

THE WORSHIP OF GOD

FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT | DECEMBER 21, 2025

GATHERING IN GOD'S NAME

The prelude provides an opportunity to prepare our hearts and minds to worship God by being still and quiet.

Prelude	<i>Es ist ein' Ros' entsprungen</i> Dan Lawhon	Mary Beth Bennett
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Welcome		Erica Cooper
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Choral Introit	<i>Awake! Awake, and Greet the New Morn</i>	REJOICE, REJOICE
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Processional Hymn No. 93	<i>Lift Up Your Heads, Ye Mighty Gates</i> Hymn sheet on page 3	TRURO
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Lighting the Candle of Love		Reba Williams and Serra Williams
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One: What does love look like?

All: It looks like helping, listening, hugging, and sharing.

One: God's love became a person, a child born in the night, lighting up the world.

All: We are part of that story, a people of love, shining with grace.

One: Let us make room for love in our hearts and in this world.

All: Come, Light of Love — live among us and through us!

Prayer of Invocation		Kit Deason
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Hymn No. 133	<i>O Come, All Ye Faithful</i> Hymn sheet on page 4	ADESTE FIDELIS
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PROCLAIMING THE WORD

Sermon on the Steps		Lindsey Bloodworth
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Hymn No. 99	<i>My Soul Gives Glory to My God</i> Hymn sheet on page 5	MORNING SONG
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Gospel Readings	Luke 1:46-55 John 1:14-18	Paxton Vaughn Eric Clark
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One: For the Word of God in Scripture, for the Word of God among us, for the Word of God within us,

All: Thanks be to God.

Choral Call to Prayer	<i>O Gladsome Light</i>	LE CANTIQUE DE SIMÉON
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Prayers of the People & Lord's Prayer		Lyndsay Clark
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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.

Anthem*Advent Carol*
Covenant Choir

Robert J. Powell

*Four candles shall we set this night
To break the winter's falling light
Across the table where each flame
Will God's sweet Advent now proclaim:
The first, Isaiah's prophecy,
The next for Bethl'hem city,
A third for those who tend the sheep,
And one for the Babe in Mary's keep.
Light Isaiah's light to see
Christ foretold in prophecy:
"For to us a Child is born,"*

*"He will reign on David's throne."
Light the light of Bethlehem
In a stable by the inn
Where rude beasts are sheltering
Beside a Child who will be King.
Four candles shall we set this night
To break the winter's falling light
Across the table where each flame
Will God's sweet Advent now proclaim.
Shepherds as you wander down*

*From you starbright hills to town,
Light your candle for the way
To Salvation born this day.
In the last light there shall be
Revealed a mystery
Christ's own flame which ever grows
From Isaiah's single rose.
Four candles shall we set this night
To break the winter's falling light
Across the table where each flame
Will God's sweet Advent now proclaim.*

Sermon*Radiant Light*

Erica Cooper

*RESPONDING TO THE WORD***Special Recognition**

Nikki Hardeman

The Frankie Huff Granger Distinguished Mentor Award Presented to Pastor Emerita Rev. Sarah Jackson Shelton

Invitation to Christian Commitment

Erica Cooper

Hymn of Response No. 104

O Lord How Shall I Meet You
[Hymn sheet on page 6](#)

VALET WILL ICH DIR GEBEN

Words of Dedication

Willie Fortune

Reception of the Offering

Ushers

Giving sacrificially of our money is one tangible expression of a wholehearted self-giving stewardship of all of life. Monetary offerings may be given online at baptistchurchofthecovenant.org/giving.

Offertory

The Virgin Mary Had a Baby Boy
Krystal Folkestad, Piano

Offertory Response*Doxology*

LASST UNS ERFREUEN

**Praise God from whom all blessings flow.
Praise God, all creatures high and low.
Alleluia, alleluia!**

**Praise God in Jesus fully known:
Creator, Word, and Spirit one.
Alleluia, alleluia!
Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!**

