



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



January 15, 2023

“What Does the Love of God Endow Us?”

Baptism of Christ Sunday

Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Sunday

The Love of God Gathers Us

Gathering Music

*We greet those around us or sit quietly
as we settle into sacred time and space*

Ringling of the Bell

Prelude & Candle Lighting “He Came to Be Baptized” *trad. Norwegian Tune*
Addison Albright, *acolyte*

A flame represents the light of Christ among us

Words of Welcome

Pastor Clare Gromoll

An Invitation from our Leader Team

Paul Spilseth, *Moderator*

*****Call To Worship** (*responsive*) Heather Kennedy-Bordeaux, *liturgist*

One: Water!

All: Life making. Body filling. World changing!

One: Spirit!

All: Life making. Soul filling. World changing!

One: Child of God!

All: Life making. Spirit filling. World changing!

One: Created by Love. Created to love. Water. Spirit. Children of God.

All: Together in this place. Remembering who we are.

One: Worshiping God!

All: Shining Light!

*****Opening Song**

“Child of God”

by Mark A. Miller

Vs. 1 - choir / Vs. 2-4 - all join in



1. No mat - ter what peo - ple say,
2. No mat - ter what peo - ple say,
3. No mat - ter what the world says,
4. No mat - ter what the church says, de -



say or think a - bout me, I am a
say or think a - bout you, you are a
says or thinks a - bout me, I am a
ci - sions, pro-nounce-ments on you, you are a



child, I am a child _____ of God.
child, you are a child _____ of God.
child, I am a child _____ of God.
child, you are a child _____ of God.

From: *Child of God* (CGA1425).

Text: Mark A. Miller.

Music: Mark A. Miller.

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Let's welcome one another!

Name tags are found in the Narthex (just inside the front doors)

Welcome forms in pews: request a prayer or name tag, update contact info, etc.

*** = Sitting or standing

Acknowledging Our Humanness and God's Grace

Prayer of Longing (*unison*)

God of all, may we listen with our hearts this morning as you call each of us by name. Speak to us through silence, spoken word, and music. May we recommit ourselves to continuing the legacies of the Rev. Dr. King and others who have peacefully worked for justice and equality for all. Forgive us for what we have left undone. Help us to recognize our complicity and accept our sacred obligation to dismantle the evils of racism, sexism, classism, environmental destruction, and injustice anywhere. May our lives respond to Jesus' prayer "that they may all be one." Amen.

prayerful silence

Musical Interlude

...as our own longings quietly emerge

Assurance of Grace

*****Passing the Peace**

We share a sign of peace with those gathered now (in-person, virtually)

We extend the peace later by phone call, email, text message

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

A Time With Children

Sung Invitation *We sing as our children come forward*

**This little light of mine, I'm gonna let it shine.
This little light of mine, I'm gonna let it shine.
This little light of mine, I'm gonna let it shine,
let it shine, let it shine, oh let it shine.**

*In fall 2022, we gave a first annual gift to Walker|West in St. Paul, MN as a reparations payment for our use of this African American spiritual.
"Walker|West creates a music learning community rooted in the African-American cultural experience, where people of all ages and backgrounds can gather, explore, and grow through music."*

Singing "Happy Birthday"

..Happy birthday dear **Dennis** (Albright), **Hannah** (Wulff), **Wilkie** (Bjork)
& **Claire** (Bjork)

Wondering Together

Blessing One Another *Seated, we open our arms to the children*

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

Sung Affirmation *We sing as children return to families*

**Ev'rywhere I go, I'm gonna let it shine.
Ev'rywhere I go, I'm gonna let it shine.
Ev'rywhere I go, I'm gonna let it shine,
let it shine, let it shine, oh let it shine.**

We welcome the sounds and movements of children who stay in worship

Lisa (Childcare Provider) also cares for infants and toddlers

9:15 - 10:45 in the Nursery downstairs

*If needing space to move around, families are welcome to use
the Narthex (entry area) or Meditation Room (off front left exit from Sanctuary)*

Proclaiming God's Love

Scriptures

Isaiah 42: 1-9 ~ *The Inclusive Bible (responsive)*

Here is my Servant, whom I uphold – my chosen one, in whom I delight! I have endowed you with my Spirit, that you may bring true justice to the nations.

