



March 30, 2025

“Will  
Humility and Grace  
Liberate Us?”

New Member Sunday  
Fourth 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 “The Old Rugged Cross”**

*Bennard*

*...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** (*responsive*)

Holy Spirit, you gather us as one body.

**Strengthen the bonds of affection that hold your people together.**

Bless us with grace to cooperate with one another in love and service.

**May we practice compassion and uniting love in a fractured world.**

May we face challenges with imagination and counter disappointments with prayerful trust.

**May we, your church, bring forth your reign of love. Amen.**

**\*Opening Hymn (NCH #547)**

“Amazing Grace, How Sweet the Sound”  
verses 1, 3 & 5

**Acknowledging Our Need for God’s Grace**

**Centering Ourselves**

*...in stillness and breath*

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

O God, we rejoice as we welcome new members today. We confess that we sometimes limit ourselves to the company of who and what we already know. Make us eager to hear and learn from one another – honoring life stories, faith journeys, and diverse gifts. Open our senses – that we might appreciate new perspectives. Empower us to nurture 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**

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.

## 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...**

### **Singing “Happy Birthday”**

**Dan Warnes (4/1), Melissa Stephan (4/2)**

### **Invitation to the Rite of Membership**

### **Sharing by our Candidates for Membership**

Kathy Whiterabbit  
Forrest Whiterabbit. Jr.

### **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 as a sign of support.  
Place a hand on a shoulder as we connect in a web of faith community.*

#### **\*Covenanting Together**

Nat Graf, Leadership Council Moderator

**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

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 Carol and Kim

***Youth Group*** | Youth (gr. 5-12) go with Sue to their 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**

**Reading from the Gospels** | NRSV (New Testament, p. 78)

Luke 15: 1-3, 11b-32

**Contemporary Reading** | by Nan C. Merrill

A companion text to Psalm 32

Here ends the readings.

**Thanks be to God.**

**Morning Message**

**“Will Humility and Grace Liberate Us?”**

**Responding To God's Love**

**Special Music**

**“Unfailing Love (Psalm 32)”**

*Richard Bruxvoort Colligan*

**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*)

**Eternal Spirit, Earth-maker, Pain-bearer, Life-giver,**

**Source of all that is and that shall be, Father and Mother of us all,**

**Loving God, in whom is heaven:**

**the hallowing of your name echo through the universe!**

**The way of your justice be followed by the peoples of the world!**

**Your heavenly will be done by all created beings!**

(*cont'd...*)

Your commonwealth of peace and freedom sustain our hope and come on Earth.  
With the bread we need for today, feed us.  
In the hurts we absorb from one another, forgive us.  
In times of temptation and testing, strengthen us.  
From trials too great to endure, spare us.  
From the grip of all that is evil, free us.  
For you reign in the glory of the power that is love, now and forever. 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 Keep Me Near the Cross”

Doane

### \*Offertory Response

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;  
Praise God all creatures here below – Alleluia! Alleluia!  
Praise God, the source of all our gifts!  
Praise Jesus Christ, whose power uplifts!  
Praise the Spirit, Holy Spirit! Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

### \*Prayer of Dedication (*unison*)

Holy One, in loving care you labor that no one would be forgotten, rejected or neglected – but that all be raised to new life. Now may your word live among us – that we who are welcomed, forgiven, and loved may live tenderly with one another and all your creation. In the power of your Spirit, we pray. Amen.

### Going Forth to Share God’s Love

\*Closing Song (SPP #139) “I’m Gonna Live So God Can Use Me”  
*all verses*

### \*Benediction

## \*Passing the Peace

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

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

## \*Postlude

### **Today Following Worship:**

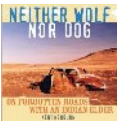
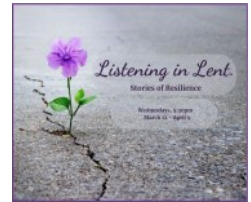
**10:30 am** | All are welcome downstairs for refreshments and good company!

### **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



### **Lenten Book Discussion -**

**"Neither Wolf Nor Dog" by Kent Nerburn**

*\*pre-reading not required, check the Midweek for this week's study guide*

### **Earth Day Celebration!**

Pastor Clare seeks a few partners in planning and hosting a simple outdoor gathering on Earth Day - Tuesday evening, **April 22nd!** It might be co-hosted by several churches.

We will include readings, songs, and prayer - incorporating voices of all ages. We might also offer simple refreshments and individual blessings of animals. Please contact Pastor Clare (651-600-6409) if you would like to help plan this.



### **Gerten's Spring Plant Sale is ON!**



**Our church receives 30% of all plant sales & 15% of all gift card sales!**

**AND you'll have beautiful plants for your summer garden!**

**THE LAST DAY to order is April 3rd.** (Delivery on May 15th.)

All ordering online. Instructions and the brochure are in the Midweek News.

