



March 10, 2024

“How Do
We Embody
Grace?”

Fourth Sunday
in Lent

Welcome!

We encourage wearing name tags. Coffee and tea are welcome in worship.
Restrooms: main level (exit front left), lower level (at foot of entry stair/elevator)
Optional nursery care downstairs (infant - age 3)

The Love of God Gathers Us

Gathering Music

We gently settle into sacred time and space

Ring the Bell

Prelude & Candle Lighting

“Growing in Faith”

DeMan

We acknowledge the light of Christ among us

Words of Welcome

SPP = *Sing! Prayer and Praise*

* = Sitting or standing

NCH = *New Century Hymnal*

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

We gather here in your presence, God –
In our need, and bringing with us the needs of the world.

We come to you, for you come to us in Jesus –
And you know what human life is like.

We come as we are, because you invite us to come –
And you have promised never to turn us away.

***Opening Hymn (NCH #459) “Come, O Fount of Every Blessing”**
all verses

Acknowledging Our Need for God’s Grace

The singing bowl’s vibrations invite us into depths of grace

***Prayer of Confession and Longing** (*unison*)

Creator God, we offer this prayer as persons who often feel less than whole. We have experienced losses that have diminished us. We have found our attention to your will divided by other claims upon us. We have discovered how difficult it is to fulfill our best intentions. Forgive us and enable us to enjoy the fullness of your love. Strengthen us and inspire us to whole-hearted devotion. We pray with voices united in the name of Jesus the Christ. Amen.

***Musical Interlude**

...to accompany our quiet prayers

***Assurance of Grace** (*responsive*)

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

***Passing the Peace**

To those with us online and onsite: smiles, peace signs, handshakes

A Time With Children and Youth

Sung Invitation

...as young people come forward

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

Singing “Happy Birthday”

Michael Bjork (4th), Claire Stokes (5th), Trevor Stokes (10th), Stan Hilliard (12th), Jim Purnick (13th), Cindy Baker (14th), Kim Klisch (14th)

Wondering Together

Blessing One Another

...with arms wide open

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, let it shine.**

*infant - age 3 | nursery care available downstairs (9:25-10:30)
PreK-Gr. 1, Gr. 2-5 | gather now for Sunday School downstairs
Youth Group (gr. 6-12) | gathers now in the Corner Meeting Room upstairs
We welcome sounds and movements of children in worship*

Proclaiming God's Love

A Reading from the Hebrew Scriptures | *The Inclusive Bible*

Numbers 21:4-9

A Reading from the Epistles | *The Inclusive Bible*

Ephesians 2:1-10

A Reading from the Gospels | *The Inclusive Bible*

John 3:14-21

Morning Message

“How Do We Embody Grace?”

Responding To God's Love

Prayer Hymn (NCH #547)

**"Amazing Grace, How Sweet the Sound"
verses 1-3**

Prayers of the People

...God, in your love: 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)

*Note: Checks currently need to be written to People's Congregational Church
(as our bank awaits IRS confirmation of our new name)*



Offertory

“Sanctuary”

Thompson/Scruggs

*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.

The musical notation consists of two staves in G major and 4/4 time. The first staff has a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a 4/4 time signature. The melody is written on a treble clef. The lyrics are: Hal - le - Hal - le - Hal - le - lu - ja. Hal - le - Hal - le - Hal - le - lu - ja. The second staff continues the melody with the lyrics: Hal - le - Hal - le - Hal - le - lu - ja. Hal - le - lu - ja. Hal - le - lu - ja. The chords are indicated above the notes: G, D, G, C, Am, D, G, B7, Em, Am, D7, G, C, G, D.

***Prayer of Dedication**

God of grace, we come to you in plenty and in want. Teach us to receive without embarrassment when we have needs, and help us to give without reservation when we have abundance. Bless and multiply these financial gifts, and open our hearts and minds to your presence and activity in each day. Amen.

