



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



January 22, 2023

*"What Might Following Jesus Look Like?"*

## 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** “You Are the Salt of the Earth, O People ”

*Haugen*

Sam Gromoll, *acolyte*

*A flame represents the light of Christ among us*

### **Words of Welcome**

Pastor Clare Gromoll

### **Invitation from the International Congregational Fellowship**

Sharon Binger

### **\*\*\*Call To Worship** (*responsive*)

Sharri Kinkead, *liturgist*

One: Friends in Christ, the God of Jesus calls us to be the church.

**All: God of grace and wisdom, we gather because we hear your call.**

One: Love reaches out to us in Jesus Christ, touching us with the Spirit;

**All: We turn toward God, seeking to love as we are loved.**

One: We call upon God’s holy name to empower us in worship and service, that we might walk gently with the Earth.

**All: Through the grace of Jesus the Christ, let us worship God!**

### **\*\*\*Opening Song**

“Better is One Day”

*Sing! Song & Praise #113*

**Choir - Vs. 1 | Then all join in mid-chorus**

*see next page...*

♩ = 80

$\text{E}(\text{omit } 3)$   $\text{Asus}^2$

1. How love-ly is your dwell-ing place, O God al- might-  
 thing I ask and I would seek: to see your beau-

$\text{Bsus}$   $\text{E}(\text{omit } 3)$   $\text{Bsus}$

- y. For my soul longs and e - ven faints for you.  
 - ty, to find you in the place your glo - ry dwells.

$\text{E}(\text{omit } 3)$   $\text{Asus}^2$

For here my heart is sat - is - fied with-in your pres-  
 One thing I ask and I would seek: to see your beau-

$\text{Bsus}$   $\text{E}(\text{omit } 3)$   $\text{Bsus}$

- ence. I sing be-neath the shad-ow of your wings...  
 - ty, to find you in the place your glo - ry dwells.

$\text{Asus}^2$   $\text{Bsus}^2$

Bet-ter is one day in your courts, bet-ter is one day in your house, bet-ter is

$\text{Asus}^2$   $\text{A/C}\sharp$   $\text{Bsus}$   $\text{E/G}\sharp$

Last time, Coda  $\text{C}$  1.

one day in your courts than thou-sands else - where. Bet-ter is

$\text{Bsus}$   $\text{B}(\text{omit } 3)$   $\text{D.S.}$   $\text{Bsus}$

2.

else-where, than thou-sands else-where. 2. One else-where.

\*\*\* = Sitting or standing

## Acknowledging Our Humanness and God's Grace

### **Prayer of Longing** (*unison*)

**Living Christ, your ministry through Jesus was full of struggle as well as joy. Yet Jesus was faithful in following your call. Breathe your Spirit into our lives as we pursue the way of discipleship – loving the other and ourselves. May we find true courage and peace as we accept the cost of following you into every part of our lives—in our homes and workplaces; into the public square of every town, city, and nation. Forgive us our resistance and empower us by your Spirit. 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!**

*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.*

## A Time With Children and Youth

**Sung Invitation**     *We sing as our young people 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* **Wilkie** (Bjork), **Claire** (Bjork), **Carol** (Dusbabek)  
& **Mary** (Binger)

### **Wondering Together**

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

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

**Sung Affirmation**     *We sing as young people 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

Psalm 27: 1, 4-9 ~ *The Inclusive Bible (responsive)*

God, you are my light, my salvation—whom will I fear?

**You are the fortress of my life—of whom will I be afraid?**

One thing I ask of you, God, one thing I seek: that I may dwell in your house all the days of my life, to gaze on your beauty and to meditate in your Temple.

**You will keep me safe in your shelter when trouble arises, you will hide me under the cover of your Tabernacle—you'll set me on a rock, high and out of reach.**

Then I'll be able to hold my head up, even with my enemies surrounding me. I will offer in your Tabernacle sacrifices of great joy—I'll sing and make music to you, God!

**Hear me when I call, God! Have mercy on me and answer me!**

You say to my heart, "Seek my face," and so it is your face I seek!

**Don't hide your face from me; don't turn your faithful one away in anger. Don't reject me, don't desert me, O God of my salvation, for you are my only help.**

When Jesus heard that John had been arrested, he went back to Galilee. He left Nazareth and settled in Capernaum, a lakeside town near the territory of Zebulun and Naphtali. In this way the prophecy of Isaiah was fulfilled:

“Land of Zebulun, land of Naphtali,  
the way to the sea on the far side of the Jordan,  
Galilee of the Gentiles:  
the people who lived in darkness have seen a great light;  
on those living in the land of the shadow of death a light has  
dawned.”

From that time on, Jesus began proclaiming the message, “Change your hearts and minds, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand!”

As Jesus was walking along the Sea of Galilee, he watched two brothers—Simon, who was called Peter, and Andrew—casting a net into the sea. They fished by trade. Jesus said to them, “Come follow me, and I will make you fishers of humankind.” They immediately abandoned their nets and began to follow Jesus.

