



February 22, 2026

“In Times of Testing”

Seminary Sunday

Welcome!

We encourage wearing name tags.

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

Gathering Music

Ringing of the Bell

Prelude & Candle Lighting

...acknowledging the light of Christ among us

please observe silence as we settle into sacred time and space

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.

***Prayer of Gathering** *(responsive)*

God of the journey, we often move through a desert or wilderness unchanged.

Today, let us hear your voice through scripture, song and prayer.

Move us and change us.

Kindle in us the passion that burned in the life of Jesus as he came out of his wilderness. Amen.

***Opening Hymn**

“When We Are Tested”

new verses by Ruth Duck

Tune: Be Now My Vision

**Be now my vision, O God of my heart;
Nothing surpasses the love you impart –
You my best thought, by day or by night,
Waking or sleeping, your presence my light.**

**When we are tested and wrestle alone,
famished for bread when the world offers stone,
nourish us, God, by your word and your way,
food that sustains us by night and by day.**

**When in the desert we cry for relief,
pleading for paths marked by certain belief,
lift us to love you beyond sign and test,
trusting your presence, our only true rest.**

Centering Ourselves

...in stillness and breath

Prayer of Confession and Longing *(unison)*

Gracious God, as we begin this Lenten journey, we confess that we sometimes meet pressing human need with fear and inaction. We experience brokenness, alienation, and isolation.

Help us discover ways to use our power and talent to heal your world. Forgive our sin, strengthen our resolve, and renew us in your ever-vibrant Spirit. 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 (*seated*)

...smiles and gestures of peace — to those online and seated near us

Sung Invitation

...as young people come forward

This little light of mine...

Singing “Happy Birthday”

Sharon Neuenfeldt (2/22), **David** Staberg (2/22),
Beckham Bettin (2/23 - 13 yrs), **Joe** Legato (2/28)

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...

Children’s Activity (age 3 - grade 4) | Children can go downstairs with Claire
We welcome the sounds and movements of children who stay in worship!

Reading from the Gospels | NRSV, p. 38

Matthew 4:1-11

Contemporary Reading | Mary Luti, 2026 UCC Lent Devotional: Outgrow

“What Kind?”

One: Here ends the readings. **All: Thanks be to God!**

Morning Message

“In Times of Testing”

As reparations for use of Black spirituals, we support Walker 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.

Prayer Hymn (NCH #490) “I Want Jesus to Go with Me”

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 printed in our Prayer Corner*

...God, in your love **Hear our prayer**

Prayer of Jesus

**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.**

Seminary Sunday Witness, Eliza Dery

*Current student at United Theological
Seminary of the Twin Cities*

Invitation to Offering

*Please note specially marked envelopes for gifts to the
United Theological Seminary Scholarship Fund.*

We give to our general fund by cash, check or electronically (scanning the QR code)

***Blue electronic giving cards** found in pew pockets.*



Offertory

***Song of Thanks**

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 all, you know the many choices we face each day.
We choose between right and wrong. We choose what will be important to us.
As your Spirit strengthened Jesus in the wilderness, so strengthen us today.
We dedicate our offerings to your work of love and justice. Amen.

***Closing Hymn**

“When We Are Tested”

lyrics by Ruth Duck

Tune: Be Now My Vision

When we are tempted to barter our souls,
trading the truth for power to control,
teach us to worship and praise only you,
seeking your will in the work that we do.

When we have struggled and searched through the night,
sorting and sifting the wrong from the right,
Savior, surround us with circles of care,
angels of healing, of hope, and of prayer.

***Benediction**

***Sending Song (on next page)**

...forming a circle (not holding hands)

***Parting Music**

...as we greet one another

Today Following Worship:

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

11 am | Adult Forum

Keyboard, handbells,
and/or Orff instruments

Go now in peace, go now in peace, may the love of

God sur-round you ev-ery-where, ev-ery-where you may go.

Fine

PRAYER CORNER

*With Wendy Staberg, prayers for healing and comfort for Dave Staberg's sister, **Chrissy**. She had two successful surgeries for cancerous areas.

*As we publicize our opening for a **Youth Coordinator**, we hope for strong applicants!

*With Betsy Runke on the 1-year anniversary of her brother-in-law's death - may his loved ones experience peace as they learn to live with this grief.

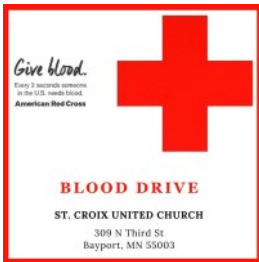
*For the **Ukrainians**, approaching 4 years under siege and defending themselves in an unjust war. May warfare end and life resume.

*For Kathy Lonetree Whiterabbit's brother, **Jacob**, as he heals from surgery and waits for a kidney donation. Prayers for his wife, **Linda**, as she navigates caregiving and decision-making.



