



November 12, 2023

"For What
Are
We Ready?"

Welcome!

Name tags are in the Narthex, welcome forms in the pews
Feel free to bring coffee and tea into worship
Optional nursery care for infant - age 3 (downstairs, starts at 9:25)

The Love of God Gathers Us

Gathering Music

We greet those around us or sit quietly, settling into sacred time and space

Ringling of the Bell

Prelude and Candle Lighting

"Wheat Grown and Gathered"

Feiten

Acknowledging the light of Christ among us

Words of Welcome

* = Sitting or standing

***Call to Worship** (*responsive*)

Come, all who are weary from the bustle of each day –
God's steadfast love awaits us.

Come, all who delight in the abundance of everyday treasure –
God's steadfast love awaits us.

Come, all who are restless in the face of acquiescence to injustice –
God's steadfast love awaits us.

Come, all who search for glimpses of quiet transcendence –
God's steadfast love awaits us.

Come, all whose spirits are frayed by unforeseen difficulties –
God's steadfast love awaits us.

Come with open hearts, ready to listen for the mystery –
God's steadfast love awaits us.

***Opening Song (SPP #123)** “Draw the Circle Wide”
all verses

Acknowledging Our Need for God's Grace

Prayer of Confession and Longing (*responsive*)

God of all — your world that weeps, yearning for a sign of mercy.
Your love works through our hands.

A friend in anguish, besieged by unexpected pain.
Your love works through our ears.

A multitude are harmed and weary from prejudicial ways.
Your love works through our eyes.

A stranger faces death alone, wondering if anyone will remember.
Your love works through our tears.

A neighbor is lonely, longing for someone to come alongside.
Your love works through our bodies.

Forgive our resistance. Open us further to your Spirit's movement —
Through all that we are and all that we do. Amen.

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

Assurance of Grace *(responsive)*

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

***Passing the Peace**

*We first wave toward the Narthex camera — to those worshiping with us online.
Then to those around us: smiles, hands at heart center or in peace signs.
We might also offer a handshake.*

A Time With Children and Youth

Sung Invitation

...as our young people come forward

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

Singing “Happy Birthday”

Michele Stephan (6th), Eric Vandre (7th), Debi Orff (9th), Pat Mazzitello (10th), Andre Harrison (10th), Rev. Fritz West (10th), Matthew Buck (14th)

Wondering Together

Blessing One Another

We open our arms to the children and youth

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

Sung Affirmation

...as young people depart for Sunday School, Youth Group, or return to families

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

*Infant - age 3 | Nursery care available (9:25-10:30) downstairs
PreK-Gr. 1, Gr. 2-4 | gather now for Sunday School downstairs
Youth Group (gr. 5-12) | gathers now in the upstairs Corner Meeting Room
We welcome sounds and movements of children who stay in worship.*

Proclaiming God's Love

A Reading from Hebrew Scriptures | *The Inclusive Bible*

Psalm 78:1-7

A Reading from the Gospels | *The Inclusive Bible*

Matthew 25:1-13

Morning Message

“For What Are We Ready?”

Pastor Clare Gromoll

Responding To God's Love

Prayer Song (SPP #66)

“Every Step of the Way”

sung twice

Prayers of the People

*We share aloud prayers for ourselves, others, and parts of the world
We'll add them to our printed and electronic Prayer Corner
Please tell Pastor Clare if you don't want yours added to the Prayer Corner*

One: God, in your love

All: Hear our 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.

Witnessing Steward

Rev. Fritz West

“What does the Lord require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God.” (Micah 6:8)



Witnessing stewards (Oct. 29 - Nov. 19) invite us to wonder: How has participation in one of our predecessor congregations changed your life? Will you offer your gifts of money, energy, skill, and presence toward our efforts to positively impact lives in 2024?

Invitation to the Offering

Greeters pass offering plates at this time.

We give by cash, check or electronically (scanning the QR code).

Pledged gifts marked for one of our predecessor churches are tracked accordingly. Loose offerings go to St. Croix United Church.

Blue Giving Cards and Welcome Forms also go in the plate.



Offertory

“Here Are Our Hearts”

Jennings

*Offertory Response

Hal - le - Hal - le - Hal - le - lu - ja. Hal - le - Hal - le - Hal - le - lu - ja.

Hal - le - Hal - le - Hal - le - lu - ja. Hal - le - lu - ja. Hal - le - lu - ja.

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

God of all, we present these offerings that they may support your liberating reign. With them, we offer our varied gifts to sustain our ministries in the days ahead. May we each and together respond to the needs of our community and of our world. Amen.

Going Forth to Share God's Love

***Closing Hymn (NCH #181)**

**“You Are Salt for the Earth, O People ”
verses 1-2, 4**

***Benediction**

***Sending Song**

*We form a circle around the perimeter of the Sanctuary.
Some may choose to offer an elbow to link or a hand to hold.*

“Let There Be Peace on Earth”

**Let there be peace on Earth, and let it begin with me
Let there be peace on Earth, the peace that was meant to be.
With God as creator, family all are we.
Let us walk with each other in perfect harmony.
Let peace begin with me; let this be the moment now.
With ev'ry step I take, let this be my solemn vow;
To take each moment, and live each moment in peace eternally!**

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

***Postlude**

“The One Who Began a Good Work”

Mohr

*Please join us downstairs immediately after worship for fellowship
and 10:40 Open and Affirming (ONA) learning session*

PRAYER CORNER

Please hold these joys and concerns in your prayers:

For persons known to us...

