

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

“Blessed”

Pitts

Addison Albright, *acolyte*

A flame represents the light of Christ among us

Words of Welcome

Pastor Clare Gromoll

*****Call To Worship** (*responsive*)

Jill Greenhalgh, *liturgist*

One: We need peace— **All: so we come for quiet.**

We need joy—**so we come for singing.**

We need to let things go—**so we come for forgiveness.**

We need hope—**so we come for scripture and community.**

We come this morning from our own agendas—**to experience needed reminders and unexpected gifts. Let us worship God.**

*****Opening Hymn**

“Be Now My Vision”

NCH #451

Vs. 1-3

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.

Acknowledging Our Humanness and God's Grace

Prayer of Longing (*unison*)

O God, sometimes your word is too much for us. You ask us to love our enemies when we scarcely love our friends and ourselves as you intend. You ask us to give as much as we take and to forgive when we want to nurse bitterness. We thank you for accepting us as we are and showing us how we can grow. Help us to believe that we can be loving, just and holy – through the grace of Jesus the Christ. Amen.

*...the singing bowl welcomes us into silence
as our own longings quietly emerge*

Assurance of Grace

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

*******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*

“This Little Light...” moves us forward in worship

Tibetan singing bowls first took form in the 16th-11th centuries BCE. In some Buddhist traditions, singing bowls accompany meditation and chanting. In the US beginning in the 1970s, singing bowls have contributed to the new-age musical genre, yoga, and music therapy.

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.**

We make an 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 **Carol** (Dusbabek), **Mary** (Binger), **Aidan** (Gromoll),
Laura (Mayaka), **Erika** (Mayaka), **Kimberly** (Jackson)*

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 depart or 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.**

*Young children (age 3-8, PreK-Gr. 2): downstairs Sunday School room
Older children & youth (Gr. 3-8): upstairs Corner Meeting Room*

Lisa cares for infants and toddlers, 9:15 - 10:45: downstairs Nursery

*We welcome sounds and movements of children who stay in worship.
Need space to move around? You're welcome to use the Narthex (entry area)
or Meditation Room (off front left exit from Sanctuary).*

Proclaiming God's Love

Scriptures

Micah 6: 1-8 ~ *The Inclusive Bible*

Hear now what God says: “Come, plead your case before the mountains, and let the hills hear your voice! Listen to God’s indictment, you mountains and you enduring foundations of the Earth; for God has a dispute with the people, and is putting Israel on trial. O my people, what have I done to you? How have I wearied you? Give me an answer! For I brought you up from the land of Egypt, and redeemed you from the house of slavery; and I sent Moses to lead you, and Aaron, and Miriam! My people, call to mind the plans devised by the ruler Balak of Moab, and how Balaam ben-Beor answered him! Remember the journey from Shittim to Gilgal, and recall how God brought you to justice!”

“What shall I bring when I come before God, and bow down before God on high?” you ask. “Am I to come before God with burnt offerings? With year-old calves? Will God be placated by thousands of rams or ten thousand rivers of oil? Should I offer my firstborn for my wrongdoings—the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?”

Listen here, mortal:

God has already made abundantly clear what “good” is,
and what God needs from you:

 simply do justice,
 love kindness,
 and humbly walk with your God.

Matthew 5: 1-12 ~ *The Inclusive Bible (responsive)*

When Jesus saw the crowds, he went up on the mountainside, and after he sat down and the disciples had gathered around, Jesus began to teach them:

“Blessed are those who are poor in spirit: **the kingdom of heaven is theirs.**

Blessed are those who are in mourning: **they will be consoled.**

Blessed are those who are gentle: **they will inherit the land.**

Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for justice:
they will have their fill.

Blessed are those who show mercy to others: **they will be shown mercy.**

Blessed are those whose hearts are clean: **they will see God.**

Blessed are those who work for peace: **they will be called children of God.**

Blessed are those who are persecuted because of their struggle for justice:
the kingdom of heaven is theirs.

You are fortunate when others insult you and persecute you, and utter every kind of slander against you because of me. Be glad and rejoice, for your reward in heaven is great; they persecuted the prophets before you in the very same way.”

