



*"An inclusive community, celebrating God's unconditional love  
through engaging worship and faithful service"*



Welcome Home Sunday  
September 12, 2021  
"Will We Lose Or Save Life? How So?"

## The Love of God Gathers Us

**Gathering Music**

*You are invited to greet those around you or sit quietly.*

**Ringing of the Bell**

**Prelude**

“Revive Us again”

*arr Hayes*

*Sharon Neuenfeldt, Worship Accompanist*

**Words of Welcome**

Pastor Clare Gromoll

**\*\*\*Gathering Prayer**

Jere Fetter

**Gracious God, we invite your uplifting presence among us. Gathered here today, we move with excitement into the fall, even if wistful for summer relaxation. Bless this church family as we sing, pray, learn and serve together. May our worship and ministry be to your greater glory. May our gifts of the Spirit build up the body of Christ. Amen.**

**\*\*\*Opening Hymn**

“Gather Us In” (vs. 1,3,4)

*see next page*

### Acknowledging Our Humanness and God’s Grace

**\*\*\*A September Prayer of Longing**

Pastor Clare Gromoll

**O God, this is a month of changes. We feel it in the cooler air. Some of us are finding our way back to school. We all want to learn. Let us all grow in wisdom and maturity.**

**Some of us are watching the harvest arrive, while the gardens of some among us produce less and less. Let all our hearts produce love and kindness.**

**As many of us leave vacations behind, O God, keep our lives renewed by filling us with your joy and your rest.**

**Creative God, every year the world spins through its seasons and encounters new troubles. Steady and soothe your Earth that its changes may be good changes and its struggles end in peace.**

**Loving God, you remains our steadfast friend. Watch over the changes in our lives. May we stretch and grow but always and ever remain yours in Christ. Amen.**

*prayerful silence*

**\*\*\*Assurance of Grace & Invitation to Pass the Peace**

Pastor: The peace of Christ be with you! All: And also with you!

**Proclaiming God's Love**

**A Time with Young People**

*Pastor Clare invites children forward to gather with her (socially distanced)*

**Commissioning our Children and Leaders for Fall Children's Activity**

**Blessing One Another**

Children: God be with you All: And also with you

*Children may follow leaders to Children's Activity or remain with their families in worship.*

**Scriptures:**

Psalm 116:1-9 *The Inclusive Bible*

Jere Fetter

James 3:1-12 *NRSV*

Mark 8:27-37 *NRSV*

- 1 I love the LORD, who has heard  
my voice and my supplications.
- 2 **Because you listened to me,**  
**I will call on you as long as I live.**
- 3 The snares of death encompassed me;  
the pangs of Sheol laid hold on me;  
I suffered distress and anguish.
- 4 **Then I called on the name of the LORD:**  
**"O LORD, I pray, save my life!"**
- 5 Gracious is the LORD, and righteous;  
our God is merciful.
- 6 **The LORD protects the simple;**  
**when I was brought low, God saved me.**
- 7 Return, O my soul, to your rest,  
**for the LORD has dealt bountifully with you.**
- 8 For you have delivered my soul from death,  
my eyes from tears,  
my feet from stumbling.
- 9 **I walk before the LORD**  
**in the land of the living.**

\*\*\*“Gather Us In” ~ vs.1,3,4 ~ #284/CH

*Unison*    D            A            C            G            Gm/B $\flat$     Dm

1. Here in this place, the new light is stream- ing,    sha- dows of doubt    are  
 2. We are the young—our lives are a mys- tery;    we are the old,    who  
 3. Here we re- ceive new life in the wa- ters;    here we re- ceive the  
 4. Not just in build- ings, small and con- fin- ing,    not in some heav - en,

          C            G            D            A            C            G

van- ished a - way.    See in this space    our fears and our dream-ings,  
 yearn for your face.    We have been sung through- out all    of his - tory,  
 bread of new birth;    here you shall call    your sons and your daugh- ters,  
 light years a - way,    here in this place    the new light is shin - ing;

          Gm/B $\flat$     Dm            C            Am7    D

brought here to you in the    light of this    day.  
 called    to be light to the    whole hu- man    race.  
 call    us a - new to be    salt for the    earth.  
 now    is God pres- ent, and    now is the    day.

