

## Interfaith Service

January 19, 2017

Good evening! And welcome to this Interfaith Service at Emmanuel Church. What a gift to be gathered together here in this place tonight!

A special welcome also to those of you who are joining us via the NewsLeader live stream.

We come together tonight, not because we have the same beliefs, but because we have different beliefs, yet we recognize the humanity in one another. We are here because we are called to honor and respect the dignity of every human being. We are here out of a deep love for the people, all people, that God had created.

At this time of transition in our nation, many of us feel polarized, maybe even unable to communicate with those with whom we disagree. But this problem offers an opportunity, an opportunity to strengthen relationships with those who may be different than us, an opportunity to consider the value each person or group can bring to the whole, an opportunity to build bridges that we might recognize ourselves not as isolated individuals but as part of an interconnected body that functions much better when we are working together.

So I welcome you here tonight as we sing and pray together. My prayer for all of us is that we embrace this season in our personal lives and in this season of our nation's history as a time to work through our doubts, our fears and embrace the opportunities before us, each in our unique ways, to bring peace, unity and love into a world that is indeed hungry for it.