Morning Message

"What Will We Co-create with God?"

Responding To God's Love

Prayer Song

“Every Step of the Way”

*Sing! Prayer & Praise #66
see page 8*

Cantors sing once | then all sing it together

Prayers of the People

*We share aloud prayers for ourselves, others, and parts of the world
We'll add your prayer to our Prayer Corner*

One: God, in your love

All: Hear our prayer

The singing bowl invites brief silence after each prayer

Prayer of Jesus (unison)

**Eternal Spirit, Earth-maker, Pain-bearer, Life-giver,
Source of all that is and that shall be, Father and Mother of us all,
Loving God, in whom is heaven:
the hallowing of your name echo through the universe!
The way of your justice be followed by the peoples of the world!
Your heavenly will be done by all created beings!
Your commonwealth of peace and freedom sustain our hope and come
on Earth. With the bread we need for today, feed us.
In the hurts we absorb from one another, forgive us.
In times of temptation and testing, strengthen us.
From trials too great to endure, spare us.
From the grip of all that is evil, free us.
For you reign in the glory of the power that is love, now and 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!

“Every Step of the Way” ~ Cantors sing once | then all sing it together

$\text{♩} = 128$
F C/E Dm C B \flat Dm/A C/G Gsus G

The musical score is written in 4/4 time with a tempo of 128. It consists of seven staves of music. The first staff shows the key signature (one flat) and the initial chords: F, C/E, Dm, C, B \flat , Dm/A, C/G, Gsus, and G. The second staff begins the melody with a repeat sign and includes the lyrics 'Help me do the jus - tice to be'. The third staff continues the melody with lyrics 'done to - day. Help me love kind -'. The fourth staff has lyrics '- ness in all I do and say'. The fifth staff has lyrics 'Help me walk hum - bly with you, O God I pray'. The sixth staff has lyrics 'ev - 'ry step of the way,'. The seventh staff concludes the piece with lyrics 'ev - 'ry step of the way.' and a double bar line with repeat dots. Chords are indicated above the notes throughout the score.

Help me do the jus - tice to be

done to - day. Help me love kind -

- ness in all I do and say

Help me walk hum - bly with you, O God I pray

ev - 'ry step of the way,

ev - 'ry step of the way.

Based on Micah 6:8.

Words and Music: Christopher Grundy

Music arrangement: Christopher Grundy and Gregory Milton

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Invitation to the Offering

*Greeters pass offering plates at this time
We support our church financially as we have means to do so
Welcome Forms also go in the offering plate (prayer request, updates, etc.)
We can also mail in a check or give electronically by scanning the QR code*



Offertory

“Weave Us Together”

Crow

***Offertory Response (*unison*)

**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 (*unison*)

Creative and generous God, from whom new possibilities spring, make a way for us where there has been no way. We give thanks as you quench the drought of our spirits with the living water of your boundless love. Free us to offer our whole selves in return, participating fully in your newness of life. Amen.

Going Forth to Share God’s Love

***Closing Song

“Dream God’s Dream”

*Sing! Prayer & Praise #120
see page 10*

Cantors sing chorus and verse 1 | then all join in!

“Dream God’s Dream” Cantors sing chorus and verse 1 | then all join in!

♩ = 69

Dream God's dream! Ho-ly

Spir - it___ help us dream of a world where there is

jus - tice___ and where ev - 'ry one is free to

build and grow and love, and to sim - ply have e -

-nough. The world will change, when we dream God's dream.

1. I'm dream-ing___ of a world where the col - or of one's
2. I'm dream-ing___ of the call God is of - fer-ing to
3. I'm dream-ing___ of the way that I want my life to

skin will mean less than___ what's with - in the per - son's heart.
 me, how to use my___ en - er - gy and my best gifts;
 go. I've got hope and___ I've got goals I'd like to meet.