A C/G D/F# G A C/G

Gath-er us in, the lost and for - sak - en; gath-er us in; our  
 Gath-er us in— the rich and the haugh-ty; gath-er us in— the  
 Give us to drink the wine of com-pass-ion, give us to eat the  
 Gath-er us in and hold us for - ev - er; gath-er us in and

D/F# G A D A C G

spir - its in-flame. Call to us now, and we shall a-wak-en;  
 proud and the strong; give us a heart so meek and so low-ly;  
 bread that is you; nour-ish us well, and teach us to fash-ion  
 make us your own; gath-er us in, all peo-ples to-geth-er,

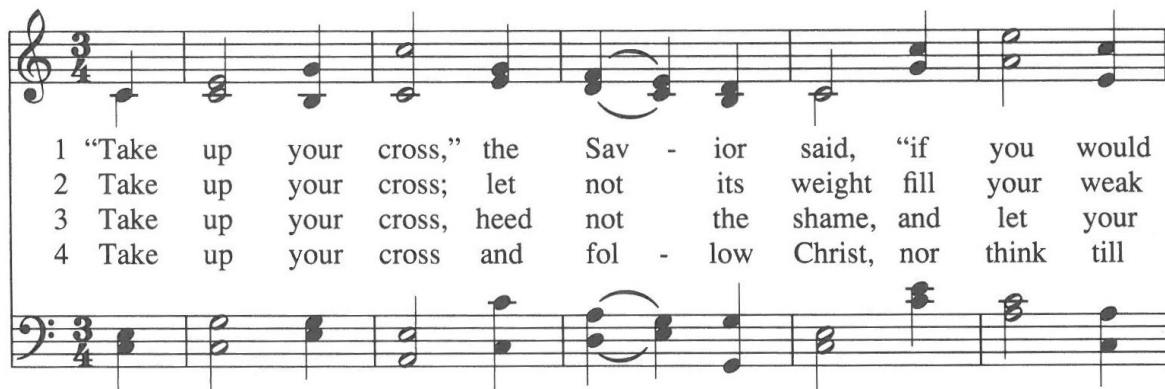
Gm/Bb Dm C Am7 D C/D Gm/D D

we shall a-rise at the sound of our name.  
 give us the cour-age to en - ter the song.  
 lives that are ho-ly and hearts that are true.  
 fire of love in our flesh and our bone.

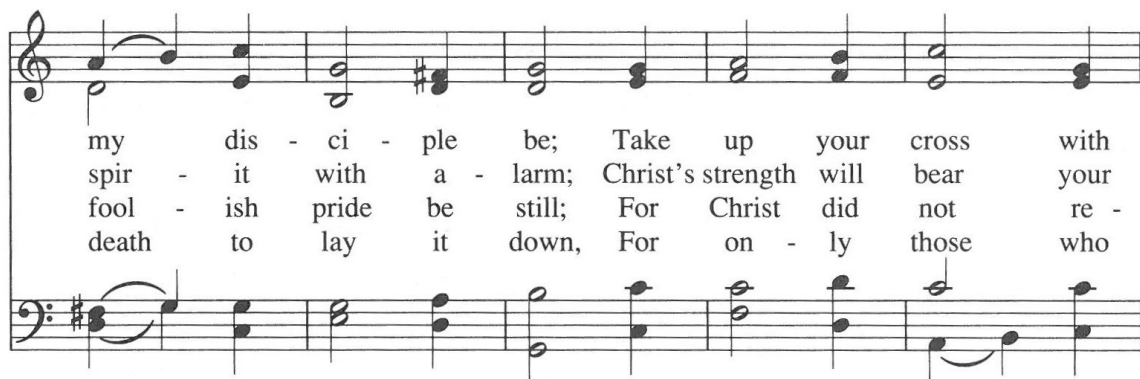
\*\*\*Sitting or standing

# Morning Message "Will We Lose or Save Life? How So?"

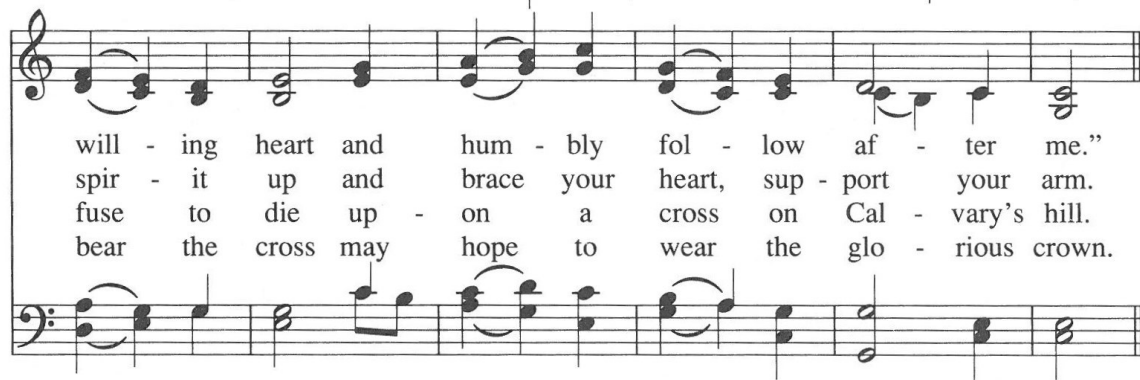
## Prayer Hymn "Take Up Your Cross," the Savior Said" #204 NCH



