



April 28, 2024

“How Do
We Love
One Another?”

New Member
Sunday

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 “How Great Thou Art”

Swedish Folk Melody, arr by Chris White

We acknowledge the light of Christ among us

Words of Welcome & Announcements

SPP = *Sing! Prayer and Praise*

* = *Sitting or standing*

NCH = *New Century Hymnal*

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

God has shown love among us –

By coming into the world in Christ, inviting us into abundant life.

If God has so loved us, we also out to love one another –

For if we love one another, God dwells in us.

Let us worship the Holy One –

And seek to love as we have been loved.

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

all verses

Acknowledging Our Need for God’s Grace

Centering Ourselves *...as the singing bowl’s vibrations invite us into depths of grace*

Prayer of Confession and Longing *(unison)*

O God, we rejoice in today’s opportunity to welcome new members. We confess that we sometimes limit ourselves to the company of who and what we already know as familiar. Make us zealously willing to hear and learn from one another; honoring our life stories, faith journeys, and diverse gifts. Open our senses, that we might appreciate new perspectives. Empower us to co-create a nurturing community as we journey forward together. Renew in us your Spirit of radical welcome and affirmation. As followers of Jesus, we pray. Amen.

Musical Interlude *...to accompany our quiet prayers*

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

A Time With Children and Youth & The Rite of Membership

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”

**Rebecca Dennis (20th), David Kirstein (22nd), Sue Voosen (24th),
Shaun Stokes (28th), Sharon Binger (May 2nd),
Evelyn Wulff (May 2nd - 10 yrs), Frank Cole (May 2nd), Tor Thorsen (May 3rd)**

Words of Invitation to the Rite of Membership

Pastor Clare Gromoll

Sharing by our Candidates for Membership

Rebecca Dennis, Dan Warnes, Marianne Warnes

Questions of the Candidates

Do you seek to continue your journey of faith, following the way of God's Love as revealed and embodied by Jesus the Christ, knowing you have the guidance of the Holy Spirit and the love and support of this community?

Do you promise to live in covenant with the members of St. Croix United Church — worshiping together and supporting our ministries with your presence, talent, and financial support?

Do you promise to open your heart and mind in love among these siblings in Christian faith, knowing that together we can nurture this community?

Presentation of Membership Certificates & Gifts

*Laying On of Hands

*All are invited forward to lay hands on our new members.
Place a hand on a shoulder as we connect in a web of faith community.*

*Covenanting Together

Cindy Baker, Leadership Council

Enfolded in the Love of God, we gladly embrace our newest members in this Christian community. Today, we recommit ourselves to mutual care and partnership in ministry. May we trust the Holy Spirit to empower and encourage our faithful striving to embody Love in the world.

*Blessing One Another

...with arms wide open

Children & New Members: 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 Resource Room upstairs
We welcome sounds and movements of children in worship*

Proclaiming God's Love

A Reading from the Epistles | *The Inclusive Bible*

1 John 4:7-21

A Reading from the Acts of the Apostles | *The Inclusive Bible*

Acts 8:26-40

Here ends the readings.

May God speak to us through these sacred words.

Morning Message

“How Do We Love One Another?”

Responding To God's Love

Prayer Hymn

"Lord, Listen to Your Children Praying"
sung twice

Lord, lis-ten to your chil-dren pray - ing, Lord, send your spir-it
in this place; Lord, lis-ten to your chil-dren pray - ing,
send us love, send us pow'r, send us grace. 1 (optional) Final
grace!

The musical score is written in 2/2 time with a key signature of two flats (Bb and Eb). It consists of three systems of music, each with a vocal line (treble clef) and a piano accompaniment line (bass clef). The lyrics are placed below the vocal line. The first system covers the first two lines of lyrics. The second system covers the next two lines. The third system covers the final line of lyrics and includes two endings: '1 (optional)' and 'Final'. The piano accompaniment features chords and moving lines that support the vocal melody.