Going Forth to Share God's Love

***Closing Hymn (NCH #547)** "Amazing Grace, How Sweet the Sound"
verses 4-5

***Benediction**

***Sending Song**

Forming a circle, optionally linking elbows or hands

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** "The One Who Began a Good Work in You"

Mohr

Today Following Worship:

10:30am | All are welcome in the Fellowship Hall for refreshments & good company!

11:00—noon | Adult Faith Conversations: "Saving Jesus Redux"

Fellowship Hall (childcare provided) & Zoomed

The DVD series is designed for its audience to interact with well-known, progressive theologians who challenge Christians to think about the relevance of a renewed understanding of Jesus in the context of our current culture.

One Great Hour of Sharing

One Great Hour of Sharing® is one of four special mission offerings of the United Church of Christ. This Lenten Offering supports the disaster, refugee, and development ministries of the United Church of Christ within Wider Church Ministries.

Share the light.



Join us **today** in giving a special offering to support this mission.

Cash and checks are welcome.

(please make checks out to People's Congregational Church, memo: OGHS)

It's Minnesota FoodShare Month!



As the largest grassroots fundraiser in the state, the MN FoodShare Campaign brings together individuals, community organizations, businesses, and faith communities to help nearly 300 food shelves statewide.

Our local community food shelf, Valley Outreach, is the only nonprofit in the St. Croix Valley/Stillwater, MN area that provides people with a wide range of support – whether they need food, clothing, or help navigating resources during challenging times.

The Local Outreach Team has decided that all monetary donations will be sent to Valley Outreach to help reach more people in the community. Cash and checks are welcome. (Please make checks out to People's Congregational Church, memo: MN FoodShare)



Donations of food items will continue to be collected in the grocery cart in our entry area and put into the Little Free Pantry located at our St. Peter's building. We continue to stock it at least once/week (as it is being used regularly)!

**Reminder: Please donate nutritious items. No glass or metal packaging during the cold months.*

PRAYER CORNER

We hold these joys and concerns in our prayers:

*For **Barb Hillard**, healing in a torn hip tendon while receiving care at Good Samaritan in Maplewood.

*For **Debi Orff**, former pianist for St. Peter's UCC, as she heals from surgery to repair a 2nd retinol tear and waits to be put on the kidney donor list as she struggles with kidney failure.

*For **Aidan Gromoll**, we pray for safe and fruitful work as she provides first aid and medical care to refugees and migrants in Dunkirk, France throughout March.

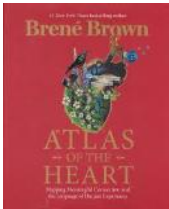
*Celebrating anniversaries: **Joe and Diane Legato** (7th), **Gina and Rick Buberl** (11th)

Wednesday Evenings in Lent (**Feb. 21 - Mar. 20**)

5:30pm | contemplative worship (*helpers needed*)

6:00pm | soup supper 6:30-7:30 pm | discussions inspired by
*Atlas of the Heart: Mapping Meaningful Connection and the Language of
Human Experience*

Reading the book is optional: conversations are accessible for anyone.



Gerten's Spring Plant Sale is ON!

Our church receives 30% of all plant sales and 15% of all gift card sales! AND you'll have beautiful plants for your summer garden!

Plants/Flowers will be delivered on May 16th.

THE LAST DAY to order is March 28th.



All ordering online. Instructions and the brochure are in the Mid-Week News. For assistance, contact Megan (office@stcroixunitedchurch.org or 651-439-5667).

