

Community Vigil

Lament for our Country

January 15, 2026



First
Church

Special Services - January 15, 2026

Welcome

Pastor Duane

Call to Worship

L: People of God, we gather with hearts that are heavy, carrying grief for lives lost, fear for our neighbors, and sorrow for a world where violence continues.

God has shown us what is good.

P: What does the Holy One require of us but to do justice, to love kindness, and to walk humbly with our God?

L: We come seeking justice—not vengeance; truth—not silence; dignity—not dehumanization for any of God's children. We come naming harm, lamenting loss, and refusing to turn away.

P: Teach us, O God, to do justice—steadfast, courageous, and rooted in love.

L: We come longing for kindness in a world grown cruel, for compassion where fear has hardened hearts, and for mercy that heals what violence has broken.

P: Teach us, O God, to love kindness and to walk humbly with you, even—and especially—in times of grief and fear.

Song

"When People Die by Hatred"
("The Church's One Foundation")

Opening Prayer

Holy and Merciful God,
we come before you not with easy answers
but with aching hearts and trembling hope.
We come carrying grief for lives taken by violence,
fear for neighbors who live under threat,
and weariness from a world that feels too often broken beyond repair.

You have shown us what is good, O God,
yet we confess that justice feels fragile,
kindness feels scarce,
and humility feels hard when anger and despair press in.
Still, we come—because you are faithful,
and because your love does not abandon us in our lament.

Teach us to do justice, O God—
not justice shaped by power or punishment,
but justice rooted in dignity, truth, and the sacred worth of every person.
Help us name harm honestly,
grieve lives lost fully,
and refuse the lies that say violence is inevitable
or that some lives matter less than others.

Teach us to love kindness, O God—

a fierce and tender kindness that sees suffering and does not turn away,
that shelters the vulnerable,
that comforts the grieving,
and that dares to imagine healing where wounds run deep.
Shape our hearts to be wide enough for compassion
and strong enough for solidarity.

Teach us to walk humbly with you, O God—
to listen more than we speak,
to repent when we have been silent or complicit,
to learn from those whose fear and pain we do not carry ourselves.
Keep us close to you,
especially when the path forward feels unclear.

Hold in your loving care all who mourn this day,
all who live in fear,
and all whose trust has been shattered by violence.
Let your Spirit move among us—
binding up the brokenhearted,
stirring courage in weary souls,
and calling us again to be a people of justice, mercy, and peace.

We offer this prayer not because we are strong,
but because you are.
Not because we know the way,
but because we trust you to walk with us.

Amen.

Song

"When We Face an Unknown Future"

BEACH SPRING 8.7.8.7 D

Scripture Reading

Lamentations 3:17-26

my soul is bereft of peace;
I have forgotten what happiness is;
so I say, "Gone is my glory
and all that I had hoped for from the Lord."
The thought of my affliction and my homelessness
is wormwood and gall!
My soul continually thinks of it
and is bowed down within me.
But this I call to mind,
and therefore I have hope:
The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases,
his mercies never come to an end;

they are new every morning;
great is your faithfulness.
“The Lord is my portion,” says my soul,
“therefore I will hope in him.”
The Lord is good to those who wait for him,
to the soul that seeks him.
It is good that one should wait quietly
for the salvation of the Lord .

Song

"Lord, What Is All Our Fighting For?"
O WALY WALY 8.8.8.8 ("Though I May Speak")

A pastoral message from Bishop Lanette regarding the shooting in Minneapolis

Song

"It Is Well With My Soul"

Faithful Conversation

- Lament and Truth

- In times of violence and injustice, the church is called to tell the truth and to lament honestly.
- What does faithful lament look like in this moment?
- Where do you sense the church is being called to name pain, fear, or harm—without rushing too quickly to answers or solutions?

- Witness and Presence

- The church cannot fix everything, but it can choose how it shows up.
- What does it mean for the church to be a visible, faithful presence in a divided and fearful world?
- How might our words, worship, or relationships bear witness to God’s justice, compassion, and dignity for all people?

- Faith and Action

- Micah 6:8 calls us to do justice, love kindness, and walk humbly with God.
- How does your faith invite you to act in this season—personally and as part of the church?
- What is one small but faithful step the Spirit may be nudging you to take?

Song

"Benediction in Song: "Plowshare Prayer""
Pastor Kory

When People Die by Hatred

by Carolyn Winfrey Gillette

Verse 1

When people die by hatred, when people die by fear,
When people die defending our right to protest here,
When young Black men are murdered, when heroes die
in blue,
When people die for justice, O God, we cry to you.

Verse 2

We thank you for the faithful who give and give some
more:
Who advocate for justice, who lead the cry: "No more!"

Who work for public safety, who seek a peaceful way.
We thank you for their labors to build a better day.

Verse 3

When people raise their voices and seek the common
good,
When neighbors meet with neighbors to change their
neighborhood,
When we hear others' stories, when we admit our sin,
O God, we'll know your healing in this world once again.

