

BELOVED COMMUNITY SCHOOL FOR THE COMMON GOOD

Fall Season / Ordinary Time:

Sept - Nov 23, 2025

Wayfinding: Wisdom for Action
in the Public Square



TULIP POPLAR

Guardian of faith in the public square, activism, public art, direct action, resistance,
resilience, perseverance

We are living in a time of deep ecological crisis, economic injustice, and social fragmentation. In Charlotte—a city shaped by racial segregation, gentrification, and extreme wealth gaps there is an urgent need to build communities that are grounded, responsive, and committed to the common good.

BELOVED COMMUNITY SCHOOL FOR THE COMMON GOOD
***brings people together to examine and challenge
systems of oppression, care for the environment, and
create networks of mutual support and shared
abundance.***

Through everyday practices, community storytelling and ritual, and collective action, we are experimenting with new ways of being that resist the status quo and build a more just, connected future. Our hope is to cultivate a way of living that is practical, critical, and rooted in place.

We know that sustained transformation requires both inner and outer work—practices that restore connection, challenge systems of harm, and foster a more liberated way of living together. Our approach blends critical thinking, ecological awareness, and creative communal practice to address the deep disconnection between people, land, and each other.

BELOVED COMMUNITY SCHOOL FOR THE COMMON GOOD

Summer Season / Ordinary Time:
June - August 2025

We are the Ones We've Been Waiting for:
Radical Interconnection, Communal Voice,
and Wisdom of the Margins

Fall Season / Ordinary Time:
Sept - Nov 23, 2025

Wayfinding: Wisdom for Action in
the Public Square

Winter Season /Advent &
Epiphany: Nov 29 - Feb 19, 2026

Make the Path While Walking: Rhythms
and Routines for Mutual Care

Spring Season / Lent: Feb 19 -
April 5, 2026:

Field Notes for Change: remaining attentive
to place with a critical eye toward change

Spring Season 2 / Eastertide:
April 5 - May 24, 2026

Groundwork: Inner Practice and
Public Action

EACH SEASON INCLUDES:

- Activation: a participatory learning experience designed to spark justice, connection, and collective care in a specific place and time.
- Ritual Gatherings: bi-weekly practices of ceremony, creative contemplation, story sharing, and connection rooted in the Christian tradition
- Occasional Feast Days: community celebrations
- Toolkit: resources for at-home study and application
- Beloved Community Circles: facilitated small group conversations

BELOVED COMMUNITY SCHOOL FOR THE COMMON GOOD

Fall Season / Ordinary Time:

September- November 23, 2025

Wayfinding: Wisdom for Action in the Public Square

The second season of Beloved Community School for the Common Good centers on values and practices of prophetic, ancestral, and ecological wisdom and public witness and liturgical direct action

Prophetic, Ancestral, and Ecological Wisdom

Drawing from plants, elders, and liberatory traditions to imagine new ways forward. Truth-telling through story, public art, and scripture, connecting personal experience with structural critique, realized eschatology, afrofuturism

Public Witness and Liturgical Direct Action

This practice explores the intersection of faith, activism, and communal participation. Using public art, action, and rituals to challenge oppression and witness God's justice in the public realm.

This season we are wayfinding together—seeking wisdom from ancestors, prophets, and creation as we journey. Guided by this wisdom, we are strengthened to bear witness in our households, neighborhoods, community, and in the public square.

Field Guide

Wayfinding: Wisdom for Action in the Public Square

Week of Sept 7, Sept 21, Oct 5, Oct 19, Nov 16

Beloved Community Charlotte Ritual Gatherings

5:00-7:00pm

2647 Freedom Dr

Week of Nov 2: Feast Day: All Saints Day and Blessing of the Children

November 11 Song and Salve: Music and Practices for the Soul and the City

Join the Carolina Music Social Club for Song and Salve, a community gathering where music and medicine-making meet to nurture heart and body. Together we'll share songs of healing and resistance, craft herbal salves, and leave with something lasting for spirit and community.

