



March 16, 2025

Guest Preacher:
Rev. Vicki Wunsch

Second Sunday in Lent

Welcome!

We encourage wearing name tags.

Restrooms: main level (exit front left), lower level (at foot of entry stair/elevator)

The Love of God Gathers Us

Gathering Music

...as we settle into sacred time and space

Ring the Bell

Prelude & Candle Lighting “O Christ, the Same (Londonderry Air)” *Irish Tune*

...acknowledging the light of Christ among us

Words of Welcome & Announcements

Singing Bowl & Opening Words from a Neighbor

Tibetan singing bowls took form in the 6th and 5th centuries BCE.
In some Buddhist traditions, they accompany meditation and chanting.
They now contribute to spiritual practices and well-being in many spaces.

***Gathering Prayer** (*unison*)

God, we cannot escape your love. We can find no place to hide.

You search us out wherever we may be.

We may travel to the moon or to the depths of the ocean—your love is there.

We may think ourselves to greater levels of sophistication—your love is there.

We may fall into the pits of sin—your love is there.

Thank you for your steadfast mercy.

Thank you for being there, wherever there may be. Amen.

***Opening Song** (SPP #84)

“All My Days”

verses 1-3

Acknowledging Our Need for God’s Grace

Centering Ourselves

...in stillness and breath

Prayer of Confession and Longing (*unison*)

O God, much stands between us and the life you intend us to lead. As frozen ground stifles a bulb’s expression of life, things hinder spirits from blooming.

Lack of courage chills the ground of our being and prevents our challenging the cold rip of injustice.

A snow-covering of indifference keeps problems out of sight and makes us believe there is no life below the surface.

Self-importance allows the dormancy of faith and permits us to be content without growing into the world.

As we worship, thaw us out. Through the chill, we feel the life-giving warmth of your love. Help us to bloom as persons nourished by that love. We pray as followers of Jesus. Amen.

Musical Interlude

...to accompany our quiet prayers

Assurance of Grace

The peace of Christ be with you!

And also with you!

***Passing the Peace**

...online and onsite: smiles, eye contact, gestures (refraining from touch)

A Time With Children and Youth

Sung Invitation

...as young people come forward

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

Singing "Happy Birthday"

Jonah Gromoll (3/18 - 8 yrs), Milo Holler (3/19 - 4 yrs)

Wondering Together

Blessing One Another

...with arms wide open

Young Ones: 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...

Children's Activity | Children (age 3 - gr. 4) go downstairs with Claire and Kathy
Youth Group | Youth (gr. 5-12) go with Jane to their main-level meeting space
Nursery | Families with infants & toddlers are welcome to utilize the downstairs nursery
We welcome the sounds and movements of children who stay in worship!

Proclaiming God's Love

Contemporary Reading | from Ann Weems in *Kneeling in Jerusalem* **"The Walk"**
Reading from the Psalms | NRSV (Old Testament, p. 577) Psalm 139: 1-12, 19-24

Here ends the readings.

Thanks be to God.

Morning Message

Rev. Vicki Wunsch

As reparations for use of Black spirituals, we support Walk West (St. Paul):
*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.*

Responding To God's Love

Prayer Hymn (NCH #461) “Let Us Hope When Hope Seems Hopeless”
verses 1-2

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)
Blue electronic giving cards represent gifts made electronically.



Offertory

“Jesus, Lord to Me”

Nelson

***Offertory Response**

**Praise God from whom all blessings flow;
Praise God all creatures here below;
Praise God above, you heavenly host;
Creator, Christ and Holy Ghost. Amen.**

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

Gracious One, we offer common gifts through our daily living. With gestures of strength, words of daring, prayers of kindness – we shape the tone and texture of how your vision is realized. Remind us that we are each a part of your whole. We dedicate these gifts and our very lives to your way of love. Amen.

Going Forth to Share God's Love

***Closing Hymn (NCH #179)** “We Yearn, O Christ, for Wholeness”
all verses

***Benediction**

***Sending Song** *...forming a circle, not holding 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.

***Postlude**

Today Following Worship:

10:30am | All are welcome downstairs for refreshments and good company!

