship Christ, the new - born king.

Text: James Montgomery, 1771–1854, alt., sts. 1–3; *Salisbury Hymn Book*, 1857, st. 4  
 Music: REGENT SQUARE, Henry T. Smart, 1813–1879

**SERMON** *Carrie Ballenger*

**HYMN OF THE DAY** ELW 300 “The First Noel”

## **NICENE CREED**

With the whole church, let us confess our faith.

**We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty,  
maker of heaven and earth,  
of all that is, seen and unseen.**

**We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God,  
eternally begotten of the Father,  
God from God, Light from Light,  
true God from true God, begotten, not made,  
of one Being with the Father,  
through whom all things were made;  
who for us and for our salvation  
came down from heaven,  
and by the power of the Holy Spirit  
became incarnate from the Virgin Mary,  
and was made human; who, for our sake,  
was crucified under Pontius Pilate;  
suffered death and was buried;  
on the third day rose again  
in accordance with the Scriptures;  
ascended into heaven  
and is seated at the right hand of the Father;  
who will come again in glory  
to judge the living and the dead;  
and whose kingdom will have no end.**

**We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,  
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,  
who with the Father and the Son is worshipped and  
glorified, who has spoken through the prophets.  
We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church.  
We acknowledge one Baptism  
for the forgiveness of sins.  
We look for the resurrection of the dead,  
and the life of the world to come. Amen.**

## **PRAYER LITANY FOR CHRISTMAS EVE**

In joy and thanksgiving at Christ's birth, let us sing to the Lord a new song: **On earth peace, good will among people.**

For all faithful people, for all welcome messengers of good news, let us sing to the Lord a new song: **On earth peace, good will among people.**

For the nations and their rulers, for anyone with power over the lives of others, let us sing to the Lord a new song: **On earth peace, good will among people.**

For the unhoused, the cold, and the lonely this night, for those who defend the helpless, for those who strive for justice, for those who work to find a way to peace, for all the world, and all who live in it, let us sing to the Lord a new song: **On earth peace, good will among people.**

For anyone suffering, sick, alone, afraid, or in any kind of trouble. We pray especially for those in this community who have asked for our prayers, including . . . .

For what and for whom else shall we pray?

O God, Before the eyes of all the nations you sent Jesus, the exact imprint of love, to be our brother and our salvation. With the shepherds in the fields let us go now from Bethlehem into our lives, there to find Christ in our hearts, and to share the love of the manger and the cross with the world. **Amen.**

## **PEACE**

The peace of Christ be with you always. **And also with you.**

## MEAL

**OFFERTORY** “Lo, how a Rose e’er blooming” — 14th century German melody; choral verses arr. Michael Praetorius (1571–1621); brass verse arr. Gary Osen (b. 1954)

Lo, how a Rose e’er blooming  
From tender stem hath sprung!  
Of Jesse’s lineage coming  
As men of old have sung.  
It came, a flow’ret bright,  
Amid the cold of winter,  
When half spent was the night.

Isaiah twas foretold it,  
The Rose I have in mind,  
With Mary we behold it,  
The Virgin Mother kind.  
To show God’s love aright,  
She bore to us a Savior,  
When half spent was the night.

*To make a one-time donation by phone (Google or Apple Pay, Venmo, PayPal, or credit card), you may visit [givebutter.com/university-lutheran-church](https://givebutter.com/university-lutheran-church) or scan the QR code here:*



*Many people in our community already give online. Visit [unilu.org/giving/](https://unilu.org/giving/) if you would like to set up an electronic funds transfer, or a credit card donation on a recurring or one-time basis.*