*For Pat's son, **Myke**, we pray for smooth healing after hernia repair surgery.

*For **Barb Hilliard**, healing from a hematoma caused by an accidental injury to the side of her body. After another brief hospitalization for pain relief, Barb continues forward with rehabilitation at The Estates at Linden.

*For Rev. Fritz West's son, **Kevin**, prayers for a successful recuperation following surgery.

*For **Gina Buberl**, smooth and swift healing after knee replacement surgery last week.

Harvest Fest is coming!
November 18 | 9am—3pm

Best ways to help right now:

Visit our volunteer sign-up sheets in the Fellowship Hall.

Commit to making soup or baking goodies!

Buy and sell Raffle tickets (cash prize): \$5 each or 5 for \$20.

Invite your friends and neighbors to come!

Share our Harvest Fest webpage and Harvest Fest Facebook event!

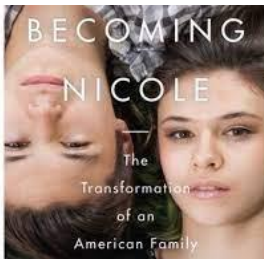


Questions about Harvest Fest?

Please contact Mary Binger (mehbinger@gmail.com, 651-357-8601)

A United Book Club

Nov. 29th | 6:30pm | @ Church and Zoomed



Our Open and Affirming Task Force (focused on LGBTQ+ inclusivity) is teaming with our book club, inviting anyone to join us in reading:

Becoming Nicole: The Transformation of an American Family by Amy Ellis Nutt.



Our Open and Affirming (ONA) Journey

*A faith-forming conversation for our whole congregation
– members and friends!*

TODAY, 10:45am | Taking a Closer Look

We will surface and explore questions in small groups, sharing our own experiences with sexual orientation and gender diversity. We will harness the power of personal stories to break through the fragility of confusion and discomfort. Special Guest: **Rev. Kelly Gallagher** (MN Conference UCC)

Nov. 19 | A Visit with **Rev. Nora P. Elliott (she/they)**


Nora will speak with us about her experience as a transgender person and about God as gender nonbinary or genderless.



Thank you to today's partners: Sharon Neuenfeldt (Worship Accompanist), Michael Bjork (Choir Director), SCUC Choir, Sue Favilla (greeter), Sam Gromoll (youth greeter), Jonah Gromoll (acolyte), Naomi Kirstein (liturgist), Rolf Dittman and Jill Greenhalgh (fellowship), Paul Spilseth, Bob Dickie & Mark Stephan (tech team), Lisa Culbertson (Childcare Provider), Carol Dusbabek, Claire Spilseth, Roger Klisch (PreK-Gr1), Wendy Staberg (Gr2-4), Sue Favilla (Youth Group), Jackie Savage (sanctuary organizer, outdoor sign), Andi Favilla and Jenni Shaller (decorations)



St. Croix United Church
with roots in People's Congregational
& St. Peter's UCC

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RESPOND

123

Draw the Circle Wide

$\text{♩} = 132$

Draw the cir-cle_ wide. Draw it wid-er still. Let this be our.

song, no one stands a-lone, stand-ing side by side, draw the cir-cle_

To verses Last time, Fine

wide._____ wide._____

1. God the still - point of the cir - cle, 'round whom all cre -
 2. Let our hearts touch far hor - i - zons, so en - com - pass
 3. Let the dreams we_ dream be larg - er, than we've ev - er

- a - tion turns; noth - ing lost, but
 great and small; let our lov - ing
 dreamed be - fore; let the dream of

held for - ev - er in God's gra - cious arms._____
 know no bor - ders, faith - ful to God's call._____
 Christ be in us, o - pen ev - 'ry door._____

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Every Step of the Way

66

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

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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You Are Salt for the Earth, O People

181

Paraphr. by Marty Haugen, 1986; alt.

Matt. 5:13-15

Unison
D (allow to ring off)

1 You are salt for the earth, O peo-ple: salt for the reign of God!
2 You are a light on the hill, O peo-ple: light for the Cit-y of God!
3 You are a seed of the Word, O peo-ple: bring forth the reign of God!
4 We are a blessed and a pil-grim peo-ple: bound for the reign of God!

Share the fla- vor of life, O peo- ple: life in the Cit-y of God!
Shine so ho- ly and bright, O peo- ple: shine for the Cit-y of God!
Seeds of mer- cy and seeds of jus- tice, grow in the Cit-y of God!
Love our jour-ney and love our home-land: love is the Cit-y of God!

Refrain

Bring forth the reign of mer- cy, bring forth the reign of peace;

Bring forth the reign of jus- tice, bring forth the Cit-y of God!

During a residency at Holden Village, a retreat center in the state of Washington, Marty Haugen wrote this hymn to be used as a "processing song" for outdoor worship. The lectionary readings focusing on Jesus' teaching about the "reign of God" provided the basis for the text.

Tune: BRING FORTH Irr. with refrain
Marty Haugen, 1986