## PRAYER CORNER

- \*For **Kathy Lone Tree—Whiterabbit**, swift healing after this Monday's total knee replacement surgery.
- \*For Sharon Neuenfeldt and her husband, **Bob**, as he enters palliative care. For relief from physical pain and for love to surround and comfort them.
- \*For **all who manage depression and mental health challenges**, especially amidst the current political environment. May light and love find ways to break in.
- \*For **Pope Francis** as he continues to recover. Gratitude for his love of children. And gratitude for the presence of young children in our church!
- \*For **those who are in danger of being deported**. For individuals who have been deported and their loved ones. For safety and dignity in these uncertain times.
- \*Traveling mercies for **all traveling over spring break**.
- \*For **Lori Mildon's friend's 3-year old grandson** who is experiencing liver issues, we pray for answers and a return to health.
- \*For Sharon Neuenfeldt's friend's son, **Roger**, experiencing complexities while awaiting a liver transplant.
- \*For a **new church friend** who is missing their beloved wife who died 1.5 years ago – for the ache of deep loss and desire for community to surround them.

## March is MN Food Share Month



### March 30 - Meal Kit Ingredients Needed!

As we wrap up the March Food Drive, the Local Outreach Team is focusing on Meal Kits.

Meals from the Heart has donated many meal kit bags for us to provide in our pantries. We would like to spruce up the bags by providing ingredients to make a meal! Please bring any last minute donations for this project by Thursday.

*(More details and ideas in the Midweek e-newsletter.)*

## Gentle Tai Chi is Back!

**Mondays at 7 pm**

@ St. Croix United Church

For notifications & cancellations, please contact Mary Ann Litfin to be added to the email list ([malitfin@gmail.com](mailto:malitfin@gmail.com))



*Connection... Balance... Renewal*

## Week at a Glance:




**Lenten Worship** (Mary Maren Bjork, story sharer) | **April 2, 5:30 pm** | @ Church  
**Lenten Soup Dinner** | **April 2, 6 pm** | @ Church  
**Lenten Book Discussion** | **April 2, 6:30 pm** | @ Church  
**Garden Gathering** | **April 3, 9:30 am** | @ Church  
**Choir Rehearsal** | **April 6, 8:30 am** | @ Church  
**Sunday Worship** | **April 6, 9:30 am** | @ Church & Livestream  
**Children's Activity & Youth Group** | **April 6, 9:45 am** | @ Church  
**Fellowship** | **April 6, 10:30 am** | @ Church  
**Congregational Discussion** (re: strategic planning) | **April 6, 11 am**

Thank you to today's partners: Sharon Neuenfeldt (Worship Accompanist), Lori Mildon (flute), Kathy & Bob Iverson (ushers), Sam Gromoll (acolyte), Heather Kennedy-Bordeaux (liturgist), St. Croix United Choir, Carol Dusbabek & Kim Klisch (age 3 - gr 4), Sue Favilla (youth group), Arly Fuhr & Wendy Staberg (fellowship), Paul Spilseth, Bob Dickie, Mark Stephan (tech team), Jackie Savage (sanctuary organizer), Sue Favilla (altar decor)



### St. Croix United Church

[www.stcroixunitedchurch.org](http://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

**CREDITS & PERMISSIONS** | **Call to Worship Prayer of Confession & Longing** reprinted or adapted by permission of the publishers from *Touch Holiness*, ed. Ruth C. Duck and Maren C. Tirabassi. Copyright © 1990 by The Pilgrim Press. **Prayer of Dedication** reprinted or adapted by permission of the publisher from *Before the Amen: Creative Resources for Worship* (p. 64), ed. Maren C. Tirabassi & Maria I Tirabassi. Copyright © 2007 The Pilgrim Press. **Contemporary Reading** from *Psalms for Praying: An Invitation to Wholeness*, by Nan C. Merrill. Copyright © 2007 by Continuum International Publishing Group, [www.PsalmsForPraying.com](http://www.PsalmsForPraying.com). **Scripture Reading** from *The NRSV*. Permission to podcast/stream the music in this service obtained from ONE LICENSE with license #A-703858. All rights reserved.



## 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

## I'm Gonna Live So God Can Use Me 139

$\text{♩} = 68$

1. I'm gon-na live so \_\_\_\_\_ God can use me \_\_\_\_\_ an - y -
2. I'm gon-na work so \_\_\_\_\_ God can use me \_\_\_\_\_ an - y -
3. I'm gon-na pray so \_\_\_\_\_ God can use me \_\_\_\_\_ an - y -
4. I'm gon-na sing so \_\_\_\_\_ God can use me \_\_\_\_\_ an - y -

- time, Lord, \_\_\_\_\_ and an - y - where. \_\_\_\_\_
- time, Lord, \_\_\_\_\_ and an - y - where. \_\_\_\_\_
- time, Lord, \_\_\_\_\_ and an - y - where. \_\_\_\_\_
- time, Lord, \_\_\_\_\_ and an - y - where. \_\_\_\_\_

- I'm gon-na live so \_\_\_\_\_ God can use me \_\_\_\_\_
- I'm gon-na work so \_\_\_\_\_ God can use me \_\_\_\_\_
- I'm gon-na pray so \_\_\_\_\_ God can use me \_\_\_\_\_
- I'm gon-na sing so \_\_\_\_\_ God can use me \_\_\_\_\_

- an - y - time, Lord, \_\_\_\_\_ and an - y - where. \_\_\_\_\_
- an - y - time, Lord, \_\_\_\_\_ and an - y - where. \_\_\_\_\_
- an - y - time, Lord, \_\_\_\_\_ and an - y - where. \_\_\_\_\_
- an - y - time, Lord, \_\_\_\_\_ and an - y - where. \_\_\_\_\_