PRAYER CORNER

* For **loved ones** lingering at the end of life, we pray for comfort and release.

*With **Barb and Stan Hilliard**, we give thanks that Stan is doing well after a recent brief hospitalization!

*With Bob Dickie, we give thanks for **thoughtful sermons** and actions they inspire.

*With Bruce, we pray for our **aviation industry** – for those who have been involved in airplane crashes, for loss of life, for those grieving, for those who work in the industry, for those experiencing fear and anxiety around flying.

*With Mary Maren Bjork we give thanks for her new grandchild as daughter, **Miela**, adopts a 2-month-old child through kinship adoption.

*With Sharon Binger, we share joy in the engagement of her son, **Ian**.

*For Sharon Neuenfeldt's nephew, **Mike**, healing energy as he heals from colon cancer surgery and continues to seek more answers.

Wednesday Evenings in Lent | **March 12 - April 9**

5:30 pm | worship: hearing stories of resilience

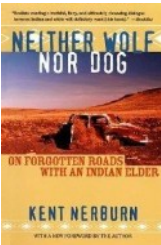
**In-person only due to sensitive story-sharing*

6:00 pm | soup supper

6:30 pm | book discussion

**pre-reading recommended but not required for participation,
contact Heather or Pastor Clare for our study guide*

Lenten Book Discussion - "Neither Wolf Nor Dog" by Kent Nerburn



This 1995 narrative invites us to start a conversation about healing through the acknowledgment of the unvarnished truth.

The book follows writer Nerburn as he spends time with Dan, a Lakota elder eager to share his wisdom before he passes. Along the way, Nerburn realizes that this journey is far from straightforward, leading to unexpected discoveries and deeper understanding.

We welcome Rev. Vicki Wunsch as guest preacher...



Rev. Vicki Wunsch currently serves as Hospice chaplain & Grief Counselor with Interim Hospice; and as Interim minister at Grace United Church of Christ. She also works as an educator & support group facilitator for caregivers/family members dealing with loved ones with Alzheimer's or related dementia.

After living in the Twin Cities for 32 years, Vicki moved back to Wausau, WI where she was born and raised to be closer to her parents. Vicki has one daughter, Emily and a 6 month old granddaughter who lives in Bayport.

For more about Rev. Vicki, check out last week's Midweek e-newsletter!

March is MN Food Share Month



The Local Outreach Team is collecting for our Food Share Pantries. We are filling the pantries at least twice/week and it costs us around \$100/week to fill them. Please donate money to the Food Share Pantry Account (scan the QR code or designate a check/cash to "Food Share Pantries").

March 16th: Help us make snack packs! With Spring Break around the corner (3/21-3/30), we'd love to fill the pantries with snack packs for families, students, and kids who may be spending more time at home and might need extra food during this time. The youth will be decorating bags during Sunday School for the snack items to go in.

Examples of items: beef jerky, granola/fruit bars, fruit pouches/bowls, crackers, etc.

One Great Hour of Sharing

March 1 - 31

Our United Church of Christ promotes 4 quarterly special offerings as part of Our Church's Wider Mission. One Great Hour of Sharing carries God's message of love and hope to people in crisis; by supporting domestic and international ministries for disaster preparedness and response.

Please use specially marked envelopes and/or memo: "OGHS."



**Pastor Clare and Megan will be
on vacations March 10-17**

In the event of a question or urgent need, please contact one of the following:
Nat Graf, Leadership Council Moderator (651-470-0408, ngraf11@gmail.com)
Urgent pastoral concerns: Rev. Dan Warnes (402-200-9680)


Week at a Glance:

Lenten Worship (Kathy Whiterabbit, story sharer) | March 19, 5:30 pm | @ Church
Lenten Soup Dinner | March 19, 6 pm | @ Church
Lenten Book Discussion | March 19, 6:30 pm | @ Church
Garden Gathering | March 20, 9:30 am | @ Church
Iftar Celebration | March 20, 5:30 pm | @East Twin Cities Islamic Center, Afton

