



Preparing for the Journey of Lent

Gathering Music

We gently settle into sacred time and space

Ring the Bell

Prelude & Candle Lighting

“Change My Heart O God”

Espinosa

We acknowledge the light of Christ among us

Words of Welcome

***Call to Awareness** *(responsive)*

Jesus said, “Unless a grain of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it shall not have life.”

In Lent, we come to know that the only way to life, healing, and wholeness comes paradoxically through letting go—through a thousand small deaths.

We cannot encounter light unless we are willing to enter darkness.

Fullness of life often means the death of lesser things.

Come, let us enter this season of Lent, willingly or reluctantly.

Let us embrace the life Jesus offers as we enter this sacred season – trusting in God’s everlasting power to give life, to heal, and to make whole.

***Opening Song (SPP #20)**

**“Waiting for You”
sung twice**

Waiting for You

20

♩=110

We are wait - ing for you, know - ing that you_

al - ways a - bide, we are wak - ing_ to your pres - ence

and our hearts are_ o - pen wide,

o - pen_ wide._ o - pen_ wide.

Words and Music: Christopher Grundy

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Acknowledging Our Need for God's Grace

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

Creating God, we come to you in this season of turning and returning. We long to seek you with our whole hearts, trusting you as both our source and our destiny. We turn to you in the midst of our lives. You receive our broken hearts, our troubled minds, our conflicted spirits. Affirmed by your embrace, may our lives honor you – through Jesus Christ, our path homeward to you. Amen.

...the singing bowl welcomes us into silent prayer

***Sung Response (NCH #751)** “Kyrie” (*Kyrie eleison = Lord, have mercy*) **cantor sings once | then all sing twice more**

The image shows a musical score for the Kyrie response. It consists of two systems of music. Each system has a vocal line (treble clef) and a piano accompaniment line (bass clef). The key signature is three sharps (F#, C#, G#) and the time signature is 4/4. The lyrics are: Ky - ri - e e - lei - son. Ky - ri - e e - lei - son. The first system shows the vocal line with a colon after the first measure, indicating a caesura. The piano accompaniment consists of chords and single notes. The second system shows the vocal line with a colon after the first measure and a long note for 'son.' The piano accompaniment has a long note for 'son.' and a final chord.

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

The peace of Christ be with you! **And also with you!**

***Passing the Peace**

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

Reflecting on the Lenten Journey

Scripture in the shape of music (*Chalice Hymnal* #743)

Psalm 51:1-3, 6-7, 9-13, 15

response—sung 4 times in unison
verses—chanted by our cantor



Cre - ate in me a clean heart, O God.

A Reading from the Prophets (*NRSV, part 1, p. 688*)

Isaiah 58: 1-12

A Reading from the Gospels (*The Inclusive Bible*)

Matthew 6: 1-6, 16-20

A Pastoral Reflection

Sung Response (NCH #751, see page 3)

“Kyrie”
sung 3 times

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”



Offertory

“Give Me a Clean Heart”

Douroux

Sharing the Bread of Life and Cup of Salvation

*Holy Communion is open to members and friends of all ages
as we seek to follow Jesus in the way of radically inclusive love*

Words of Invitation

Communion Prayer (*unison*)

God of the winding path, you are within and around us always. Touch us in some new, tangible way through this meal tonight. Reassure us – through the kindness in a neighbor’s eye, the strength of bread, and the savor of the cup – that you move with us along the journey. Amen.

Words of Remembrance and Blessing

*Sharing the Bread of Life and Cup of Blessing

*Please approach the serving table by the center aisle
Take a piece of (gluten-free) bread and a cup of juice, receiving words of blessing
Place your empty cup in a basket on a front pew, returning by a side aisle*

Communion Hymn (NCH #330)

**“Let Us Break Bread Together”
sung as we share in Communion**

**Let us break bread together on our knees;
Let us break bread together on our knees;
When I fall on my knees, with my face to the rising sun,
O Lord, have mercy on me.**

**Let us drink wine together on our knees ...
Let us praise God together on our knees ...**

*Closing Prayer (*unison*)

Holy Spirit, we remember that it was you who called Jesus. And it is you who calls and sustains us along the journey. The bread and cup nourish us for the winding and rough road ahead. The mark of ashes reminds us of your presence with us – in every moment and space along our human journey. Amen.