Life of the Church

Paxton Vaughn

Benediction

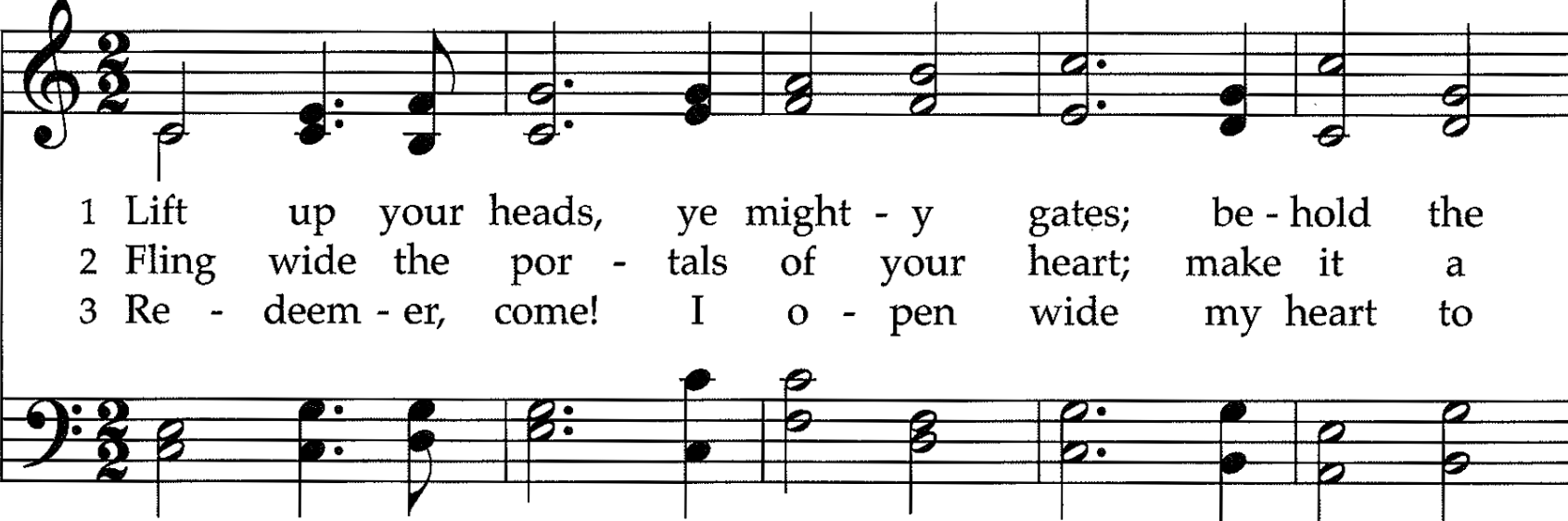
Erica Cooper

Postlude

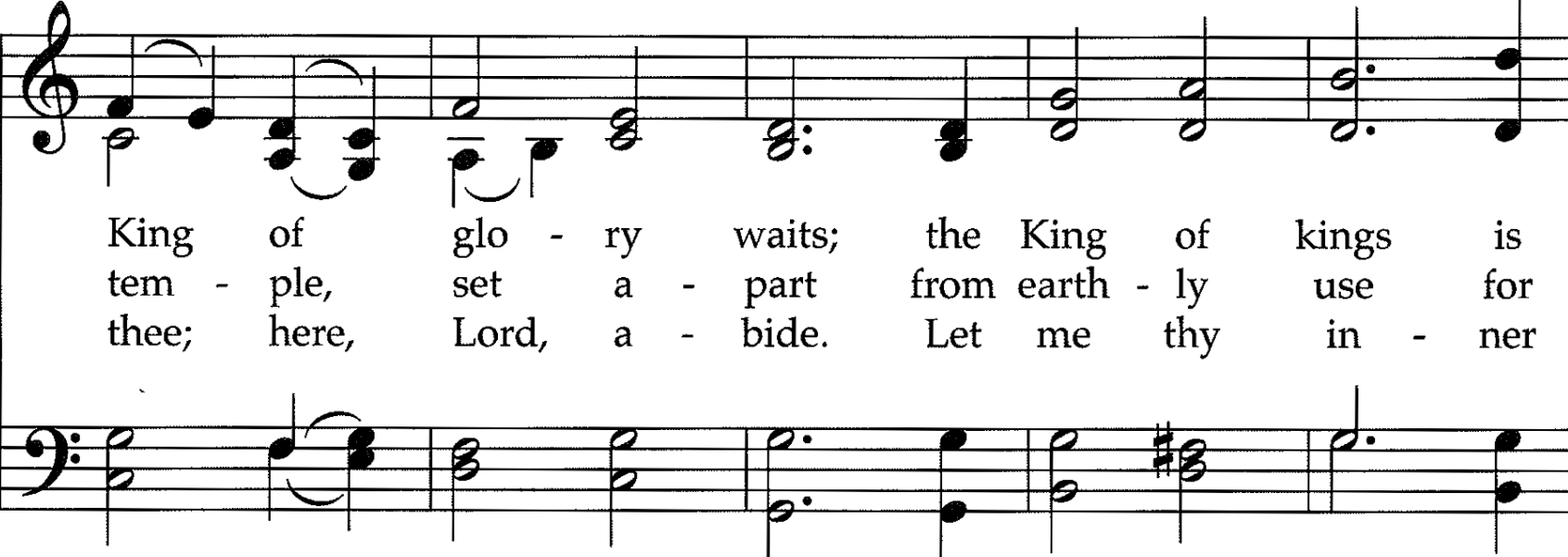
Fantasia on Adeste Fidelis
Dan Lawhon

David Blackwell

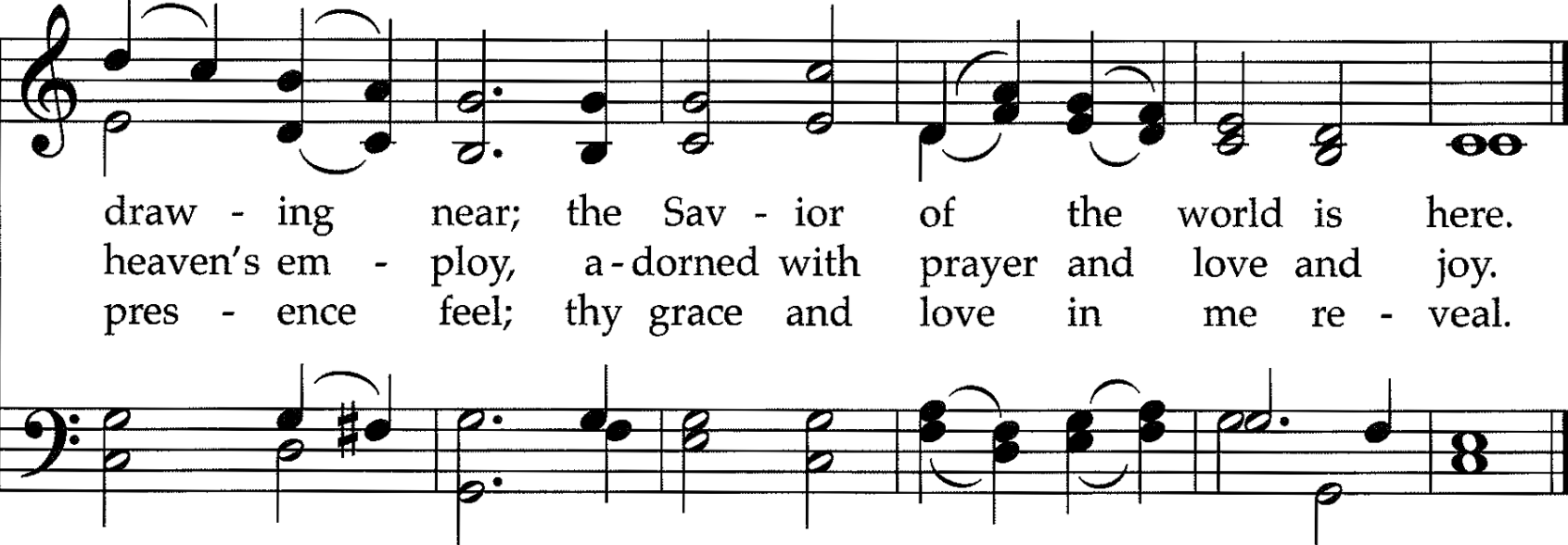
Lift Up Your Heads, Ye Mighty Gates 93



1 Lift up your heads, ye might - y gates; be - hold the
 2 Fling wide the por - tals of your heart; make it a
 3 Re - deem - er, come! I o - pen wide my heart to




King of glo - ry waits; the King of kings is
 tem - ple, set a - part from earth - ly use for
 thee; here, Lord, a - bide. Let me thy in - ner





draw - ing near; the Sav - ior of the world is here.
 heaven's em - ploy, a - dorned with prayer and love and joy.
 pres - ence feel; thy grace and love in me re - veal.