C G/B D C

A world where wa - ter's clean and where
to do the work of Christ to say
I'm reach - ing for the stars, but I

G D Em7

air is safe to breathe. And ev - 'ry chi - ld
God, please use my life to spread Your heal - ing
won't for - get the scars of Christ who died to

D/F# Em7 G Asus D Coda

born has e - nough to eat. dream.
love and to live Your truth.
show that the dream's for all.

***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 spaces

***Postlude "We Are Walking in the Light of God" South African Tune

All are welcome to gather downstairs after worship!

10:30 am | Brunch



Annual Meeting of the Congregation

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 & selecting our 3 task force members
- *Hear updates about People's Park (Park Improvement Task Force, a next-door development on the horizon)

To join via Zoom, click [here](#).

Meeting ID: 842 3099 0306

Passcode: 709302

Click [here](#) for the final copy of the Annual report

Mark your calendars for the next People's Book Club
Thursday, March 23

People's Book Club

We read theologically progressive books by diverse authors

People's Congregational Church (Bayport)
March 23 | 6:30-8 pm | @ church & Zoomed

Jesus' Alternative Plan: The Sermon On The Mount by Richard Rohr

"Much of patriarchal Christian interpretation has been trying to avoid pain, trying to avoid being poor, trying to avoid powerlessness. That's why we couldn't hear Jesus. If we had had an image of God as the great mother who is giving birth... I think history as process, pain, patience, guided destiny would have come more naturally. As it is, we have seen history as a linear obstacle course, something to be conquered, exploited and won."

"Emptiness has to precede fullness. Usually our old securities have to be wrested from us before we will move into the new. We seldom do it deliberately. Spirituality is always about letting go—not just in Christianity, but in Judaism, Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism... You let go, and hopefully collapse back into your true self, into who you really are. The work of religion is to guide us on the path of the fall and onto the path of the return. "

Interested? Contact us: office@peoplescongregational.org

Valley Bookseller (Stillwater) has copies at 15% off the \$21.99 list price!

PRAYER CORNER

Please hold these joys and concerns in your prayers:

For persons known to us...

*For Cheri Schwartz's spouse **Bob**, as he experiences tough side effects during chemotherapy. We pray for healing, strength, and a good prognosis.

*For our friends at **St. Peter's UCC**. May they feel love surrounding them as they adjust to their recent vote to pursue merger explorations as they await our vote.

*For Lori Mildon's husband **Kerry**, now recovering at home after hospitalization with pneumonia. We pray for continued recuperation.

*For the **snowbirds** in our congregation. Even as we miss your physical presence among us, we pray that you have joyful experiences and safe travels this winter.

*For safe and fruitful travels for **Mary Maren Bjork** and daughter **Miela**, currently on a mission trip in Jamaica with St. Andrew's Lutheran Church.

*For **Aidan Gromoll**, providing medical care to Syrian refugee children and families in eastern Turkey.

*We celebrate birthdays of: **Carol Dusbabek** (22nd), **Mary Binger** (28th), **Aidan Gromoll** (30th), **Laura Mayaka** (2nd), **Erika Mayaka** (4th) and **Kimberly Jackson** (5th)

*We celebrate the anniversary of: **Mark & Michele Stephan** (24th)

And in the wider community...

*Gratitude for the Stillwater DaVinci Fest this past weekend, which created community uplift through its celebration of science and the arts among young people.

*For those devastated in Monterey Park, CA after a mass shooting during the Lunar New Year celebration. Recognizing that 39 mass shootings have occurred in this land during the first few weeks of 2023, may we find our way toward more sensible gun control laws.



Older Sunday School Group Launched!

Every Sunday | 9:45-10:30 am

We invite our older children and middle school youth (age 8 and above) to gather with **Sharon Binger** in our upstairs Corner Meeting Room!

Carol Dusbabek and Claire Spilseth continue to lead younger children (ages 4 - 7, PreK-Gr. 2) in our downstairs Children's Activity Room.

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

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.



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)
Cheri Schwartz & Michele Stephan (greeters), Addison Albright (acolyte)
Jill Greenhalgh (liturgist),
Jill Greenhalgh & Rolf Dittmann (brunch), 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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Hymns used: New Century Hymnal, Sing! Prayer & Praise.