You do not cry out or raise your voice, or make yourself heard in the street.

So gentle that you do not break a bruised reed, or quench a wavering flame; faithfully you will bring forth true justice.

You will neither waver nor be crushed until justice is established on Earth, for the islands await your teaching!

Thus says God, who created the heavens and spread them out, who gave shape to the Earth and what it produces, who gave life to its peoples and spirit to its inhabitants:

I, God, have called you to serve the cause of right; I have taken you by the hand, and I watch over you. I have appointed you to be a covenant people, a light to the nations:

To open the eyes of the blind, to free captives from prison, and those who sit in darkness from the dungeon.

I am God! This is my name! I will not yield my glory to another god or my praise to idols!

See how former predictions have come true. And now I declare new things!

Before they spring forth, I tell them to you.

Matthew 3: 1-17 ~ *The Inclusive Bible*

At this time John the Baptizer appeared in the desert of Judea, proclaiming, “Change your hearts and minds, for the reign of heaven is about to break in upon you!”

...cont. next page

It was John that the prophet Isaiah described when he said, “A herald's voice cries in the desert: ‘Prepare the way of our God, make straight the paths of God!’”

John was clothed in a garment of camel’s hair and wore a leather belt around his waist. Grasshoppers and wild honey were his food. At that time, Jerusalem, all Judea and the whole region around the Jordan were going out to him. John baptized them in the Jordan River as they confessed their sins.

When he saw that many of the Pharisees and Sadducees were coming to be baptized, John said to them, “You pack of snakes! Who told you to flee from the coming wrath? Give some evidence that you mean to reform! And don’t pride yourselves on the claim, ‘Sarah and Abraham are our parents.’ I tell you, God can raise children for Sarah and Abraham from these very stones! Even now the ax is laid to the root of the tree. Every tree that is not fruitful will be cut down and thrown into the fire. I will baptize you in water if you have a change of heart, but one who will follow me is more powerful than I. I’m not fit even to untie the sandals of the Coming One! That one will baptize you in the Holy Spirit and fire, whose winnowing-fan will clear the threshing floor. The grain will be gathered into the barn, but the chaff will be burned in unquenchable fire.”

Then Jesus came from Galilee to the Jordan to be baptized by John. John tried to dissuade Jesus, saying, “I should be baptized by you, and yet you come to me!”

But Jesus replied, “Leave it this way for now. We must do this to completely fulfill God’s justice.” So John reluctantly agreed.

Immediately after Jesus had been baptized and was coming up out of the water, the sky suddenly opened up and Jesus saw the Spirit of God descending as a dove and hovering over him. With that, a voice from the heavens said, “This is my own, my beloved, on whom my favor rests.”

Morning Message “What Does the Love of God Endow Us?”

Responding To God's Love

Prayer Hymn

“God, When I Came into This Life”

NCH #354

Vs. 1-2

Prayers of the People

When sharing a joy or concern for yourself, another, or a part of the world; please project your voice to be heard. We'll add your prayer to our Prayer Corner.

One: God, in your love

All: Hear our prayer

Prayer of Jesus (*unison*)

**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.

Prayer Cards

(on the Information Table in our Fellowship Hall)

If you voice a prayer for a loved one during Prayers of the People, we welcome you to start a card for us to sign during Fellowship.

Or simply take a blank card with you as you leave!

Invitation to the Offering

Offering plates circulate at this time

*We support our church financially as we have means to do so
Or... mail in a check -or- give electronically by scanning the QR code*

Welcome Forms also go in the offering plate



Offertory Solo

“The Love of God”

*by Nicholas Mroczek
Michael Bjork, soloist*

There is a quiet place deep within my soul,
Where God has given me love,
But when the love of God starts to overflow,
I cannot keep it in.

Because God's love is my love,
And my love is God's love,
And I'll take that love, and pass it 'round,
From God, from me, to you.

