

Mary Elizabeth (Phillips) Norris
May 28, 1933 – October 4, 2026

Celebration of Life Service

The Community Reformed Church of Colonie
November 21, 2026

Please join in the worship liturgy by reading aloud what is in ***bold italics.***
* = Please rise in body or in spirit

PRELUDE "Arabesque No. 1" Claude Debussy (1862-1918)

VOTUM | Psalm 124:8

Our help is in the name of the Lord, who made heaven and earth. ***Amen.***

OPENING SENTENCES | John 11: 25-26 & Romans 14: 7-8

Jesus said, "I am the resurrection and the life. Those who believe in me, though they die, yet shall they live. And those who live and believe in me shall never die."

We do not live to ourselves, and we do not die to ourselves. If we live, we live to the Lord, and if we die, we die to the Lord; so then, whether we live or whether we die, we are the Lord's.
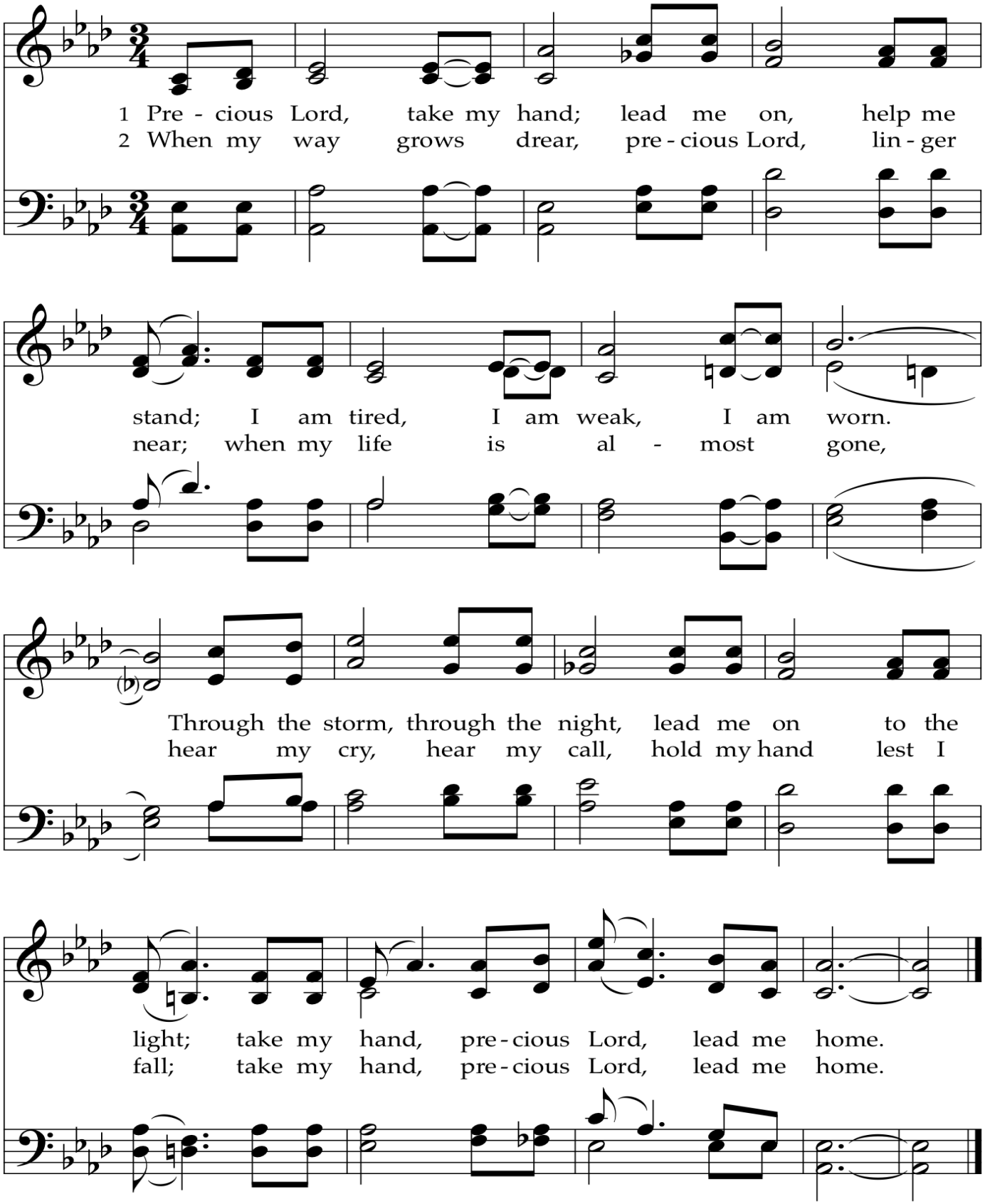
STATEMENT OF PURPOSE & GREETING | II Peter 1:2