O Come, All Ye Faithful


133



1 O come, all ye faith - ful, joy - ful and tri - um - phant; O come
 2 True God from true God, Light from light e - ter - nal, born
 3 Sing, choirs of an - gels; sing in ex - ul - ta - tion; sing,
 4 Yea, Lord, we greet thee, born this hap - py morn - ing; Je -

ye; O come ye to Beth - le - hem! Come, and be - hold him,
 of a vir - gin, a mor - tal he comes; ver - y God, be -
 all ye cit - i - zens of heaven a - bove! Glo - ry to God, all
 sus, to thee be all glo - ry given; Word of the Fa - ther,



Refrain



born the King of an - gels!
 got - ten, not cre - at - ed!
 glo - ry in the high - est! O come, let us a - dore him; O come, let
 now in flesh ap - pear - ing!

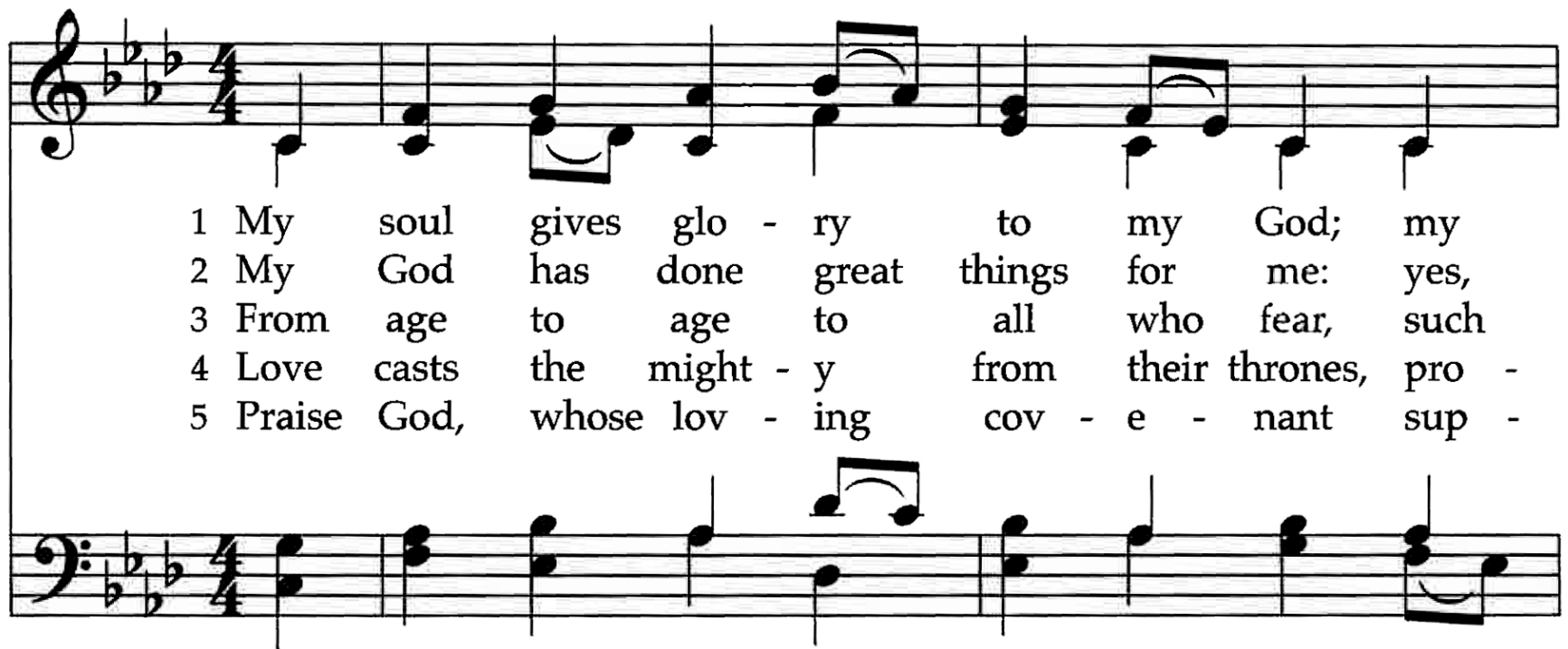



us a - dore him; O come, let us a - dore him, Christ, the Lord!