There is a quiet place deep within your soul,
Where God has given you love,
But when the love of God starts to overflow,
Don't try to keep it in.

Because God's love is our love,
And our love is God's love,
And we'll take that love, and pass it 'round,
From God, from me, to you.

*****Offertory Response**

“Praise God”
sung twice

by John Mueller

**Praise, God, for these gifts;
we lift them up for heaven’s blessing.
Praise God, for these gifts;
we lift them up to serve you, Lord.**

*****Prayer of Dedication** (*unison*)

God of all, through baptism and through participation in this congregation, we dedicate our lives to you and pledge to embody your love in the world. We bring ourselves, our time, and our possessions. May they amplify your tender voice of love; overpowering voices of violence, hatred, and oppression. Use us and all we have to your glory. Amen.

Going Forth to Share God’s Love

*****Closing Hymn** “God, When I Came into This Life”
Vs. 3-5

NCH #354

*****Benediction**

*****Sung Response** ..as we form a spacious circle
around the perimeter of the Sanctuary

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**

We carry the light of Christ with us in all times and space

*****Postlude**

“May We Have Peace”

trad. English

*As we depart, you are invited to pause at the baptismal font.
Dip your fingers into the water and anoint your forehead,
marking yourself as a beloved child of God.*

All are welcome to gather downstairs after worship!

10:30 am | Fellowship (refreshments)

10:45 am | A Forum of People's Congregational Church, facilitated by Pastor Daniel Harrell, interim legacy minister at St. Peter's UCC

If you are with us virtually, join us via Zoom [here](#).

PRAYER CORNER

Please hold these joys and concerns in your prayers:

For persons known to us...

- * For **Kimberly Jackson**, recovering from a first-ever migraine this past week.
- *For **Jessy Hintze** (daughter in-law to Nat Graf), whose father **Pete** passed away unexpectedly last Sunday.
- *For **Jennifer Halvorsen-Albright's** son **Brian**, who is struggling with health issues.
- *For **Sharon Neuenfeldt's** brother **Greg**, who was flown to Mayo in Rochester on Jan. 7th in respiratory distress. Now in a medically-induced coma, he is benefiting from a respirator as doctors run tests to diagnose a likely infection.
- *For **Aidan Gromoll**, safe travels as she departs on Jan. 15th for eastern Turkey. She will provide medical care to Syrian refugee children and their families.
- *For **Linda Tossey** (a former pastor of People's), who recently fell and sustained injuries. May she recover smoothly.
- *For **Carol Dusbabek's** children and all who grieve the recent death of good friend **Sean**, who died from complications of a brain tumor. May Sean rest in deep peace; may love surround those who mourn.
- *For **John Norheim** and his family as they grieve the recent death of John's mother, **Betty Julin**, on Dec. 31. May Betty rest in deep peace; may love surround those who mourn. A service was held in Minneapolis on Jan. 7. *See Mid-Week News for her obituary.*
- *For **Mike**, neighbor to **Cindy Parsons & Bob Dickie**, as he deals with complicated medical issues.
- *We celebrate with **Mary Maren Bjork** and her great-niece, **Abby**, who participated in the London New Year Parade as a member of a Davenport, Iowa marching band.
- *We hope for strength and courage for **Mary Binger's** friend **Dee** and all who struggle with addiction and toward recovery.
- *We celebrate with **Mary Binger** as her daughter, **Erika**, finds herself in a time of relief from the mysterious chronic pain she has been managing.
- *We celebrate with **Sharri Kinkead**, who enjoyed a wonderful Christmastime visit with her son, Peter.

*We celebrate birthdays of: **Dennis Albright** (10th), **Hannah Wulff** (6 yrs. on the 13th), **William (Wilkie) Bjork** (2 yrs. on the 16th), and **Claire Bjork** (19th)

And in the wider community...

*For our MN State legislature, inclusive of an increased number of black and brown women and others from historically underrepresented groups. May we support them in their work of leading us.