Thank you to today's partners: Rev. Vicki Wunsch (Guest Preacher), Sharon Neuenfeldt (Worship Accompanist), Lori Mildon (flute), Bob Dickie & Cindy Parsons (ushers), Mary Maren Bjork (liturgist), St. Croix United Choir, Claire Spilseth & Kathy Iverson (age 3 - gr 4), Jane Hanson (youth group), Sharri Kinkead (fellowship), Paul Spilseth, Bob Dickie, Mark Stephan (tech team), Jackie Savage (sanctuary organizer), Sue Favilla (altar decor)



St. Croix United Church

www.stcroixunitedchurch.org  @SCUCBayport

Rev. Pastor Clare Gromoll | Pastor

pastor@stcroixunitedchurch.org, (651) 600-6409

Megan Adams | Office Coordinator

office@stcroixunitedchurch.org, (651) 439-5667

Telae | Youth & Outreach Director, Interim Choir Director
youthandoutreach@stcroixunitedchurch.org, (612) 203-0859

All My Days

84

$\text{♩} = 78$ N.C. A⁷sus

1. You

D D/F# G A⁷sus G/B D D/F# D G

know my_ words, be - fore they're said. You know my need and
 I should fly_ be - yond the_ dawn, the shad - ows will_ not
 ev - ery_ thought, each word we say, - the whole of_ time, the
 mend my_ heart and free my_ voice. From sin re - leased, I

E/G# Esus A F#⁷/A# Bm F#m⁷ G Am D⁷ Gadd⁹

I am_ fed. You give me_ life. You know my_ ways, my
 o - ver - come. If I lie_ down in deep - est_ night, still
 pre - sent day, - are held with - in your might - y_ hand too
 will re - joice. O search me_ now, my spir - it_ cries, and

D/A G/B Em/C#F#aug Bm D⁷/A D/G D/F# Em⁷

strength, my path_ for all my_ days, my strength, my_ path, for
 you are_ there, my truth, my_ light, still you are_ there, my
 won - der - ful_ to com - pre - hend, too won - der - ful_ to
 let my_ song of praise a - rise, - and let my_ song of

Asus N.C. A⁷sus Asus N.C. Dadd⁹

1. 2. 3. 4.

all my days. _____ 2. If praise a - rise. _____
 truth, my light. _____ 3. Our
 com - pre - hend. _____ 4. O

Words: Laurie Zelman

Music: Mark A. Miller

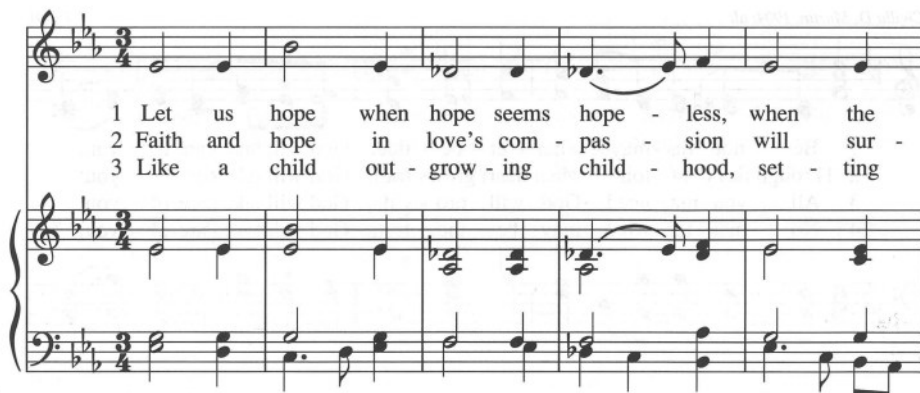
©2003 Abingdon Press, (Admin. By The Copyright Company, Nashville, TN 37212)

All rights reserved. Used by permission.