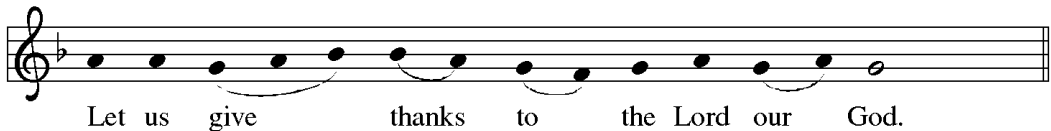
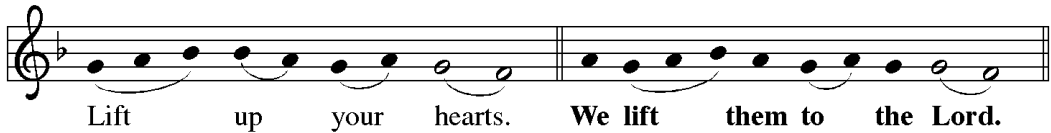
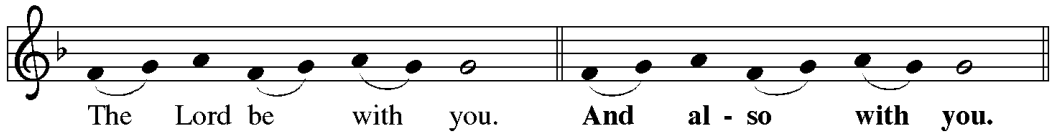
*You can also give by mailing a check to: 66 WINTHROP ST, CAMBRIDGE MA 02138 (there may be a slight delay in processing donations received by mail).*

## OFFERING PRAYER

Let us pray.

God of heaven and earth, from the beginning, you have called forth life, in which you take delight. The trees, the fields, and the seas sing for joy. Bless now these gifts, received from your bounty, that we may join the chorus of creation to tell of your salvation from day to day. **Amen.**

## THE GREAT THANKSGIVING



It is indeed right, our duty and our joy . . .

. . . we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

# SANCTUS ELW 289 "Angels We have Heard on High (*refrain*)

*Refrain*

Glo - ri - a

in ex - cel - sis De - o; glo - ri - a in ex - cel - sis De - o.

Text: French carol; tr. H. F. Hemy, *The Crown of Jesus Music*, 1864  
Music: GLORIA, French carol; arr. Edward S. Barnes, 1887–1958

## **THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE**

*The presider may lead these or similar words:*

... we proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

**Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.**

*The presider may lead these or similar words:*

... be all honor and glory in your holy church, now and forever.

**Amen.**

## **LORD'S PRAYER**

*In the Bible, Jesus often speaks of God as "Abba," Father, reflecting a profound intimacy with the creator of all worlds. Here, we extend that intimacy to name God as our Mother.*

Friends, it gladdens the heart of Jesus when we pray:

**God our Mother, God 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.**

## **INVITATION TO RECEIVE AND SHARE COMMUNION**

A child has been born for us, a Son given to us.

Come, receive the gift of Jesus.

The body of Christ, given for you. **Amen.**

The blood of Christ, shed for you. **Amen.**

*For those worshipping via Zoom, individuals may commune themselves and households may serve one another with the same words.*

## **HYMNS DURING COMMUNION**

ELW 284 “ ’Twas in the Moon of Wintertime”

ELW 292 “Love Has Come”

ELW 294 “In the Bleak Midwinter”

## **TABLE BLESSING**

The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in God’s grace. **Amen.**

## **PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION**

Let us pray.

Merciful God, we thank you for Jesus, who is our heavenly food. Strengthened by this goodness, send us forth to announce your peace, comfort the afflicted, and share the good news of great joy. **Amen.**

## **SENDING**

### **BLESSING**

The God of love, Father, ✝ Son, and Holy Spirit, lavish you with grace, illumine your path, and increase your joy, today and always. **Amen.**

### **DISMISSAL**

Go in peace. The Word of God dwells in you richly.  
**Thanks be to God.**



## CANDLELIGHTING AND SENDING HYMN

John 1:1–4

<sup>1</sup>In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. <sup>2</sup>The Word was in the beginning with God. <sup>3</sup>All things came into being through the Word, and without whom not one thing came into being. What has come into being <sup>4</sup>in the Word was life, and the life was the light of all people.