May grace and peace be yours in abundance in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord. ***Amen.***

THE LIGHTING OF THE CANDLES
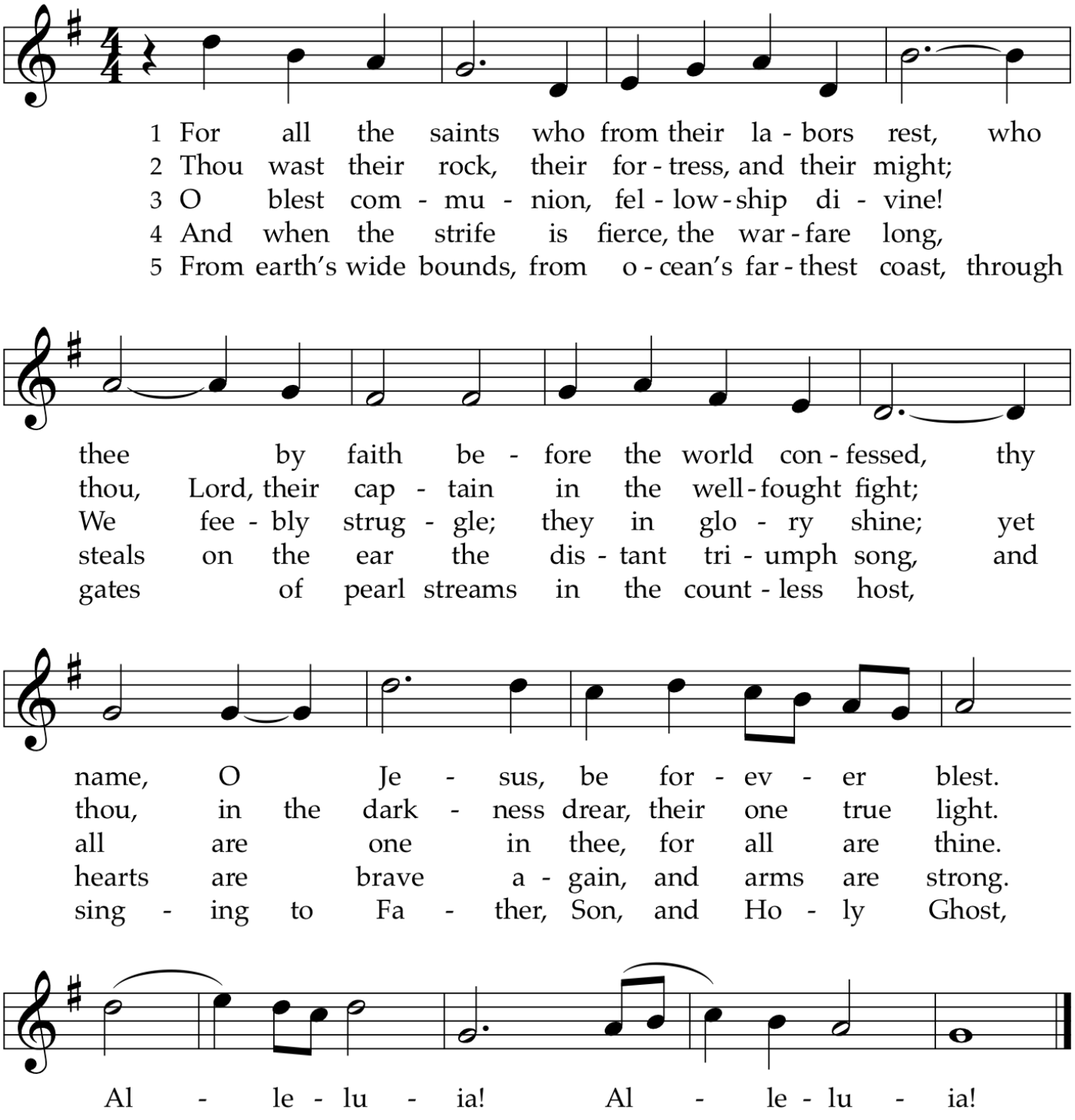
One for our grief;
One for our courage;
One for our memories;
One for our love; and,
One for our ever-present hope that Christ is with us.