Easter Flower Orders are DUE

Please get your orders turned in
—orders will be placed on Tuesday morning!



Blood Drive | **Wednesday, Feb. 25th** | 9 am - 3 pm

Please call 1-800-RED CROSS or visit RedCrossBlood.org and enter "Bayport" to schedule an appointment.

SEVERE BLOOD SHORTAGE: There is a severe blood shortage as requests from hospitals exceed the available supply of blood.

We have 6 openings!

Connecting with the Word

a weekly study of biblical and contemporary texts



Wednesdays, 4:30 - 5:30 pm
hybrid format

Connecting with the Word | **Wednesdays, 4:30 pm**

Come explore the biblical and contemporary readings for the coming Sunday. We examine each passage, wonder about its meaning, and discover connections to our own faith journeys.



FREE Community Suppers | **Every Wednesday, 5:30 pm**

Son's Deli caters a free meal, open to the community every Wednesday! Know someone could use a warm meal or some good company? Be sure to invite them! All are welcome!

Questions?

Contact Sue F. at 612-381-4996 or Betsy R. 303-229-5763



Wednesday Lenten Vespers: Stories of Struggle & Growth

Feb. 25 - Mar. 25 | 6:30pm

During Lent, join us as we reflect on our journey in faith. We recognize that, through every painful or difficult struggle, we can grow and rise.



Conversations From the Heart—New day!

Mark your calendars for the 4th **THURSDAY** at 10:30 am and 6:30 pm.



Week at a Glance:

Gentle Tai Chi | Feb. 23, 7 pm | @ Church

Blood Drive | Feb. 25, 9 am—3 pm | @ Church

Gentle Tai Chi | Feb. 25, 10 am | @ Church

Buildings & Grounds Team | Feb. 25, 1 pm | @ Church

Connecting with the Word | Feb. 25, 4:30 pm | @ Church

Free Community Meal | Feb. 25, 5:30 pm | @ Church

Lenten Vespers Service | Feb. 25, 6:30 pm | @ Church

Conversations from the Heart | Feb. 26, 10:30 am | @ Church


Community Collective Planning Team | Feb. 26, 4:30 pm | @ Church

Conversations from the Heart | Feb. 26, 6:30 am | @ Church

Thank you to today's partners: Debi Orff (guest worship accompanist), Heather Kennedy-Bordeaux (choir director), Lori Mildon (flute), Gary Piasecki (usher), Jonah Gromoll (youth usher), Kathy & Bob Iverson (greeters), Sam Gromoll (acolyte), Mary Piasecki (liturgist), St. Croix United Choir (cantors), Sue Favilla (fellowship), Paul Spilseth, Bob Dickie & Mark Stephan (tech team), Jackie Savage (sanctuary organizer), Cindy Baker & Wendy Heurung (children's activity)



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I Want Jesus to Go with Me

African-American spiritual; alt.

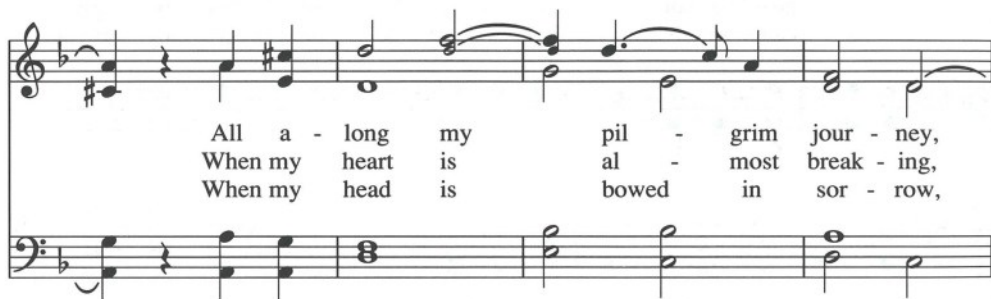
Unison



1 I want Je - sus to go with me;
2 In my tri - als, O com - fort me;
3 When I'm in trou - ble, O stay with me;



I want Je - sus to go with me;
In my tri - als, O com - fort me;
When I'm in trou - ble, O stay with me;



All a - long my pil - grim jour - ney,
When my heart is al - most break - ing,
When my head is bowed in sor - row,



O I want Je - sus to go with me.
O I want Je - sus to com - fort me.
O I want Je - sus to stay with me.

Most spirituals were congregational songs, but such "sorrow songs" as this convey the image of a lone person singing prayerfully to God. The solemnity of this particular spiritual reminds us of the oppression and tragedy with which slavery afflicted so many lives.

Tune: African-American spiritual 8.8.8.9.
Harm. J. Jefferson Cleveland
and Verolga Nix, 1981