Beloved Community Circle- Small group meet up and conversation. Email

hello@belovedcommunityclt.com to receive details

RHYTHM FOR RITUAL GATHERINGS

Invocation

Scripture

Songs for the Season

Call to Communion

Words of Invocation

Serving One Another

Food and Fellowship

Songs for the Season

Creative Contemplation

Scripture

Proclamation

Community Response

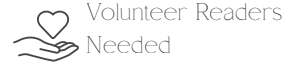
Prayers for the People

Announcements and Take Care of Our Meeting Space

Benediction

Field Guide: Invocation

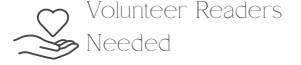
Wayfinding: Wisdom for Action in the Public Square



Week of Sept 7	The fruit of God's Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, and self control. Who are the prophets and ancestors in your life who embody these qualities? Consider what non-human beings are characterized by these traits as well. On the wooden star provided to you, write down the ancestor, prophet, or non-human creation that comes to mind. Tell the person next to you about what you wrote.	As we look toward the star, we may remember God's wisdom as revealed through the ancestors, prophets, and creation. May their wisdom guide our way.
Week of Sept 21	We pause to pay attention to our surroundings and acknowledge God as Creator. God invites us to experience and bear witness to the belovedness of all creation. Within the intertwined community of this watershed and landscape are creatures and creation of a wildly imaginative and mysterious God. We acknowledge the history of this place We bear witness to that which is deep in the soil, the history of this place and the people that inhabited it. We honor and recognize the Catawba and Sugaree peoples. We also recognize that many enslaved and indentured peoples were forced to dedicate their labor to the construction of what is now Charlotte, NC. To these peoples and their descendants, we acknowledge their indelible mark on the space in which we gather. We proclaim the reason why this all matters to us and what we hope to do about it. We yearn to know and share in the mystery of God's unending love. In recognizing that this land is colonized indigenous territory that has been crafted through slave and indentured labor, it is our collective responsibility to critically interrogate the histories of these events, and to honor, protect, and sustain this land. We remember the reason why we are here. Through acknowledgement, confession, and repair, we take responsibility for embodying God's holy peace. This is why we are gathered, to actively participate in and embody God's restorative healing and unending love.	As we pour the soil, we remember that we are rooted in God's creation and in the stories of those who came before us.

Field Guide: Invocation

Wayfinding: Wisdom for Action in the Public Square



Week of Oct 5	Using the sticks, let us make rhythm together.	Let the sound echo the truth-telling of prophets and the voices of the silenced. Let the branches remind us of the prophets, alive with vision, bending but not breaking in times of change.
Week of Oct 19	Place the dirt in your hand. Note how the dirt sinks into the lines on our hands. Our origin story says we are made from dust and dirt. God breathed life into the dirt and created humankind in God's image.	We hold this handful of soil, knowing we are dust and to dust we shall return. God breathes life into us and invites us to breathe life into our communities, bearing witness to the goodness of God.
	Week of Nov 2- Feast Day.	
Week of Nov 16	The leaves rustle with the wind and fall in autumn season. Imagine each leaf has something important and good to say to the City of Charlotte. What would we hear them saying if the leaves cried out?	We breathe in the scent of crushed leaves, remembering ecological wisdom that teaches us that we are interwoven with all creation.

Earth is our call to worship element this season. Earth represents connection to the physical world grounding, the foundation of life, substance, and stability. Green is the liturgical color for this season. Green often represent balance, nature, creativity, and growth. You may recognize other sacred symbols in this place. Pause and notice. Note how these symbols help you to sense a connection to God.

Field Guide: Songs for the Season

Wayfinding: Wisdom for Action in the Public Square

Blessing at Communion	God bless to us our bread. Give bread to those who are hungry and hunger for justice to those who are fed. God bless to us our bread.	
Benediction	May the peace of Christ go with you, wherever He may send you. May He guide you through the wilderness, protect you through the storm. May He bring you home rejoicing at the wonders He has shown you. May He bring you home rejoicing once again into our doors. WOO!	
Week of Sept 7	We'll walk in the light, the beautiful light. Come where the dewdrops of mercy shine bright. Shine all around us by day and by night. Jesus the light of the world.	Lead me, guide me, along the way. For, if you lead me I shall not stray. O, let me walk each day with Thee. Lead me, O God, lead me.
Week of Sept 21	Guide my feet, while I run this race. (3x) For I don't want to run this race in vain. Hold my hand, while I run this race. (3x) For I don't want to run this race in vain.	When you pass through the waters, I will be with you.. The flame and the flood will not consume you. Do not fear, for I have redeemed you. I have called you by name, you are mine. For I am Almighty God. For I am Almighty God, the Holy One of Israel, your Savior. I am your God.
Week of Oct 5	Ain't gonna let nobody turn me 'round. Turn me round, turn me 'round. Ain't gonna let nobody, turn me 'round. I'm gonna keep on a walkin', keep on a talkin'. Marching up to freedom land. Ain't gonna let racism turn me 'round Ain't gonna let no poverty Ain't gonna let no war economy Ain't gonna let no President Ain't gonna let no Congress	This is the moment, put down what you're holding. Everything is changing. Listen to the wind. And when you hear it, you don't have to fear it. Now's the time for healing. Everything we love.