* **HYMN** "Precious Lord, Take My Hand"



BAPTISMAL REMEMBRANCE Romans 6:3–5

* **HYMN** "For All The Saints" (v.1-3)



PRAYERS OF THANKSGIVING & INTERCESSION

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your 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 yours is the kingdom, and the power and the glory forever. Amen.

POEM "My Mother Kept A Garden"

My mother kept a garden
A garden of the heart
She planted all the good things
That gave my life its start

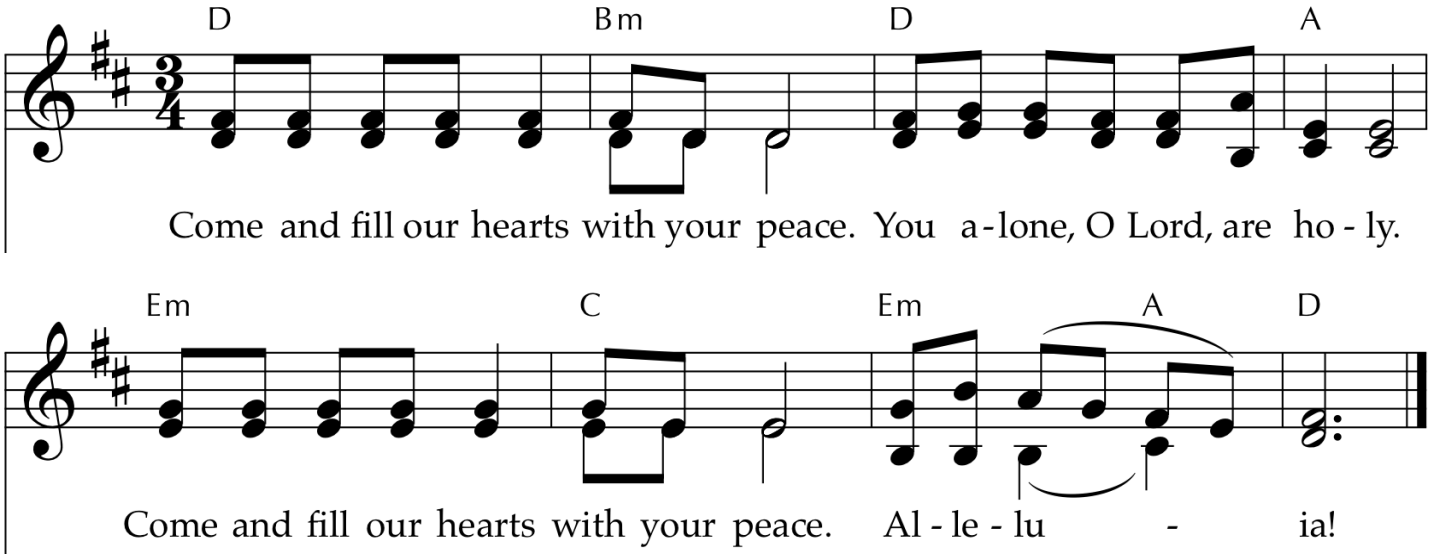
She turned me to the sunshine
And encouraged me to dream
Fostering and nurturing
The seeds of self-esteem

And when the winds and rain came
She protected me enough
But not too much because she knew
I'd need to stand up strong and tough

Her constant good example
Always taught me right from wrong
Markers for my pathway
That will last a lifetime long

I am my mother's garden
I am her legacy
And I hope today she feels the love
Reflected back from me.

*** TAIZÉ MEDITATION** "Come and Fill Our Hearts" (3x)



GOSPEL READING John 14:1-6; 6:40

"Do not let your hearts be troubled. Believe in God; believe also in me. In my Father's house there are many dwelling places. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, so that where I am, there you may be also. And you know the way to the place where I am going." Thomas said to him, "Lord, we do not know where you are going. How can we know the way?" Jesus said to him, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.