***Closing Hymn (NCH #186, on next page) “Dust and Ashes Touch Our Face”
verses 1-2**

Unison

1 Dust and ash - es touch our face, mark our fail - ure and our
2 Dust and ash - es soil our hands— greed of mar - ket, pride of
3 Dust and ash - es choke our tongue in the waste-land of de -

fall - ing. Ho-ly Spir-it, come, walk with us to - mor-row,
na - tion. Ho-ly Spir-it, come, walk with us to - mor-row
pres - sion. Ho-ly Spir-it, come, walk with us to - mor-row

take us as dis - ci - ples, washed and wak-ened by your call - ing.
as we pray and strug-ple through the mesh-es of op - pres - sion.
through all gloom and griev-ing to the paths of res - ur - rec - tion.

Refrain

Take us by the hand and lead us, lead us through the des - ert sands,



*Benediction

*Receiving the Imposition of Ashes

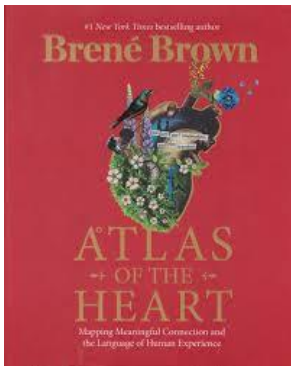
*As you depart, Pastor Clare offers the mark of ashes on your forehead
(or on your hand if you hold it out)
Please approach by the center aisle*

Postlude

“Deep Peace”

Thomas

Departing quietly, we carry the light of Christ with us in all times and spaces



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

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

6:00pm | soup supper (*hosts needed*)

6:30-7:15 pm | discussions inspired by

*Atlas of the Heart: Mapping Meaningful Connection
and the Language of Human Experience*

There are 3 copies now in stock at Valley Bookseller (Stillwater)!
Reading the book is optional: conversations will be accessible for
anyone.

Give blood.
Every 2 seconds someone
in the U.S. needs blood.
American Red Cross



Red Cross Blood Drive | Feb. 28 | 9 am—3 pm

Register by calling 1-800-733-2767

OR at RedCrossBlood.org, enter “Bayport”

We have adopted an Open and Affirming (ONA) Welcome Statement!

"St. Croix United Church is an open and affirming Christian community, which is faithfully committed to ministries of compassion, diversity, equity, and social justice. United by the grace, love, and forgiveness we know in Jesus Christ, we honor the sacredness of relationships with our neighbors. We welcome persons of every gender identity and expression, sexual orientation, race, ethnicity, physical ability, mental health status, and socio-economic condition into the full life and ministry of the church. By embracing our diversity, we learn and grow into a stronger community."

Special Offering: As part of our Open and Affirming process, we are gifting \$1000 from our Blessing Fund to the Nan Leekley LGBTQ Youth Fund.

We invite the congregation to add individual gifts during the month of February. (Write checks to "Peoples Congregational Church," memo: "LGBTQ Youth Fund.")

You are Invited to Our Next Inquirers Gathering! | February 17, 9:30am


For newer and long-time friends alike... learn about:

The life and work of St. Croix United Church, our denominational affiliations, how to deepen your participation in our congregation

Please let Pastor Clare know if you would like to attend on Feb. 17th
(pastor@stcroixunitedchurch.org or 651-600-6409).

Thanks to... Sharon Neuenfeldt (Worship Accompanist), Michael Bjork (Choir Director), Carol Dusbabek (greeter and communion server), Jane Hanson (communion preparer), Paul Spilseth & Mark Stephan (tech team), Jackie Savage (sanctuary organizer, outdoor sign), Andi Favilla (decorations)



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