1 "Take up your cross," the Sav - ior said, "if you would  
2 Take up your cross; let not its weight fill your weak  
3 Take up your cross, heed not the shame, and let your  
4 Take up your cross and fol - low Christ, nor think till



my dis - ci - ple be; Take up your cross with  
spir - it with a - larm; Christ's strength will bear your  
fool - ish pride be still; For Christ did not re -  
death to lay it down, For on - ly those who



will - ing heart and hum - bly fol - low af - ter me."  
spir - it up and brace your heart, sup - port your arm.  
fuse to die up - on a cross on Cal - vary's hill.  
bear the cross may hope to wear the glo - rious crown.

*Charles Everest, after graduating from Trinity College, Hartford, was rector of a parish in Hamden, Connecticut, for thirty-one years. This sermon in verse is from his collection of hymns titled Visions of Death and Other Poems.*

Tune: DEUS TUORUM MILITUM L.M.  
Grenoble Antiphoner, 1753

## Responding To God's Love

### **A Litany of Remembrance**

*We toll the bell twenty times to signify the years that have passed since the terrible events of September 11, 2001. With each toll of the bell, a prayer will be voiced.*

### **Prayers of the People**

*You are invited to speak a brief prayer for yourself, another, or a part of the world.  
Raise your hand or stand and project your joy or concern so we can hear it.  
Pastor Clare will follow your prayer with, "God, in your love..."*

**One:** God, in your love,

**All:** Hear our prayer

### **Lord's Prayer**

**Heavenly Father, heavenly Mother,  
Holy and blessed is your true name.  
We pray for your reign of peace to come,  
We pray that your good will be done,  
Let heaven and Earth become one.  
Give us this day the bread we need,  
Give it to those who have none.  
Let forgiveness flow like a river between us,  
From each one to each one.  
Lead us to holy innocence  
Beyond the evil of our days —  
Come swiftly Mother, Father, come.  
For yours is the power and the glory and the mercy:  
Forever your name is All in One. AMEN**

### **Invitation to the Offering**

Jere Fetter

### **Offertory**

"Come Celebrate the Call to God"

*English Melody*

### **\*\*\*Doxology**

**Praise God from whom all blessings flow;  
Praise God all creatures here below;  
Praise God above, you heavenly host;  
Creator, Christ and Holy Ghost. Amen.**

### **\*\*\*Prayer of Dedication**

**Gracious God, you have planted within us seeds of hope, nurtured within us saplings of faith, and harvested fruits of your creation. You spread before us the feast of possibility! May we embody our thanks with extravagant generosity. May we offer our lives to you in acts of compassion for one another. May we walk gently upon the Earth, ever mindful of your gifts of breath, of love, of life itself. Amen.**

### **Sharing in Holy Communion**

*Holy Communion is open to members and friends of all ages. We welcome you in the name of Jesus, whom we follow in the way of radically inclusive love.*

### **\*\*\*The Invitation & Prayer**

**Pastor: God be with you.**

**All: And also with you.**

**Pastor: Lift up your hearts.**

**All: We lift them to God.**

**Pastor: Let us give thanks to God Most High.**

**All: It is right to give God thanks and praise. All-loving God, it is a good and joyful thing always and everywhere to give you our praise. You are the Creator of energy and matter, the heavens and the Earth. Therefore we celebrate you -- joining our voices with the wind and the streams, the animals and the flowers, the living and the dead (pause), the stars and the planets and all the company of creation, who forever sing their unending hymn to proclaim the glory of your Holy name. Amen**

*\*\*\*Sitting or standing*



**\*\*\*Sung Response**            “Santo, Santo, Santo”            *see insert*  
*Sung twice - first in Spanish, then in English*

## **Words of Remembrance & Blessing**

**Sharing the Bread of Life & Cup of Blessing**  
*Pastor Clare will cue us to partake of the elements*

**Sung Response**            “Eat this Bread”            *see insert*

### **\*\*\*Prayer of Thanksgiving**

**We give thanks, loving God, for the bond of this ritual that links us in solidarity with all who have called upon your name. May your wisdom grow within us. Send us out into the world as people of courage, compassion, and commitment. Amen!**

### **Going Forth to Share God’s Love**

**\*\*\*Singing**            “Happy Birthday”  
*..Happy birthday dear Claire, Mindy, Dale, and Gary*

**\*\*\*Closing Hymn**    “Blessed be the Tie That Binds”            #393 NCH  
*See insert*

### **\*\*\*Benediction**

**\*\*\*Sung Response**    **Irish Blessing**    - *Sung twice*

**May the road rise to meet you  
May the wind be at your back  
May the sun shine warm upon your face  
The rain fall soft upon your fields  
And until we meet again  
Till we meet again  
May God hold you in the palm of God’s hand**

**Postlude**            “God Be With You”            *Tomer*

## **PRAYER CORNER**

*Please hold these joys and concerns in your prayers:*

\*For our People's Church and wider St. Croix Valley communities, we offer gratitude. May we create welcoming, empowering spaces wherever we go.