Field Guide: Songs for the Season

Wayfinding: Wisdom for Action in the Public Square

Week of Oct 19	We who believe in freedom cannot rest We who believe in freedom cannot rest until it comes	I am not afraid I am not afraid I will die for liberation Cause I know why I was made I will stand for liberation.. I will march for liberation.. I will sing for liberation..
	Week of Nov 2- Feast Day. See Special Feast Day page.	
Week of Nov 16	Which side are you on my people which side are you on We're on the freedom side Ella Baker was a freedom fighter She taught us how to fight Now we're gonna fight all day and night Until we get it right Martin King was a freedom fighter Peggy Terry was a freedom fighter Dolores Huerta was a freedom fighter Hank Adams was a freedom fighter	Hold on. just a little while longer Hold on. just a little while longer Hold on. just a little while longer Everything. gonna be alright Sing on. just a little while longer Pray on. just a little while longer March on. just a little while longer

Field Guide: Verses for the Season

 Volunteer Readers Needed

Week of September 7	Isaiah 40:6-11 pg 296 in the lectionary	2 Thessalonians 2:13-17 pg 297 in the lectionary	John 11:1-27 pg 297 in the lectionary
Week of September 21	Isaiah 43:1-7 pg 300 in the lectionary	Psalms 36:5-10 pg 300 in the lectionary	Luke 19:1-10 pg 301 in the lectionary
Week of October 5	Isaiah 52:7-10 pg 310 in the lectionary	1 Peter 1:10-12 pg 311 in the lectionary	John 4:27-42 Pg 311 in the lectionary
Week of Oct 19	Isaiah 61:1-4; 8-10 pg 313 in the lectionary	2 Corinthians 2:14-16 pg 314 in the lectionary	Mark 14: 3-7 pg 315 in the lectionary
Week of Nov 2	Isaiah 25: 1-10 pg 326 in the lectionary	Hebrews 11:1-40	Matthews 1: 1-17
Week of Nov 16	Malachi 3:1-7 pg 337 in the lectionary	Psalms 84:1-12 pg 337 in the lectionary	Revelation 22:1-21 pg 338 in the lectionary

Field Guide: Call to Communion

Wayfinding: Wisdom for Action in the Public Square



Volunteer Readers
Needed

Week of September 7	At this table, God's provisions are not scarce but overflowing, enough for all who hunger and thirst. Together with saints before us, we receive the wisdom of God's promise made flesh.
Week of September 21	God's love is the feast. God's wisdom the bread. God's promise the cup. At this table, all are welcome to receive, rejoice, and be renewed.
Week of October 5	God created this bread and cup, gifts from the earth and from the labor of many hands. At this table, God's promise of love is made visible and shared with all.
Week of Oct 19	Here at Christ's table, we find provision for our wandering hearts and weary bodies. The Spirit calls us into the long tradition of faith, joining ancestors who trusted in God's abundance.
Week of Nov 2	On this Feast Day, we will have a special service with its own separate bulletin.
Week of Nov 16	This table stretches across time and place, uniting us with generations who have sought God's wisdom and way. Here God provides, and we are fed for witness in the world.

Traditional Words of Institution from Martin Luther's Small Catechism in 1529:

On the night in which he was betrayed, Jesus took bread, And gave thanks; broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying: Take and eat; this is my body, given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me. Again, after supper, He took the cup, gave thanks, And gave it for all to drink, Saying: This is the cup of the new covenant poured out for your sake. Do this for the remembrance of me.

God bless to us our bread.
Give bread to those who are hungry
and hunger for justice to those who are fed.
God bless to us our bread.