My Soul Gives Glory to My God 99

Song of Mary



1 My soul gives glo - ry to my God; my
2 My God has done great things for me: yes,
3 From age to age to all who fear, such
4 Love casts the might - y from their thrones, pro -
5 Praise God, whose lov - ing cov - e - nant sup -



heart pours out its praise. God lift - ed up my
ho - ly is God's name. All peo - ple will de -
mer - cy love im - parts, dis - pens - ing jus - tice
motes the in - se - cure, leaves hun - gry spir - its
ports those in dis - tress, re - mem - ber - ing past

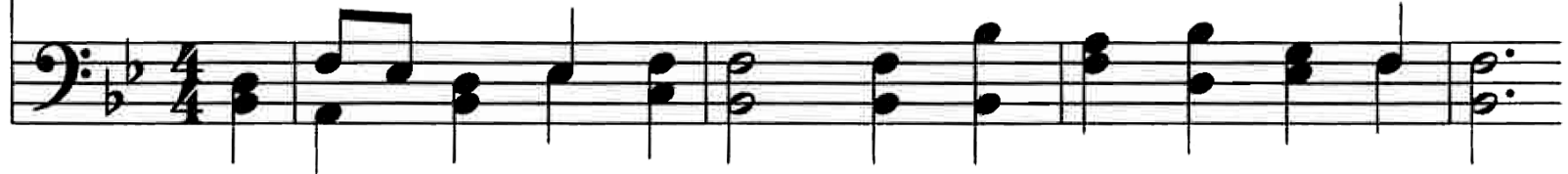


low - li - ness in man - y mar - vel - ous ways.
clare me blessed, and bless - ings they shall claim.
far and near, dis - miss - ing self - ish hearts.
sat - is - fied; the rich seem sud - den - ly poor.
prom - is - es with pres - ent faith - ful - ness.

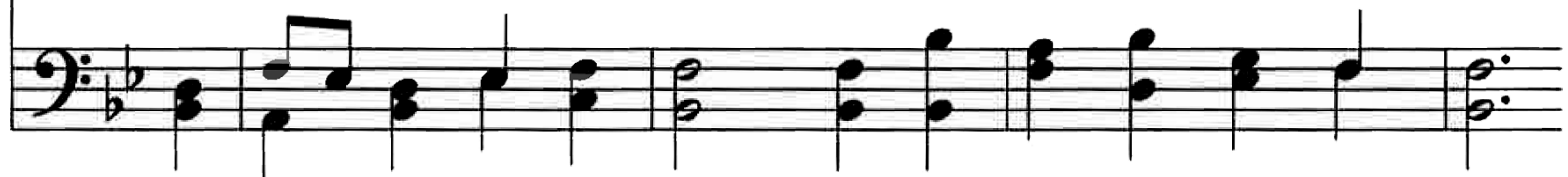
O Lord, How Shall I Meet You 104



1 O Lord, how shall I meet you, how wel-come you a - right?
2 Love caused your in - car - na - tion; love brought you down to me;
3 You come, O Lord, with glad - ness, in mer - cy and good-will,



Your peo - ple long to greet you, my hope, my heart's de - light!
your thirst for my sal - va - tion pro-cured my lib - er - ty.
to bring an end to sad - ness and bid our fears be still.



O kin - dle, Lord most ho - ly, a lamp with - in my breast,
O love be - yond all tell - ing, that led you to em - brace
In pa - tient ex - pec - ta - tion we live for that great day



to do in spir - it low - ly all that may please you best.
in love, all loves ex - cel - ling, our lost and fal - len race.
when your re-newed cre - a - tion your glo - ry shall dis - play.





Cover art: Detail of *Starry Night* (1889) by Vincent Van Gogh

ANNOUNCEMENTS

CHRISTMAS EVE: CANDLELIGHT AND COMMUNION **December 24 at 4:00 pm**

The night is still and full of glory. Angels blaze into the sky. Shepherds tremble. A baby cries. Light has come in the most unexpected, earthy, vulnerable way. The eternal Word is now held in human arms. In this sacred night, we are invited into the wonder of incarnation, the holy mystery of heaven touching earth.

OFFICE CLOSURES **December 24-29 & January 1**

The church office will be closed Wednesday, December 24 through Monday, December 29. Kelsey McClure will be in the church office on December 30 and 31 for last-minute contributions.

The church office will be closed on Thursday, January 1 in observance of New Year's Day.

FIRST SUNDAY AFTER CHRISTMAS **Sunday, December 28 at 10:00 am**

Rev. Eric Atcheson will be preaching the first Sunday after Christmas. Please note that worship will begin at 10:00 am, and we will not have Sunday School classes.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED FOR YOUTH SUNDAY NIGHT DINNERS

We're looking for volunteers to provide dinner for our youth group on Sunday nights.

This meal is an important time to build community and check in with each other. If you're able to provide a meal, please sign up using the QR code. Contact Paxton with any questions.

