

So often we sit side by side, week after week in the pews—or on YouTube & Zoom—without truly getting to know one another. After a year of isolation made harder by political divisiveness and social unrest, our society is desperately in need of spaces for connection and conversation. We know that change, growth, and healing can only come through curiosity, empathy, and courage. In this event, we hope to move beyond small talk to practice curiosity, listening, and connection.¹



Today we will worshiping God through Holy Communion, reconnecting with one another (including a recognition of those celebrating birthdays in September). In addition, we will welcome Pastoral Intern Christina Schoenwetter as she begins her time with Memorial, and celebrate Frances Mozer's new ministry in our midst!

So... it is a good time to ask: Where Are You From?

Those who bless and receive communion at home, please prepare a slice or roll of bread, a corn tortilla, Naan, or rice cake and a cup of juice — perhaps grape or cranberry — or wine, with or without alcohol and bring the elements you have prepared for yourselves to our online service.²

Guide to the bulletin:

An asterisk () indicates that those gathered are invited to rise in body and/or spirit*

*Text printed in **BOLD** in the bulletin indicates a congregational response.*

- **If you are worshipping in the sanctuary** for the health and safety of all at this time, **WE ASK YOU NOT TO SPEAK OUT LOUD or SING**. Yes, singing is a part of the service we love dearly—and we await the day we can do so again!
- *If you are joining us on Zoom or YouTube, while your microphone will be muted – you can still read aloud and sing at home!*

¹ Adapted from a prayer by Rev. Sarah Are | A Sanctified Art LLC | sanctifiedart.org.

² Tirabassi, Maren. "Holy Communion Liturgy for September 5, 2021." Gifts in Open Hands, August 26, 2021. <https://giftsinopenhands.wordpress.com/2021/08/26/holy-communion-liturgy-for-september-5-2021-2/>.

GATHERING TOGETHER

Welcome and Announcements

Musical Meditation

How Can I Keep from Singing

arr. by Richard Walters

***Call to Worship³**

One: We are from north and south.

All: We are from cozy apartments and expansive homes.

One: We are from this city and from others far away.

All: We are from big families and dinners made for one.

One: We are from stages of grief and stages of love.

All: We are from hot summers and cold winters.

One: We are from kitchens with passed down recipes,
and microwave dinners.

All: We are from the dust of the earth and the stars of the sky.

One: We are from a lot of places, but today we are here.

All: Today we are together.

One: Holy God, gather us in.

***Prayer of Confession**

When people heard that Jesus was from Nazareth, they asked, “Can anything good come from Nazareth?” We confess, God of beginnings, that we have asked the same question. Can anything good come from that side of town?

From a school with poor test scores?

From a criminal history?

From the opposite political party?

From a history of addiction?

From a faith with doubt?

From a church with faults?

Holy God, forgive us for doubting that you are in all things at all times. Open our eyes to see your goodness, not as something that resides here or there, but as the expansive grace that it is. Can anything good come from there? Yes. Always yes. Amen.

³ Adapted from a prayer by Rev. Sarah Are | A Sanctified Art LLC | sanctifiedart.org.

***Words of forgiveness**

HEARING THE WORD

First Bible Reading

James 3:1-12

Special Music

Amazing Grace

arr. by Patricia Sanders Cota

The Good News

Mark 8:27-38

Time with Children

Rebecca Malke

Reflection

I've Been Meaning to Ask: Where Are You From?

Pastor Kris

SHARING OUR LIVES

Call to Prayer

Quiet Prayer Response

Marc Jordan

Prayers of the People

During our blended worship service, Pastor Kris will be collecting prayers both on prayer cards and via text (608-571-5870). During the week you are encouraged to email your prayer requests to the church office at memorialucc@gmail.com. Emailed prayers will be added to Memorial's prayer chain. If you have prayer requests that you would like to remain private, you may email them to pastorkris@memorialucc.org.

Affirmation of faith

**We believe that goodness can come from the dirt,
That faith can come from doubt, that minds can be changed,
That justice can begin with us,
and that something good *can* come from Nazareth.**

We believe all these things,

**Because we believe that God is more expansive than we have words for—
showing up in the corners of our world so often ignored and denied.**

**We believe that from this place of holy surprise, God invites us forward—
Beckoning hope, bravery, and curiosity from each of us.**

"Come and see," God says. We believe. Help our unbelief as we pray...

Prayer of Jesus

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our

debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.

SHARING A MEAL⁴

Come to God's Extravagant Table—wherever you are.

- *For those who will be receiving the sacrament in church, the elements will be prepared for you, or please bring the elements you have prepared for yourselves if you prefer.*
- *If you are participating in the outdoor Bible Garden service, communion will be brought outside.*
- *Those who are blessing and receiving the sacrament at home, please prepare a slice or small loaf of bread, corn tortilla, or rice cake to share and a cup or small cups of juice — perhaps grape or cranberry — or wine, with or without alcohol.*

Invitation to the Table⁵

Prayer of Remembrance and Consecration

Sharing the Bread and the Cup

Pastor Kris: Receive the bread of heaven in your hands. Honor it.