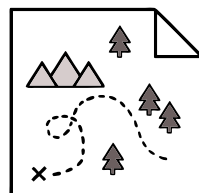
Field Guide: Creative Contemplation

Wayfinding: Wisdom for Action in the Public Square

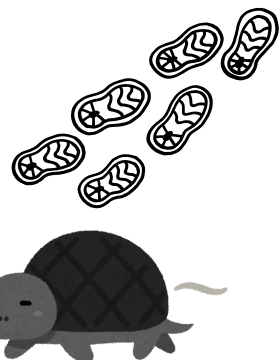


Volunteer Readers
Needed

Week of September 7	The fruit of God's Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, and self control. Who are the prophets and ancestors in your life who embody these qualities? Consider what non-human beings are characterized by these traits as well. Take another 3 minutes to silently consider the saints in your life. What other words would you use to characterize the human and non-human saints in your life. Get into groups of three to share.
Week of September 21	Take a few deep breaths. Picture yourself on a path. Draw the shape of the path: curvy, bumpy, forks in the road, straight, blocked? Who are the ancestors, prophets, or guides—human or non-human that walk with you? How does their witness guide you?
Week of October 5	The Spirit's fruits—love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, and self-control—are like a compass. Which of these is most needed for your wayfinding now? Spend 3 minutes reflecting and then share with someone.
Week of Oct 19	Wayfinding often brings us to crossroads. Recall a moment when you had to choose a direction. What helped you discern? How might those practices serve our community now? Create a wayfinding sign to help others learn from your experience. See examples below.
Week of Nov 2 On this Feast Day, we will have a special service with its own separate bulletin. Use this prompt at home.	Consider how our present actions will one day become wisdom for future generations. What do you hope your descendants—human and non-human—will learn from the way you walked in this season?
Week of Nov 16	Name the forces—internal or external—that pull you away from justice, compassion, or peace. Use the playdough to sculpt what this is like for you. Pause to reflect. Now, imagine how God's wisdom equips you to resist and reorient. Reshape your clay to represent a reoriented self.



Lets go!



Field Guide: Prayers for the People

Wayfinding: Wisdom for Action in the Public Square

Blessed are the poor.

for theirs is the Kin-dom of God.

Blessed are the hungry.

for they shall be filled.

Blessed are the meek.

for they shall inherit the earth.

Blessed are the pure in heart.

for they shall see God.

Blessed are those who mourn.

for they shall be comforted.

Blessed are the merciful.

for they shall be shown mercy.

Blessed are the peacemakers.

for they are the children of God.

Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness and justice.

for great is their reward.

For peace in a world of war.

God, hear our prayer.

for those on the margins—unhoused, incarcerated, displaced.

God, hear our prayer

for our city leaders and decision makers.

God, hear our prayer

for creation and all who suffer from environmental destruction.

God, hear our prayer

for racial justice and the dismantling of white supremacy.

God, hear our prayer.

for children and young people, their future and their flourishing.

God, hear our prayer.

for workers—those underpaid, exploited, or unseen.

God, hear our prayer.

for those who grieve, suffer illness, or live with trauma.

God, hear our prayer.

for wisdom in the public square.

God, hear our prayer.

for courage to embody our faith in action.

God, hear our prayer.

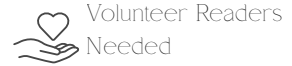
Field Guide: Prayers for the People

Wayfinding: Wisdom for Action in the Public Square

Let us create signs and banners representing our prayers.

- peace in a world of war. Imagine a banner that calls for ceasefire, justice, and reconciliation. What words or images rise up?
- for those on the margins—unhoused, incarcerated, displaced. Create a sign that names their dignity and demands care.
- for our city leaders and decision makers. Design a banner with the wisdom you believe they most need to hear.
- for creation and all who suffer from environmental destruction. What cry for the earth belongs on a protest sign?
- for racial justice and the dismantling of white supremacy. Imagine a bold message that declares the truth of beloved community.
- for children and young people, their future and their flourishing. Create a banner that names what every child deserves.
- Pray for workers—those underpaid, exploited, or unseen. What words of justice, wages, or dignity would you paint on a sign?
- for those who grieve, suffer illness, or live with trauma. Create a sign of solidarity that could be carried at a vigil.
- or wisdom in the public square. What words do we need to lift high to guide us toward justice and peace?
- for courage to embody our faith in action. Make a banner that declares what love looks like in public.

