



November 26, 2023

Asking with the
Sheep, "When
Did We...?"

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

“The Harvest is Plentiful”

W. African Tune

Acknowledging the light of Christ among us

Words of Welcome

* = Sitting or standing

***Opening Hymn (NCH #419)**

"Now Thank We All Our God"
verses 1 & 3

***Gathering Prayer** (*responsive*)

Wondrous Spirit, we raise to you our joyful noise:
Words of thanksgiving, songs of praise!

Rhythm-setter of tides and seasons:
From the depths of the waters to the heights of the land, creation declares your greatness.

You dapple our days with sunlight and our nights with starlight.
Your love and peace flow unceasingly.

May your goodness transform us –
Deepening our gratitude for the beauty of this season and for the kindness among us.

Lead us, we pray, in blessing the lives of others –
So that all your world may have reason to rejoice. Amen.

Choral Anthem

"God, Bless Us and Keep Us"

Robert Buckley Farlee, text by Susan Ruth Briehl

Acknowledging Our Need for God's Grace

Prayer of Confession and Longing (*unison*)

To the righteous, Jesus said, "I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink."

The followers were confused. "When, God? When did we ever help you?"

To the others, Jesus said, "I was a stranger and you did not welcome me, I was naked and you gave me no clothing."

They were indignant. "Surely not, God. We would never abandon you."

Jesus said, "Truly I tell you, what you do to the least of these, you do to me."

Whatever we offer to another, we are offering to God.

(continued...)

God of love and mercy, we long to live as your people and share your compassion. So often we hesitate — afraid to reach out, to care, to go the second mile, to truly give of ourselves.

Forgive us when our actions and words hurt others. Have mercy on us when we neglect one another or stay too busy to notice needs all around us. Open our senses and our hearts – that we might recognize each opportunity to share your love and compassion. In Jesus’ name we pray. Amen.

...the singing bowl welcomes us into silent prayer

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 – to those with us online
To those around us: we offer a smile, peace sign, or 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”

Mary Maren Bjork (19th), Rosie Hernandez (20th), Andi Favilla (21st), Bob Dickie (22nd), Sandi Lundgren (22nd), Emily Wulff (30th)

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 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 Corner Meeting Room upstairs
We welcome sounds and movements of children who stay in worship.*

Proclaiming God's Love

A Reading from the Epistles | *The Inclusive Bible*

Ephesians 1:15-23

A Reading from the Gospels | *The Inclusive Bible*

Matthew 25:31-46

Morning Message Asking with the Sheep, "When Did We...?"

Responding To God's Love

Prayer Hymn (NCH #583)

“Like a Mother Who Has Borne Us”
all verses

Prayers of the People

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

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.**

Invitation to the Offering

Greeters pass offering plates.

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

Pledged gifts marked for a predecessor church are tracked accordingly.

Loose offerings go to St. Croix United Church.



Offertory

“Let All Things Now Living”

Welch Folk Tune

Shared Ministry Inventory *(an annual spiritual practice)*

Our Nominating Team invites all members and friends to complete our Shared Ministry Inventory during an extended Offertory this morning.

*Please place your completed inventory in a marked basket at either exit as you depart.
Thank you!*

***Offertory Response**

**“Praise God” by John Mueller
sung twice**

**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)*

Creator of all, bless our offerings of presence, money and skill. Empower us to share all that we have and all that we are, investing in ministry that offers compassion to your world. Amen.

Going Forth to Share God's Love

*Closing Song (SPP #120)

“Dream God's Dream”
verses 1 & 2

*Benediction

*Sending Song

Seated, we sing and carry the Christ light with us... out into our daily lives

“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!
Let there be peace on Earth, and let it begin with me.**

*Postlude

“God is Our Shelter and Strength”

Colligan

*Please join us downstairs after worship for fellowship,
followed by our **10:45 Park Land Listening Session.***

Help us stock the **Free Little Pantry** (at the former St. Peter's UCC building) by placing items in the grocery cart in the Narthex.



Several members will be sure to keep the pantry stocked all winter for those who need it!

Here is a list of desired items: summer sausage, tuna packets, boxed grains, boxed pastas, cereal, oatmeal, granola bars, snack crackers, dried fruit, beef jerky

- *Please note that protein and high-quality items are preferred
- **Cardboard and plastic packages (no glass or metal during winter)
- ***More info and suggestions available in the Mid-Week e-newsletter

PRAYER CORNER

Please hold these joys and concerns in your prayers:

For persons known to us...

*We give thanks for the leadership of our **Harvest Fest Team** and for all community members who came out to support the event.

*For Cindy Baker's cousin, **Lynette**, a smooth recovery after kidney removal due to cancer.

*For Sharon Neuenfeldt's neighbor, **Lori**, and all who are grieving the recent death of her husband.

*With Cindy Siegel, we celebrate as her daughter, **Jenna**, continues tumor-free!

*For Bob Schwartz's granddaughter, **Beatrice**, well-being (body, mind, spirit).

*For **Diane and Joe Legato**, a quick and full recovery from COVID.

And in the wider community...

*For safe travels for all who gathered with loved ones for Thanksgiving. And for Love to accompany those who are alone this holiday weekend.

*Having recently recognized Transgender Day of Remembrance, we pray for those who have lost loved ones to acts of anti-transgender violence. And we pray for the wellbeing of our transgender, nonbinary, and gender fluid neighbors.

Thank you to all who have submitted Intended Giving Forms for 2024!