*For our US congressional legislators, now (finally) newly sworn in. May they do the work of leading us in justice and goodness.

*We give thanks for caring energy poured out from across the nation to Damar Hamlin, a Buffalo Bills football player who recently went into cardiac arrest during a game. We pray for Hamlin's wellbeing.

*For the family of Tony, a homeless youth (age 22) who recently died in a hotel in Roseville. May he rest in peace and may those who miss him carry his spirit with them. We pray for boldness as we look closely at issues of homelessness and work to become more powerful allies this spring.

*For wellbeing and positive energy for students of all ages, teachers, bus drivers, and school staff as they move through the winter months.

*For all who are living lives behind bars - that they find hope, meaning and purpose even while incarcerated. May we learn from those neighbors about courage and faith.

We invite you to these upcoming activities...

People's Book Club

We read theologically progressive books by diverse authors

People's Congregational Church (Bayport)
Jan. 18 | 6:30-8 pm | @ church & Zoomed

CONVICTIONS
HOW I LEARNED WHAT MATTERS MOST

Marcus J. Borg

Interested? Contact us:

office@peoplescongregational.org

*Valley Bookseller (Stillwater) has copies for us
at 15% off the \$16.99 list price!*

...All are welcome!



Launching an Older Sunday School Group

(for age 8/grade 3 and above!)

**Sundays, Jan. 15, 22 & 29 |
9:45-10:30 am**

Our Children's Ministry Team invites older children and middle school youth to gather with **Sharon Binger** in our upstairs Corner Meeting Room!

Carol Dusbabek and **Claire Spilseth** continue to lead a group for younger children (ages 4 - 7) in our downstairs Children's Activity Room.

(Children in gr. 2-3 are welcome in whichever group works best for them.)



Celebrate Martin Luther King Jr. Day...

January 16, 7 am-9:30 am

...at a breakfast and presentation at Trinity Lutheran Church, 115 4th St N, Stillwater. There will be a local program by the Stillwater Student Leadership Council and the Stillwater Human Rights Commission, followed by the Minneapolis program with entertainment and Dr. George T. French, Jr. speaking.

Tickets are available by calling Stillwater City Hall at 651-430-8800. The MLK Breakfast celebrates a 33-year legacy of leadership in the Twin Cities and is a landmark event known for uniting our community and benefitting UNCF Twin Cities local scholars.

Our goal is to celebrate the legacy of service of Dr. King and create an imperative to live out his legacy today in our homes, our communities, and our world.

Kimberly (Communications Coordinator) works primarily remotely

She will next be at church: **Jan. 31-Feb. 2**

You can reach her every week (T, W, Th 9 am - 4 pm) at 651-439-5667
and at office@peoplescongregational.org

Need access to the church building?

Want to visit with Pastor Clare or Kimberly in person?

Please call (or email) ahead of time to avoid missing us.



Annual Meeting of the Congregation

Jan. 29, 10:45 am (during brunch)


- *Review pieces of our Annual Report packet
- *Adopt a budget for our ministry in 2023
- *Vote on exploring merger with St. Peter's UCC and selection of 3 task force members (*see Mid-Week News for specific proposals*).

*Hear updates about People's Park (Park Improvement Task Force, a next-door development on in the horizon)

Thank you to today's partners: Sharon Neuenfeldt (Worship Accompanist), Michael Bjork (choir director, soloist), Choir members (cantors) Addison Albright (acolyte), Mary Binger & Lori Mildon (greeters), Heather Kennedy-Bordeaux (liturgist), Andre Harrison (youth greeter) Cindy Parsons & Bob Dickie (fellowship), Paul, Bob & Mark (tech), Jackie Savage (Sanctuary organizer, outdoor sign), Andi Favilla & Jenni Shaller (decorations), Lisa Culbertson (Childcare Provider)



People's Congregational Church

Rev. Clare Gromoll, Pastor ~ pastor@peoplescongregational.org
309 Third St. N, Bayport MN 55003-1028
(651) 439-5667 / office@peoplescongregational.org
www.peoplescongregational.org  @PCCBayport

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