Jesus walked along further and caught sight of a second pair of brothers—James and John, ben-Zebedee. They too were in their boat, mending their nets with their father. Jesus called to them, and immediately they abandoned both boat and father to follow him.

Jesus traveled throughout Galilee, teaching in the synagogues, proclaiming the Good News of the kingdom of heaven and healing all kinds of diseases and sicknesses among the people.

**Morning Message**    "What Might Following Jesus Look Like?"

## Responding To God's Love

**Prayer Hymn**

“Tú has venido a la orilla”

NCH #173

“You Have Come down to the Lakeshore”

**Cantor - vs. 1 (Spanish) | Then all sing vs. 1-2 (English)**

### **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*)

**Our Father and Mother who art in heaven,  
hallowed be thy Name.**

**Thy kin-dom come. Thy 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 thine is the kin-dom, and the power, and the glory, forever.**

**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

“A Shield About Me”

*Williams*

### \*\*\*Offertory Response (*unison*)

**Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;  
Praise God all creatures here below;  
Alleluia! Alleluia!  
Praise God, the source of all our gifts!  
Praise Jesus Christ, whose power uplifts!  
Praise the Spirit, Holy Spirit!  
Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!**

### \*\*\*Prayer of Dedication (*unison*)

**Gracious God, we ask your blessing on these gifts and on our lives. At every venturing and every homecoming, may we embody your love with generosity of spirit. Amen.**

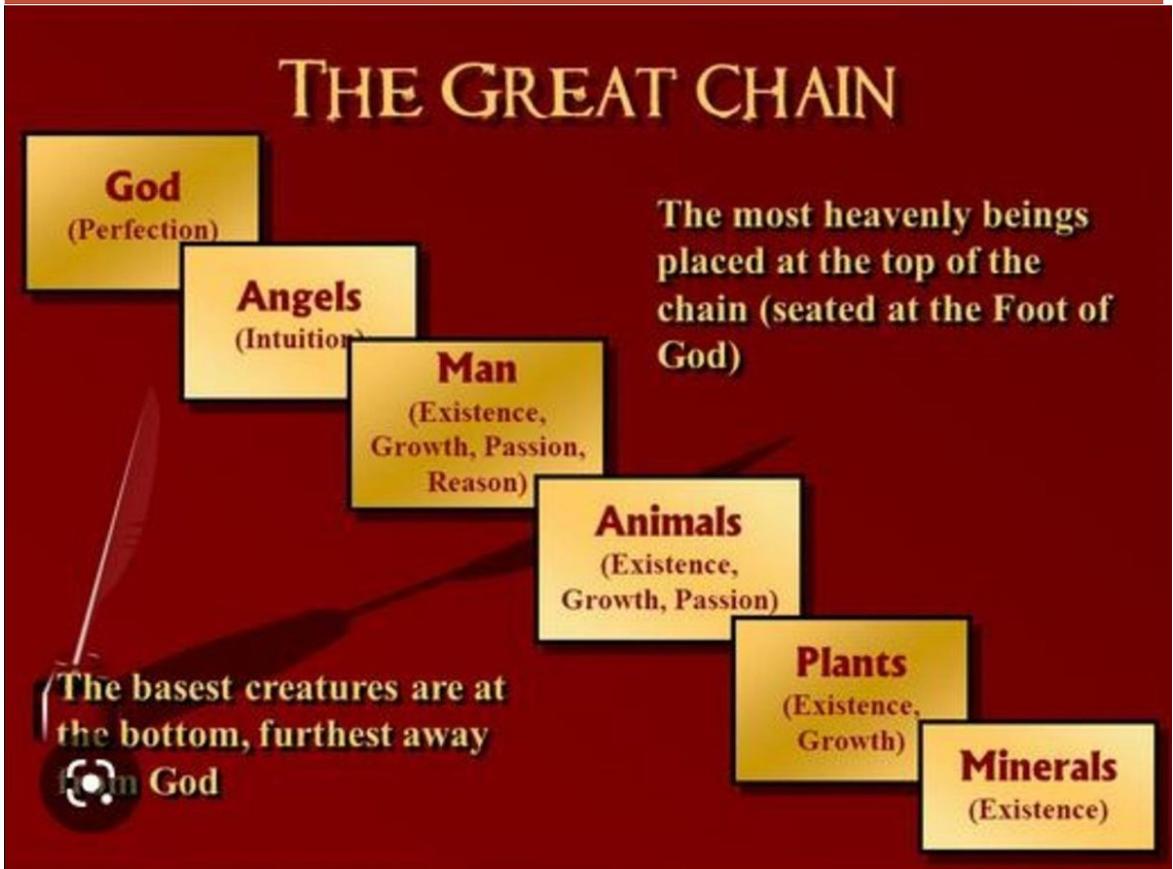


**All are welcome to gather downstairs after worship!**

10:30 am | Fellowship (*refreshments*)

11 am | Faith Conversations facilitated by Stan Hillard, *The Great Chain*

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



The great chain of being describes structures in the human mind that give one a sense of the order of things. Of ancient origin, the great chain puts all beings in their place in a hierarchy—humans above animals, animals above plants, plants above inanimate objects. The great chain also can be construed as giving permission for some kinds of people to “look down upon” other kinds of people. We can more effectively reduce racism and similar aberrations, and accomplish social justice, if we understand how the great chain is functioning.