When We Face an Unknown Future

by Carolyn Winfrey Gillette

Verse 1

When we face an unknown future that we can't imagine
yet,
when the closeness we have treasured turns from
blessing into threat —
As we miss our friends and loved ones, as we crave
community,
may we look, God, in this season, for a whole new way to
be.

Verse 2

Jesus faced the lonely desert as a time to look within.
There he met such trial and conflict; there he knew you
were with him.
In this time of separation when we miss the life we've
known,
may we hear your voice proclaiming: "I am here! You're
not alone."

Verse 3

May we cherish those around us as we never have
before.
May we think much less of profit; may we learn what
matters more.
May we hear our neighbors' suffering; may we see our
neighbors' pain.
May we learn new ways of offering life and health and
hope again.

Verse 4

God, when illness comes to threaten, and when so much
here goes wrong,
may we know this thing for certain — that your love is
sure and strong.
You're beside us in our suffering — and when times are
surely tough,
we may face an unknown future, but it's filled, Lord, with
your love.

Lord, What Is All Our Fighting For?

by Carolyn Winfrey Gillette

Verse 1

Lord, what is all our fighting for?
We train our young to go to war.
A young girl sees the terror spread
As soldiers shoot her parents dead.

Verse 2

Lord, what is our acceptance for?
We tolerate what you abhor.
Each day more little ones are lost;
May we seek truth and count war's cost.

Verse 3

What can we for repentance bring?
You do not want an offering.
"Do what is just," you simply say;
"Love what is kind and seek my way."

Verse 4

Lord, what is all our silence for?
Now make us bold to say, "No more!"
The world need not be what it's been;
Your peace will reign! Your love will win!

It Is Well With My Soul

by Horatio G. Spafford and Philip Paul Bliss

Verse 1

When peace like a river at - ten - deth my way
When sorrows like sea bill - lows roll
What - ever my lot Thou hast taught me to say
It is well, it is well with my soul

Chorus

It is well with my soul
It is well, it is well with my soul

Verse 2

Tho' Satan should buffet - tho' trials should come
Let this blessing assurance con - trol
That Christ hath regarded my helpless estate

And hath shed His own blood for my soul

Verse 3

My sin, O the bliss of this glorious thot
My sin, not in part, but the whole
Is nailed to the cross and I bear it no more
Praise the Lord! Praise the Lord, O my soul!

Verse 4

And Lord, haste the day when the faith shall be sight
The clouds be rolled back as a scroll
The trumpet shall sound and the Lord shall descend
Even so, it is well with my soul

Benediction in Song: "Plowshare Prayer"

Plowshare Prayer

Verse 1

Dear blessed creator, dear mother, dear savior
Dear father, dear brother, dear holy other
Dear sibling, dear baby, dear patiently waiting
Dear sad & confused, dear stuck & abused
Dear end of your rope, dear worn out & broke
Dear go it alone, dear running from home
Dear righteously angry, forsaken by family
Dear jaded & quiet, dear tough & defiant

Chorus

I pray that I'm heard
And I pray that this works

Verse 2

I pray if a prayer has been used as a sword
Against you & your heart
Against you & your word
I pray that this prayer is a plowshare of sorts
That it might break you open
It might help you grow
I pray that your body gets all that it needs
And if you don't want healing
I just pray for peace
I pray that your burden gets lighter each day
I pray the mean voice in your head goes away
I pray that you honor the grief as it comes
I pray you can feel all the life in your lungs
I pray that if you go all day being brave
That you can go home, go to bed
Feeling safe
I pray you're forgiven. I pray you forgive

I pray you set boundaries & openly live
I pray that you feel you are worth never leaving
I pray that you know I will always believe you

Chorus

I pray that you're heard
And I pray that this works

Verse 3

Amen on behalf of the last & the least
On behalf of the anxious, depressed & unseen
Amen for the workers, the hungry, the houseless
Amen for the lonely & recently spouseless
Amen for the queers & their closeted peers
Amen for the bullied who hold in their tears
Amen for the mothers of little Black sons
Amen for the kids who grow up scared of guns
Amen for the addicts, ashamed & hungover
Amen for the calloused, the wisened, the sober
Amen for ones who want life to be over
Amen for the leaders who lose their composure
And amen for the parents who just lost their baby
Amen for chronically ill & disabled
Amen for the children down at the border
Amen for the victims of our law & order

Chorus

I pray that you're heard
And I pray that this works

Tag

I pray if a prayer has been used as a sword
Against you & your heart
Against you & your word
I pray that this prayer is a plowshare of sorts
Plowshare
Prayer -

Prayers

Concerns Shared

WR Miller
Marissa Rowe, Niece of Barbara Krause
Mace Williams

Emily Mclaughlin, Niece of Mary Maxine
All in need of prayers

Those In Memory Care

Jack Gaunt

Pat Staver

Worship Team

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