Thus far, 23 giving units are intending \$89,000. While our 2024 operating budget has yet to be refined (based on numerous factors during this time of transition and growth), our preliminary goal zone for 2024 member and friend giving is \$165-200k.

Goal Zone: \$165,000 - \$200,000



If you would like to be part of reaching the goal zone...
Please submit an Intended Giving Form as soon as possible — thank you! (*Stewardship packets in Narthex.*)

Give Blood.
Save 2 minutes a week.
In the U.S., donate blood.
American Red Cross



Mark your calendar for the next Blood Drive!

Dec. 22nd | 9am—3pm

See Mid-Week News to register OR call 1-800-733-2767

Inquirer's Gathering for newer and long-time friends alike... Come learn from lay leaders and Pastor Clare about the life and work of St. Croix United Church.

Our next New Member Sunday will be Dec. 17 if there are persons who feel ready to join! If you would like to attend our upcoming Inquirers Gathering (at church, with a Zoom option if helpful), please tell Pastor Clare any of these time that would work for you (pastor@peoplescongregational.org, 651-600-6409):

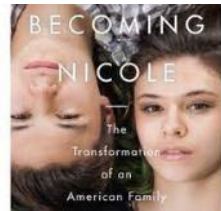
Thursday, Nov. 30 | 5:30-6:45 pm Saturday, Dec. 2 | 10:00-11:15 am
Sunday, Dec. 3 | 2:00-3:15 pm Wednesday, Dec. 6 | 6:30-7:45 pm
Thursday, Dec. 7 | 6:30-7:45 pm

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.



Thank you to today's partners: Sharon Neuenfeldt (Worship Accompanist), Michael Bjork (Choir Director), Lori Mildon (flute), SCUC Choir, Bob Dickie and Cindy Parsons (greeters), Heather Kennedy-Bordeaux (liturgist), Addison Albright (acolyte), Lori Mildon and Chris Bordeaux (fellowship), Paul Spilseth, Bob Dickie & Mark Stephan (tech team), Lisa Culbertson (Childcare Provider), Carol Dusbabek, Claire Spilseth (PreK-Gr1), Cindy Baker (Gr2-4), Cheri Schwartz (Sunday School Float), Jane Hanson (Youth Group), Jackie Savage (sanctuary organizer, outdoor sign), Andi Favilla (decorations)



St. Croix United 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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Nun danket alle Gott

(Now Thank We All Our God)

Sir. 50:20–24; 39:35; Ps. 67

Martin Rinkart, 1647; transl. Catherine Winkworth, 1858; alt.

1 Nun dank - et al - le Gott, mit Herz - en, Mund und Händ - en,
 1 Now thank we all our God with heart and hands and voic - es,
 2 O may this boun-teous God through all our life be near us,
 3 All praise and thanks to God our Mak - er now be giv - en,

der gro - sse Ding - e tut an uns und al - len End - en;
 Who won - drous things has done, in whom this world re - joic - es,
 With ev - er joy - ful hearts and bless - ed peace to cheer us,
 To Christ, and Spir - it, too, our help in high - est heav - en,

der uns von Mut - ter - leib und Kind - es - bein - en an
 Who, from our par - ents' arms, has blessed us on our way
 And keep us still in grace, and guide us when per - plexed,
 The one e - ter - nal God, whom earth and heaven a - dore,

un - zäh - lig viel zu gut bis hier-her hat ge - tan.
 With count-less gifts of love, and still is ours to - day.
 And free us from all ills in this world and the next.
 For thus it was, is now, and shall be ev - er - more.

For much of his life, German Lutheran pastor and musician Martin Rinkart ministered to the walled city of Eisleben amidst the horrors of the Thirty Years' War. This hymn has become one of the most widely used hymns of the church.

Tune: NUN DANKET 6.7.6.7.6.6.6.6.
 Johann Crüger, 1647
 Harm. Felix Mendelssohn, 1840

Like a Mother Who Has Borne Us

583

Daniel Bechtel, 1986

Hos. 11:1-9; 2 Tim. 1:8-10

Unison

1 Like a moth - er who has borne us, held us
 2 Like a fa - ther who has taught us, grasped our
 3 Though as chil - dren we have wan - dered, placed our
 4 When we of - fer food and com - fort, grasp our

close in her de - light, Fed us free - ly from her
 hand and been our guide, Lift - ed us and healed our
 trust in power and might, Left be - hind our broth - ers,
 neigh - bor's hand in love, Tread the path of peace and

bod - y, God has called us in - to life.
 sor - rows, God has walked with us in life.
 sis - ters, God still calls us in - to life.
 jus - tice, God still walks with us in life.

This hymn was inspired by Hosea's depiction of the parental aspects of God's relationship with Israel. It was first sung at a chapel service at Dickinson College, where Daniel Bechtel, an ordained minister in the United Church of Christ, began his tenure as professor of religion in 1964.

Tune: AUSTIN 8.7.8.7.
 William P. Rowan, 1992
 Alternate tune: STUTTGART

RESPOND

120

Dream God's Dream

♩ = 69

D C G D C G D Em⁷

Dream God's dream! Ho-ly

D/F# G Bm⁷

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

F#m⁷ G Em⁷ A A/G

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

D/F# G Bm⁷ A

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

G D/F# Em⁷ Asus A⁷ D

Last time to Coda:

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

C G D C G D C G

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

D C Em⁷ D

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.