Examples will be discussed.

## PRAYER CORNER

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

*For persons known to us...*

\*For Lori Mildon's husband **Kerry**, who went to the ICU last Sunday. Due to polio earlier in life, Kerry has compromised lungs. He is being treated for pneumonia, receiving oxygen. We pray for healing, rest, and a swift and full recovery.

\*For safe and fruitful travels for **Mary Maren Bjork** and daughter **Miela** as they depart on Jan. 27th for a mission trip to Jamaica with St. Andrew's Lutheran Church.

\*For Jessy Hintze (daughter-in-law to Nat Graf), whose father **Pete** passed away unexpectedly on Jan. 8. May he rest in peace and may loved ones carry forward the best of him.

\*For wellbeing for Jennifer Halvorsen-Albright's son **Brian**, who is struggling with health issues.

\*For Sharon Neuenfeldt's brother **Greg**, who was flown to Mayo on Jan. 7th. A scar tissue mass was removed from his throat. With Sharon, we rejoice that Greg is conscious and pray for healing as he adjusts to breathing through a tracheostomy tube.

\*For **Aidan Gromoll**, who arrived safely in easter Turkey on Monday. We pray for a fruitful experience as she provides medical care to Syrian refugee children and their families.

\*For **Linda Tossey** (a former pastor of People's), who recently fell and broke her leg. May she recover smoothly. We rejoice over news of her recent clear PET scans!

\*We celebrate birthdays of: William (**Wilkie**) Bjork (2 yrs. on the 16th), **Claire** Bjork (19th), **Carol** Dusbabek (22nd) and **Mary** Binger (28th)

*And in the wider community...*

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

\*For our **US congressional legislators**, now finally 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 study issues of homelessness and seek to become more powerful allies to unhoused people.

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



## Potential Merger with St. Peter's UCC

### TWO PROPOSALS FOR OUR CONGREGATION:

*At the January 11, 2023 meeting of the Leadership Team of People's Congregational Church; these two motions were made, seconded, and unanimously carried:*

"To propose to People's Congregational Church at our January 29, 2023 Annual Meeting that we explore merger with St. Peter's United Church of Christ, using the [Draft Partnership Proposal](#) from St. Peter's UCC's Church Council as a starting point for conversations."

"To propose to People's Congregational Church at our January 29, 2023 Annual Meeting that Rolf Dittmann, Kathy Iverson, and Walt Richey serve as our congregation's representatives on a task force; which will guide the work of potential merger with St. Peter's United Church of Christ."

### A Preliminary Timeline

Our Leadership Team invites all members and active friends of our congregation to be present for these upcoming months of pivotal conversations, experiences and votes!

[Jan. 22nd - St. Peter's UCC holds its Annual Meeting, voting on affirming a path forward of exploring the pursuit of a merger with us and affirming the selection of their 3 lay members of a Church Merger Task Force]

Jan. 29, 10:45 am | Annual Meeting of People's Church (during brunch), voting on (among other business items) affirming a path forward of exploring the pursuit of a merger with St. Peter's UCC and affirming the selection of our 3 lay members of a task force]

Feb. 5th, 9:30 am | (Potential) Joint Worship Service at People's Church, celebrating together in Holy Communion and commissioning the task force during worship

[Across February and March, the task force develops and drafts a "new congregation covenant," incorporating input from both congregations.]

April 9th, 10:30am | Votes on affirming a new congregation covenant (each congregation in their own church building for Easter Sunday)



**Launching an Older Sunday School Group**  
(for age 8/grade 3 and above!)

**Sundays, Jan. 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.)*



**Annual Meeting of the Congregation**

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

\*Review pieces of our Annual Report packet

\*Adopt the budget for our ministry in 2023

\*Vote on exploring merger with St. Peter's UCC and selection of 3 task force members.

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

Per church bylaws: Electronic copies of the Annual report have been sent and hard copies of the Annual Report are available now.

**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](mailto: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.**



### **Collecting Items from Harvest Fest**

For those of you who bought wreaths and porch pots during Harvest Fest, please consider bringing back the “doo-dads” (berries, decorations, etc) from your wreaths and porch pots so the team may use them again next year. There will be a box in the Fellowship Room to collect them. Thanks!

Thank you to today’s partners: Sharon Neuenfeldt (Worship Accompanist), Michael Bjork (choir director), Choir members (cantors) Sam Gromoll (acolyte), Bob Dickie & Cheri Schwartz (greeters), Sharri Kinkead (liturgist), Jonah Gromoll (youth greeter) Mindy Peters & Jane Hanson (fellowship), Paul, Bob & Mark (tech), Jackie Savage (Sanctuary organizer, outdoor sign), Andi Favilla & Jenni Shaller (decorations), Lisa Culbertson (Childcare Provider)



### **People’s Congregational Church**

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