Benediction



O gracious Light,
pure brightness of the ever living Mother in heaven.
O Jesus Christ, holy and blessed!
Now as we come to the setting of the sun,
and our eyes behold the evening light,
we sing your praises, O God: Creator, Christ, and Holy Spirit.
You are worthy at all times to be praised by happy voices,
O Child of God, O Giver of life,
your glory fills the whole world.

Sung in Unison:
Praise God from whom all blessings flow,
Praise God all creatures here below,
Praise God above, ye heavenly hosts,
Creator, Christ, and Holy Ghost. Amen.

Lighten our darkness, we beseech thee, O God:
and by thy great mercy defend us from all perils and dangers of this night;
for the love of thy only Son, our Savior, Jesus Christ.

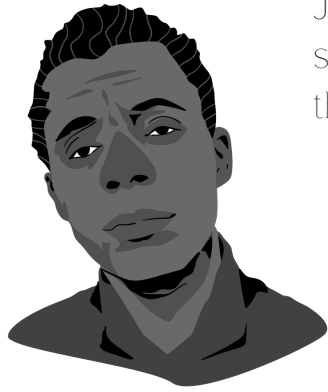
May the Creator bless us and keep us from all harm:
and may God lead us to eternal life. Amen.

May the peace of Christ go with you, wherever He may send you. May He guide you through
the wilderness, protect you through the storm, May He bring you home rejoicing at the
wonders He has shown you. May He bring you home rejoicing once again into our doors.

WOO!

Guardians

Patron Saints, Hallowed Plants, Sacred Symbols



James Baldwin, Guardian of Wisdom – Truth-telling prophet and fierce storyteller. Baldwin wove art and scripture into revelation, reminding us that words can be fire, healing, and vision all at once.

Sojourner Truth, Guardian of Prophetic Vision – Dreaming across generations. Truth bore witness to the wounds of the past and the urgencies of the present while proclaiming the freedom yet to come. She teaches us that God's liberating word is always breaking in.



Brownfield, Guardian of Critique – A witness to what was broken and what might yet be mended. Through questioning, analysis, and remediation, Brownfield teaches us to see possibility with active hope. Mount Tabor, Guardian of Transfiguration – The mountain where time folds in on itself, where past, present, and future converge in light. Tabor reminds us that change is holy and transformation eternal.

Phyllite and Shale, Guardians of Ancestry – Layered witnesses to deep time, holding the memory of human and more-than-human ancestors. These rocks remind us that we are shaped by what came before.

Seedlings, Guardians of the Future – Tender prophets and ancestors-in-the-making, both human and more-than-human. Seedlings remind us to nurture what will one day tower beyond us.

Mugwort, Guardian of Creative Resistance – Herb of dreaming and scheming, mugwort calls forth activism, ritual, and imagination as sacred tools of survival and transformation

Also featured on the front page of the toolkit:

Tulip Poplar: Guardian of faith in the public square, activism, public art, direct action, resistance, resilience, perseverance



Podcasts

Radical Transparency: Mapping
Earth from the Ground to the
Crowd

Seeding the Fields

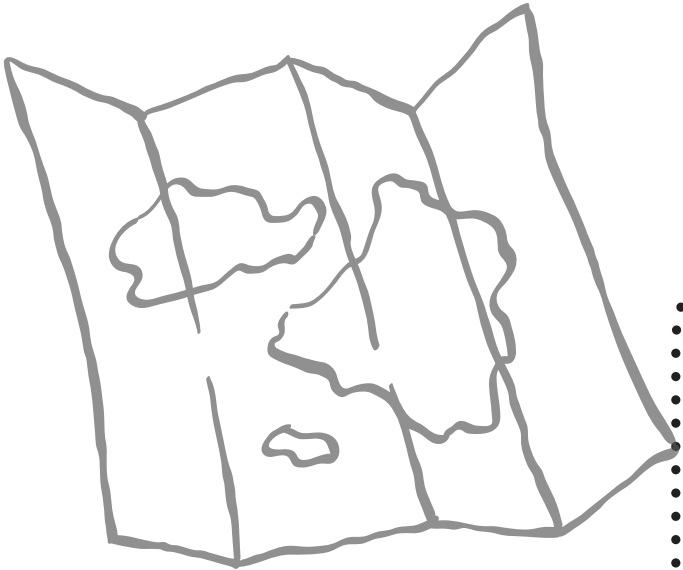
Deep Listening: Whale Culture,
Interspecies Communication,
and Knowing Your Place