We make an annual gift to Walker West (St. Paul) as reparations for use of "This Little Light of Mine" and other Black spirituals. *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.*

ST. CROIX UNITED CHURCH
WEEKLY WORSHIP SERVICE, SUNDAYS 9:30



Holy Week Services

Palm Sunday | March 24, 10 am

*An outdoor community-wide service,
worshipping with surrounding churches.*

*Watch our website for this year's
outdoor and indoor locations!*

Maundy Thursday | Mar. 28, 7 pm

Good Friday Tenebrae | Mar. 29, 7 pm

With Bethlehem Lutheran @ St. Croix United Church

Easter Sunday | Mar. 31, 10 am worship

Sunrise service @ People's Park 6:45 am

Breakfast 9 am ~ Easter egg hunt 9:30 am

Join us for any upcoming event.

You may find what you're looking for in our vibrant little congregation!

www.stcroixunitedchurch.org | 651-439-5667

Thank you to today's partners: Sharon Neuenfeldt (Worship Accompanist), Michael Bjork (Choir Director), SCUC Choir, Bob Dickie & Cindy Parsons (greeters), Sharri Kinkead (liturgist), Lori Mildon (flute), Rolf Dittmann & Jill Greenhalgh (fellowship), Paul Spilseth, Bob Dickie & Mark Stephan (tech team), Lisa Culbertson (Childcare Provider), Carol Dusbabek, Claire Spilseth, & Kathy Iverson (preK-Gr1), Wendy Staberg (Gr2-Gr5), Alisea Rangel (Sunday School Float), Sue Favilla (Youth Leader), Jackie Savage (sanctuary organizer), Andi Favilla (decorations)



St. Croix United Church

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Come, O Fount of Every Blessing

Ps. 36:7-9

Robert Robinson, 1758; alt.

1 Come, O Fount of ev-ery bless-ing, tune my heart to sing your grace;
 2 Here I pause in my so - journ-ing, giv-ing thanks for hav-ing come,
 3 O to grace how great a debt - or dai - ly I am drawn a - new!

streams of mer - cy, nev-er ceas - ing, call for songs of end-less praise.
 come to trust, at ev-ery turn - ing, God will guide me safe-ly home.
 Let that grace now, like a fet - ter, bind my wan-dering heart to you.

Teach me some me - lo-dious son - net, sung by flam-ing tongues a - bove.
 Je - sus sought me when a strang-er, wan-dering from the fold of God,
 Prone to wan - der, I can feel it, wan-der from the love I've known:

Praise the mount; I'm fixed up - on it, mount of God's un - fail - ing love.
 Came to res - cue me from dan - ger, bless - ed bod - y, pre - cious blood.
 Here's my heart, O take and seal it, seal it for your ver - y own.

Converted to Methodism at age twenty, Robert Robinson soon became a Calvinistic Methodist preacher and later gained great popularity. The melody, associated with this text since 1813, is an American folk tune.

Tune: NETTLETON 8.7.8.7.D.
 John Wyeth's Repository of Sacred Music, 1813

Amazing Grace, How Sweet the Sound

547

St. 1-4, John Newton, 1779; alt.

St. 5, A Collection of Sacred Ballads, 1790

1 A - maz - ing grace, how sweet the sound, that
 2 'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear, and
 3 Through man - y dan - gers, toils, and snares, I
 4 My God has prom - ised good to me, whose
 5 When we've been there ten thou - sand years, bright

saved a wretch like me! I once was lost, but
 grace my fears re - lieved; How pre - cious did that
 have al - read - y come; 'Tis grace has brought me
 word my hope se - cures; God will my shield and
 shin - ing as the sun, We've no less days to

now am found, was blind but now I see.
 grace ap - pear the hour I first be - lieved!
 safe thus far, and grace will lead me home.
 por - tion be as long as life en - dures.
 sing God's praise than when we'd first be - gun.

John Newton's autobiographical hymn reflects his conversion from his earlier existence as a slave trader. While serving as curate in the English village of Olney, Newton met William Cowper, and together they published Olney Hymns, which included this hymn.

Tune: AMAZING GRACE C.M.
 (NEW BRITAIN)
 Columbia Harmony, Cincinnati, 1829
 Arr. Edwin O. Excell, 1900