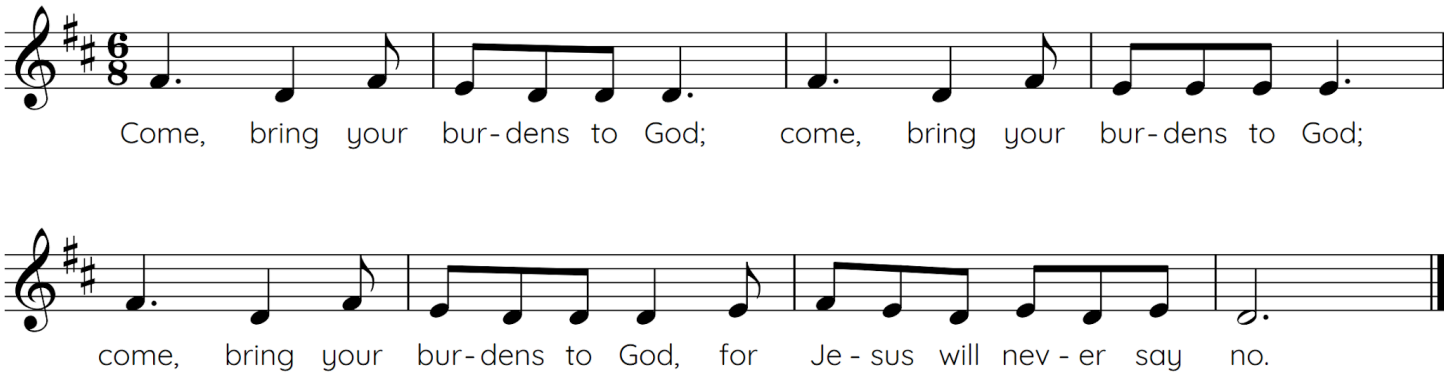
This is indeed the will of my Father, that all who see the Son and believe in him may have eternal life, and I will raise them up on the last day."

PSALM 23

The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want. He makes me lie down in green pastures; he leads me beside still waters; he restores my soul. He leads me in right paths for his name's sake. Even though I walk through the darkest valley, I fear no evil; for you are with me; your rod and your staff — they comfort me. You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; you anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord my whole life long.

REMEMBRANCE
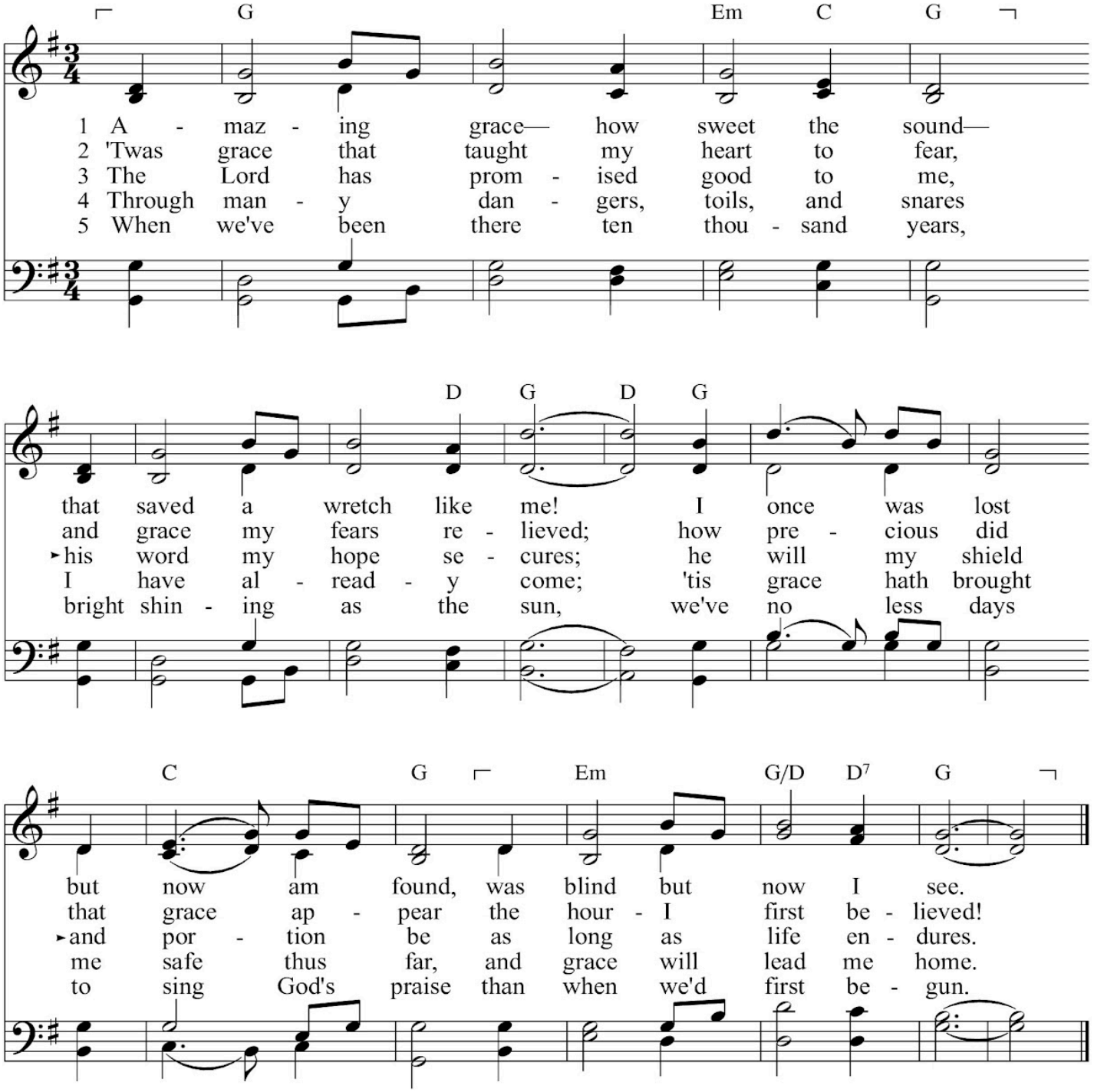
PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION "Come, Bring Your Burdens to God" (3x)