Music

Remember Me

I Am Not Afraid

We Rise: A Songbook



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OR SCAN THE QR CODE

Things to Read or View

Art of Racquel Banaszak

Storytelling Project Model

Our Communities are Storied

Art by Jeni Jenkins

Art of Thai Kim

Art of Gregg Deal

Ancient & Prophetic Readings

Az Yashir Moshe. Song of the Sea (Exodus 15)

I will sing to the Mighty One.
For God has triumphed gloriously!
The horse and its rider God has thrown
into the sea!
The Mighty One is my strength and song.
God has become my salvation:
Pharaoh's chariots and his army God cast
into the sea:
The depths have covered them:
They sank to the bottom like a stone.
In the greatness of Your majesty
You have overthrown those who rose
against you.
You sent forth your wrath:
It consumed them like stubble.
And with the blast of Your nostrils
The waters were piled up
The surging waters stood firm like a wall:
The deep waters congealed in the heart of
the sea.
The enemy boasted but you blew your
breath.
And the sea covered them.
They sank like lead in the mighty waters.
Who among the gods is like you O Holy
One?
Who is like you, majestic in holiness.
Awesome in glory, working wonders.
You stretched out Your right hand:
The earth swallowed them.
In your unfailing love
You will lead the people you have
redeemed.
In your strength you will guide them
To your holy dwelling.

Magnificat. Mary's Song (Luke 1:46-55)

translated by Wil Gafney

My soul magnifies the Holy One.
And my spirit rejoices in God my Savior.
For God has looked with favor on the
lowliness of God's own womb-slave.
Surely, from now on all generations will call
me blessed:
For the Mighty One has done great things
for me.
And holy is God's name.
God's loving-kindness is for those who fear
God
From generation to generation.
God has shown the strength of God's own
arm:
God has scattered the arrogant in the intent
of their hearts.
God has brought down the powerful from
their thrones.
And lifted up the lowly:
God has filled the hungry with good things.
And sent the rich away empty.
God has helped God's own child, Israel.
A memorial to God's mercy.
Just as God said to our mothers and
fathers.
to [Hagar and] Sarah and Abraham, to their
descendants forever.

Making the Connections

- Research and learn about one of the guides for this season. What can they teach you? How might you emulate them in your own life?
- How can we use stories, art, and our own experiences to tell the truth about what is good and right or what's wrong and imagine what's possible? When have you done this? What was that like?
- Do you use art, actions, and community events to stand up against injustice? How so? Why?
- Who are the people in your life that inspire you? What are they teaching you about your own life?
- Where are the places in God's creation that make you sense God's presence?
- Are there plants or non-human beings that teach you about God? How so?



MUGWORT

Guardian of creative resistance, activism, public ritual, dreaming and scheming

Notes



2025 dates

Jan 12 & 26
Feb 2 & 16
March 2, 16, & 30
April 13 & 20
May 4 & 18
June 8 & 22
July 13 & 20
Aug 3 & 17*
September 7 & 21
Oct 5 & 19
Nov 2, 16, 30
Dec 7, 14, & 21.

BCC VISITOR FORM

If you haven't before, please scan this QR code and fill out the visitor form.



WEEKLY NEWSLETTER

BCC distributes a weekly newsletter with announcements, reflections, and updates via email and slack. You can find the newsletter at this link:

<https://tinyurl.com/BCCWEEKLYNEWS>

GETTING TO KNOW OUR PASTOR

If you want to schedule some time to connect with Helms, feel free to find a time that works for you using this link:



FINANCIAL SUPPORT

If you'd like to support this justice-oriented, affirming church plant, we have an easy way to do so online. Please use the link below or scan the qr code. Please note that a small percentage is used to pay for the credit card processing fee.

<https://givebutter.com/BGJibM>

Translations used during worship are from **A Women's Lectionary for the Whole Church: Year C**
by Dr. Wilda C. Gafney*