Prayers of the People

*We share aloud prayers for ourselves, others, and parts of the world
Please tell Pastor Clare if you prefer yours not be added to our printed Prayer Corner*

...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

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

*Please write any checks to St. Croix United Church
Blue giving cards in the plate represent gifts made electronically.*



Offertory

“Shepherd of Love”

Peterson

*Offertory Response

Halle, Halle, Halle-lu-u-ja.
Halle, Halle, Halle-lu-u-ja.
Halle, Halle, Halle-lu-u-ja.
Halleluja! Halleluja!

*Prayer of Dedication *(unison)*

God of creativity and generosity, from you new possibilities spring. You 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 Hymn (NCH #562) "Take My Gifts"
all verses

*Benediction

*Sending Song *Forming a circle, optionally linking elbows or hands*

"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.**

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

*Postlude

"The Lord Bless Thee"

Butler

Today Following Worship:

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

11:00—noon | Adult Faith Conversations: *"Limiting resurrection to a miraculous event that happened to Jesus long ago or something that will also be the fate of true believers in some distant future has ceased to have meaning or relevance for many rational and faithful Christians today. What are the implications of seeing resurrection as a metaphor for new life—a symbol of the call to renewal."* (Marcus Borg)



Strategic Visioning Full-Congregation Workshop | April 30th

Supper at 5:00pm | Workshop will run 5:30-7:45/8:00pm.

Please email to **RSVP TODAY:** office@stcroixunitedchurch.org

PRAYER CORNER

We hold these joys and concerns in our prayers:

*With **Joel and Sue Petersen** (former members), we give thanks as they welcomed their first grandson to daughter, Claire, on Wednesday morning.

*For **Rev Patti Haaheim** whose husband, Bob, passed away in his sleep on April 6th. Patti was ordained at People's Congregational Church and served the church as an associate pastor. She currently lives in California. There will be a Celebration of life for Bob on April 26th, 2pm, Bloomington Dawn Memorial Gardens in Bloomington, Minnesota.

*For **Lisa Culbertson**, our Childcare Provider, as she copes with pain ahead of May 6th hip replacement surgery. She is now away from church until late June. *Please let Pastor Clare know if you'd like to help out in the nursery on a short-term basis.*

*With Bob and Cheri Schwartz, we give thanks with friend **Amanda** and baby **Astrid** after a successful mother-to-child kidney transplant. We pray for continued healing as love surrounds them.


And in the wider community...

*Having recognized **Earth Day**, may we learn to live in mutually respectful, caring relationships with all beings.

*As our nation sends financial aid to **Ukraine**, we pray that it will be put to humane use in the midst of violence and fear.

Thank you to today's partners: Sharon Neuenfeldt (Worship Accompanist), Michael Bjork (Choir Director), SCUC Choir, Lori Mildon (flute), Cheri & Bob Schwartz (greeters), Sharri Kinkead (liturgist), Jill Greenhalgh & Rolf Dittmann (fellowship), Paul Spilseth, Bob Dickie & Mark Stephan (tech team), Carol Dusbabek, Claire Spilseth, & Kathy Iverson (preK-Gr1), Wendy Staberg (Gr2-Gr5), David & Naomi Kirstein (Youth Leaders), Jackie Savage (sanctuary organizer), Andi Favilla (decorations)



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RESPOND

123

Draw the Circle Wide

♩=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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Take My Gifts

562

Shirley Erena Murray, 1991

1 Take my gifts and let me love you, God who first of all loved me,
2 Take the fruit that I have gathered from the tree your Spirit sowed,
3 Take whatever I can offer— gifts that I have yet to find,

gave me light and food and shelter, gave me life and set me free,
harvest of your own compassion, juice that makes the wine of God,
skills that I am slow to sharpen, talents of the hand and mind,

now because your love has touched me, I have love to give away,
spiced with humor, laced with laughter— flavor of the Jesus life,
things made beautiful for others in the place where I must be:

now the bread of love is rising, loaves of love to multiply!
tang of risk and new adventure, taste and zest beyond belief.
take my gifts and let me love you, God who first of all loved me.