*As your candle is lit, please then share the candlelight with your row. Remember to tilt the unlighted candle toward the lighted candle. You are invited to keep the candle lit through the end of the service. As you exit the sanctuary, the candles may be placed in the prepared bowls of sand in the narthex.*

ELW 281 “Silent Night, Holy Night!”  
(*Stille Nacht, heilige Nacht!*)

**POSTLUDE** “Silent Night, Holy Night” [STILLE NACHT] — Tune by Franz Gruber (1781–1863); setting by David Cherwien (b. 1957)

### **SERVING TODAY**

*Preacher and Presiding Minister:* Carrie Ballenger

*Assisting Minister and Intercessor:* Laurel Oberstadt-Petrik

*Reader:* Mary Pederson Metelmann

*Musicians:* Brass Quintet — Ali Lauer (Trumpet), Karen Sudbey (Trumpet), James Milner (E<sup>b</sup> Horn), Rick Ong (Trombone), Laura Tracey (Tuba); Lorraine Fitzmaurice and the UniLu Choir; Imogene Stulken (Organ); and Kristian Kohler (Piano)

*Tech Verger:* Chris Pollari

## **THE PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE are asked for:**

Cheri Agaskar — UniLu member  
David Bailey — friend of Gail Bucher  
Ellen Bartlett — sister of Gail Bucher  
Margrit Betke — UniLu member  
Lorraine and Roland Blanchard — friends of Gail Bucher  
Alice Conway — sister of Karin Kutrieb  
Solveig Ericson — UniLu member  
Bob Flannery — UniLu member  
Family and friends mourning the death of Karen Gil  
    — friend of Helen Schwickrath  
George Gordon — UniLu member  
Nancy Gould — UniLu member  
Vera Ryen Gregg — UniLu member  
Charles Jaferian — grandson of Nancy Gould  
Friends and family mourning the death of Gail Kaepplein — UniLu alum  
Friends and family mourning the death of Rev. Lynne Morrow  
    — friend of Carrie Ballenger  
Duncan McCoy Norton — son of Megan McCoy  
Anne Minton — colleague of Imogene Stulken  
Ambrose Moyo and family — friends of UniLu  
The Ralston-Lamb family — UniLu members  
Jeanette Searson — sister of Imogene Stulken  
Judy Steele — sister of Phyllis Steele  
Karen Worst — mother of Susan Worst

For our siblings at Faith Lutheran Church in Cambridge and their pastor, Robin Lütjohann.

For our siblings in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land.

In the Ecumenical Prayer Cycle, we remember the peoples of Japan, North Korea, and South Korea.

We pray for all who are seeking refuge, who are facing immigration challenges, who have been deported to homes that are not home, and who have been separated from their families.

*(revised 12/23/2024)*

*Join us for the following services during the  
Christmas season and time of Epiphany!*

Wed., Dec. 25, 10:30 a.m. (Zoom only) — The Nativity of Our Lord:  
Christmas Day

Sun., Dec. 29, 10:30 a.m. (hybrid worship) — Lessons and Carols  
with Holy Communion for the First Sunday of Christmas

Sun., Jan. 5, 10:30 a.m. (hybrid worship) — Epiphany of Our Lord

Sun., Jan. 12, 10:30 a.m. (hybrid worship) — Baptism of Our Lord  
and Reception of New Members



## **SERVING THE COMMUNITY**

Carrie Ballenger, *Pastor*

Gracious Moyo, *Associate Pastor*

Laurel Oberstadt-Petrik, *Ministry Intern*

Kristian Kohler, *Office Administrator*

Lorraine Fitzmaurice, *Music Director—Choir / Building Manager*

Imogene Stulken, *Music Director—Organ*

Hanqi Zhang, *Tech Verger*

Jessica Chicka, *Boston University Chaplain for International Students*

Brian Tracey, *Council President*

Ed Bucher, *Treasurer and Bookkeeper*

Gail Bucher, *Service Deacon*

Chris Porter, *Financial Secretary*

Susan Worst, *Webmaster*

Joyce DeGreeff, *Lutheran Chaplain at Northeastern University*

Andrew Heisen, *Lutheran Chaplain at MIT*

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**Welcome to University Lutheran Church, a Christian witness and ministry of and to members of the academic and wider communities in Cambridge-Boston — and, virtually, across the world! We are a Reconciling in Christ congregation, welcoming people of all sexual orientations and gender identities. We are also a member congregation of the Greater Boston Interfaith Organization (GBIO).**

***Land Acknowledgment:*** *University Lutheran Church is located on the original and ancestral homelands of the Pawtucket and Massa-adchu-es-et (Massachusetts) peoples, and we give thanks for their presence here since time immemorial. We also wish to recognize and honor all our Indigenous siblings who have called, and who continue to call, this land their home.*