\*For students, parents, teachers, bus drivers and other workers in school and childcare settings. May all experience safety, joy, learning and growth.

\*For all who are experiencing job transitions or struggling with burnout during this uncertain, stressful time of "the great resignation."

\*For people on the Louisiana and Mississippi Gulf Coast, weathering the aftermath of Hurricane Ida. May they secure safety and vital resources.

\*For the health of the Earth as droughts deepen, wildfires rage and we continue to damage the climate. May we answer the UN's (and God's) challenge to change our ways and begin to heal the Earth.

\*For the global community as the COVID-19 variants spike infection and death rates. May we protect one another from the virus. We hope for the well-being of all struggling with vaccination questions.

\*For safety and health for all travelers, moving around for many reasons.

\*For all water protectors, including those demonstrating against the Line 3 Tar Sands Pipeline - for continued resilience in efforts to protect the water.

\*For Pastor Clare's sister Aidan as she begins serving as a volunteer pediatrician in a refugee camp near Serajevo, Bosnia for several months. For all 82 million displaced persons currently living as refugees from their homelands.

\*For Cindy & John Siegel's daughter, Jenna. On Sept. 13th, she will have part of her cervix removed due to pre-cancerous cells unrelated to her brain tumor. On Sept. 14th, imaging will better pinpoint the radiation. She will then undergo 5 sessions of radiation and a follow-up MRI to check progress. Radiation will not shrink the tumor but hopefully stop its growth.

\*For Kathleen, friend to our new friend Mary Ann Litfin, whose Lymphoma tumor is growing despite treatments.

\*We celebrate birthdays with Claire Spilseth (11th), Mindy Peters (12th), Dale Shaller (14th) and Gary McLaughlin (15th).



## People's Book Club

We read books that matter from diverse genres, topics and authors

### See No Stranger by Valarie Kaur

In-person: (Saturdays) Sept. 25, Oct. 9, 23  
9-10:30am (outdoors as long as possible)

Zoom: (Wednesdays) Sept. 29, Oct. 6, 20  
6:30-8pm (or join Pastor Clare & others in person to zoom from the church meeting)

You can purchase a copy directly from Valley Bookseller.

## Pastor Clare's Service of Installation

Oct. 3, 2021  
2:00 pm at People's Park



Our Leadership Team invites you to save the date for this joyful occasion! We'll invite friends in the St. Croix Valley and in our NACCC and UCC networks to join in celebrating the beginning of Pastor Clare's partnership in ministry with us. Stay tuned as details unfold!

## Faith Conversations:

A Hybrid Bible Study



## Faith Conversations: A Hybrid Bible Study

We are retooling our weekly Bible Study!  
We'll use various curricula to explore biblical texts and faith concepts, applying them to our own lives.

We'll launch Faith Conversations with the *Animate Faith* series. In rich 7-minute videos, contemporary progressive faith leaders present key concepts of God, religion, Jesus, salvation, cross, Bible, church. Our discussions will be fruitful!

Wednesdays, 11am-noon, combined in-person and Zoom (**starts Sept. 15**)  
*find link on our website homepage*

## Volunteer Sign-Up

We now have a sign-up sheet at our After-Worship Fellowship table. Please sign up for a date to serve as lay reader, greeter (x2), After-Worship Fellowship host, cantor, or service recorder.



## People's Church is Hiring Childcare Providers

*Please share this ad  
far and wide!*

People's Congregational Church employs two Childcare Providers for infants and toddlers, each working 26 Sunday mornings per year.

Current hours are outdoors, 9:15-10:45 am.

Once cold weather arrives, hours will be 9:45-11:15 am in a childcare room in our church building. Occasionally, these providers offer an additional hour of multi-age childcare before or after worship.

They establish and maintain positive relationships with our families. We seek persons with experience providing care for infants and toddlers and willingness to work in the setting of a progressive Christian community.


Must be vaccinated against COVID-19 and willing to mask.

Please contact Pastor Clare Gromoll with any questions  
or to receive the full position description

Thank you for all who made today wonderful: Sharon Neuenfeldt, PCC Choir, and Music Director Mike Bjork (beautiful music), Sue Favilla (After-Worship Fellowship host), and Kimberly Jackson (service recorder)



## People's Congregational Church

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