SERMON 1 John 4:11-12, 16b, 18-19 | Dwell in Love | Rev. Trey Tirpak

> "Beloved, since God loved us so much, we also ought to love one another. Now, no one has ever seen God; yet, if we love one another, God dwells in us, and God's love is perfected in us. For God is Love, and those who dwell in love, dwell in God, and God dwells in them... Now there is no fear in love, for perfect love casts out fear; for fear has to do with punishment... But we love because God first loved us."

*** HYMN** "Amazing Grace"



*** PRAYER OF COMMENDATION**

Into your hands, O merciful Savior,
we commend your servant, Mary.
Acknowledge, we pray,
a sheep of your own fold,
a lamb of your own flock,
a sinner of your own redeeming.
Receive her into the arms of your mercy,
into the blessed rest of everlasting peace,
and into the glorious company of the saints in light.

*** CHARGE & BENEDICTION**

*** THE IRISH BLESSING**

May the road rise to meet you,
May the wind be ever at your back,
May the sun shine warm upon your face,
And the rains fall soft upon your fields.
And until we meet again, and until we meet again,
May the God who loves us all
Hold you in the palm of His hand.
Amen.

*** POSTLUDE** "Let It Be"

All are welcome to stay for refreshments and fellowship.

SERVICE PARTICIPANTS

Minister
Rev. Trey Tirpak

Musician
Daniel White

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The Irish Blessing
Words: Traditional; Music: Benjamin April
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Mary Elizabeth (Phillips) Norris

Mary Norris, 93, of Albany, New York, passed away peacefully on October 4, 2026, surrounded by her loved ones. Born in Albany, she was the daughter of the late Agnes and Oren Phillips and the oldest of five children.

Mary was the beloved wife of the late Robert E. Norris, who passed away on December 30, 1998. Together, they raised nine children—five daughters and four sons—and built a home filled with love, cherished traditions, and lasting memories.

She will be lovingly remembered by her nine children: Joanne Mucci, Douglas Norris, Randal Norris, Deborah Grabau, Leslie Norris, Wendy DeFazio, Sherrie Norris, Jeffrey Norris, and Christopher Norris; her 13 grandchildren; 16 great-grandchildren; her sisters, Marilyn and Sandra; and many extended family members and friends.

She was predeceased by her beloved husband, Robert Norris; her brothers, Oren Phillips and Robert Phillips; and two cherished grandchildren, Brett Mesick and Bradley Norris.

A devoted mother, grandmother, and great grandmother, Mary spent countless hours caring for her children and grandchildren. In her home she shared her love for all animals large or small, feathered or fury; it was a welcoming place for holidays and celebrations, where family and friends all gathered to enjoy one another’s company.

Mary’s greatest legacy is the life she and Bob built and the values they passed on to their children. They taught the importance of loyalty, perseverance, and making time for one another. The traditions they established will continue through every generation.

While raising their children, Mary and Bob owned and operated Bob's Mini-Mart on Wolf Road. She also worked at Friendly Home Parties in the evenings. Through every responsibility, Mary remained devoted to those she loved and approached life with determination and generosity. Mary treasured the time she spent with her loved ones. She enjoyed camping, picnics, trips to the Catskill Game Farm, and especially boating on “Bobs Mini Ark” on Lake George. These outings became cherished memories that their children and grandchildren will carry with them always.

She was very creative, talented and enjoyed drawing, painting, knitting and basket weaving. These talents have been passed on to generations and will be part of her legacy for future generations to come.