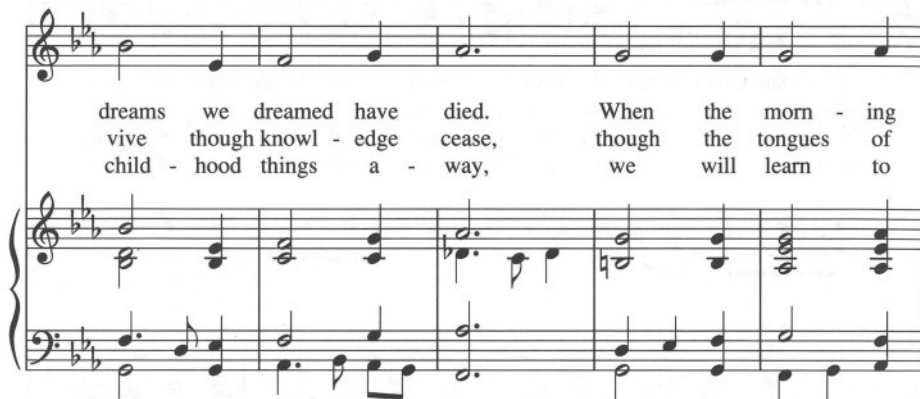
461 Let Us Hope when Hope Seems Hopeless

Ps. 126:5-6; Rom. 4:18; 1 Cor. 13

David Beebe, 1989



1 Let us hope when hope seems hope - less, when the
 2 Faith and hope in love's com - pas - sion will sur -
 3 Like a child out - grow - ing child - hood, set - ting



dreams we dreamed have died. When the morn - ing
 vive though knowl - edge cease, though the tongues of
 child - hood things a - way, we will learn to



breaks in bright - ness, hun - ger shall be sat - is - fied.
 joy fall si - lent, dull the words of proph - e - cies.
 live in free - dom, in the life of God's new day.

Emma Lou Diemer, organist since the age of thirteen, studied composition at Yale University and Eastman School of Music, and has published orchestra, chamber, choral, and organ works. David Beebe wrote this text while teaching a course on creative writing. A minister of the United Church of Christ, Beebe has served on the staff of the denomination's Stewardship Council.

Tune: LET US HOPE 8.7.8.7.D.
 Emma Lou Diemer, 1994
 Alternate tune: HYFRYDOL

One who sows the fields with weep - ing shall re - trace the
 Faith shall see and trust its ob - ject; hope shall set its
 Now we see as in a mir - ror. Then we shall see

sor-row - ing way and re - jice in har - vest
 an - chor sure; love shall bloom in Love e -
 face to face, un - der - stand how love's com -

boun - ty at the break - ing of the day.
 ter - nal. Faith and hope and love en - dure.
 pas - sion blos - soms through a - maz - ing Grace.

We Yearn, O Christ, for Wholeness

179

Dosia Carlson, 1986; rev. 1993

1 We yearn, O Christ, for whole - ness and for your heal - ing touch;
 2 We long to have com - pan - ions who trav - el by our side,
 3 We need your liv - ing pres - ence, O Christ of Gal - i - lee,

too long have we felt help - less; our bur - dens seemed too much.
 strong friends to call and an - swer with whom we are al - lied;
 a pres - ence that re - vives us and sets our spir - its free.

For - get - ting all pre - tens - es we make our plead - ings heard,
 As we lift up each oth - er when strug - gles lay us low,
 No long - er are we fear - ful, your love per - vades each place.

in hope and ex - pec - ta - tion a - wait your gra - cious Word.
 com - mu - ni - ty de - vel - ops; our faith and car - ing grow.
 Em - pow - er us with cour - age to claim your heal - ing grace.

Dosia Carlson is noted for her ministry at Beatitudes United Church of Christ in Phoenix, Arizona, and for her hymnwriting. This text was inspired by a sermon given by Harold Wilke during the International Year of Persons with Disabilities (1983).

Tune: PASSION CHORALE 7.6.7.6.D.
 Hans Leo Hassler, 1601
 Harm. J. S. Bach, 1719
 For another harmonization, see 202