It is consecrated to perfectly match your need. Receive it.

All: We eat it in hope.

Pastor Kris: You hold the cup of blessing. Honor it. It is consecrated so you become one of the Saints of Communion. Receive this one small sip – deeply.

All: We drink it in joy.

Communion

Gather Us In

Mark Hayes

Prayer of Thanksgiving

In thanksgiving for the meal that heals yesterday and the unexpected grace that empowers tomorrow, we pray...

All: God of creation, you have always been our first home. We give you thanks for being fed through this meal. May this bread and cup remind us of your extravagant welcome for us all. Allow this meal to fill us to the brim so that when we leave this space, we carry bits of you with us. Allow this meal to nourish us in the way only you can. Amen.

⁴ Adapted from Tirabassi, Maren. "Holy Communion Liturgy for September 5, 2021." Gifts in Open Hands, August 26, 2021. <https://giftsinopenhands.wordpress.com/2021/08/26/holy-communion-liturgy-for-september-5-2021-2/>.

⁵ Adapted from a prayer by Rev. Sarah Are | A Sanctified Art LLC | sanctifiedart.org.

GOING OUT TO THE WORLD

Celebrating September Birthdays

Song for Going Out #451

*Be Now My Vision*⁶

verses 1 & 2

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.

Be now my wisdom, and be my true word;
Ever within me, my soul is assured;
Mother and Father, you are both to me,
Now and forever your child I will be.

Benediction

You are invited to stay in the sanctuary through the postlude. Pastor Kris will be offering a time to connect outside of the church building afterwards.

Postlude

Be Thou My Vision

Bethany K. Smith

Memorial UCC's ONE LICENSE for streaming: #A-711042

Worship Leaders:

Jonathan Schroerlucke, Jeff Darwin, Rebecca Malke, Pastoral Intern Christina Schoenwetter, and Pastor Kris

Readers: Lisa Schoenwetter and Jeanne Prueher

Ushers: Jeff Falkner and Jay Johnson

Virtual Usher: Volunteer Needed (can be online or in-person)

Media Room: Jordan Baumgart

Camera Tech: Zac Johnson

Music Video Editor: Michael Bryant

Health Resource Nurse: Frances Mozer, LPN

Fellowship: Volunteer Needed

⁶ Traditional Irish melody; Harmony David Evans, 1927. *New Century Hymnal* #451.

Stay and Connect—OUTSIDE!

Today following worship, you are invited to stay for conversation and refreshments. The Membership Committee will be hosting fellowship outside the church building (weather permitting). Christina Schoenwetter and Frances Mozer will be outside and available to talk after church too. Take a moment to introduce yourself!

Hearing Loop and Listening Devices

For those who have hearing aids, Memorial UCC has a t-coil compatible hearing loop. Listening devices are also available for people who are hard-of-hearing. See an usher if you need assistance.



Giving Options—Ever-Widening Opportunities

If you are giving by cash or check today, you may place your offering in the plate by the sanctuary doors. Checks can also be mailed directly to the church. Indicate in the memo line whether the giving is to Memorial operating costs or help to our community wide nonprofit partners.

If you prefer to give electronically, Memorial UCC offers an opportunity for you to give securely via charge card, debit card, and direct withdrawal donations. Giving through PayPal is fast and secure, and you do not need to have a PayPal account to use the service for making one-time or recurring donations. Visit memorialucc.org and click on the "donate" button in the lower, right-hand corner to make your gift. If you are interested in our monthly automatic withdrawal system, please email John Van Overbeke at jvanoverbe@aol.com and he will get you signed up.

We understand that the pandemic impacts each of us in unique ways. For those that are able please continue your pledge and non-pledge giving.

10 REASONS WHY SUNDAY SCHOOL IS IMPORTANT

1. **Commonality.** Our world is a divided place. Sometimes it's nice to be able to go to a place where people have the same or similar beliefs. A place we're safe to share and express ourselves.
2. **It's fun!** Our teachers work hard so that your child learns the stories, beliefs and values of their faith and they do that in a fun and engaging way.

3. **Friends.** Your child has an opportunity to meet fun, smart and caring kids from schools all over the Madison area.
 4. **Fellowship.** While your child is in class, you get to talk to adults and have an actual adult conversation! That conversation can give you an opportunity to share ideas, concerns and give and take suggestions. Parenting is hard and we all need help sometimes.
 5. **Role models and spiritual mentors.** Our teachers, nursery staff and the congregation as a whole is full of wonderful Christian role models. This also includes YOU as a positive role model. By coming to church, you show them know that it's important.
 6. **Social Justice.** Jesus didn't just sit back and talk, he also moved. He put his words into action. Children learn why it's important to follow Jesus's words and actions and then learn how they can take those messages and make a difference in our world.
 7. **Solid Christian foundation.** Your child will receive a strong foundation in their faith. Children can't grow in Christianity if they don't have a solid ground to start on. Sunday school helps them develop their faith
 8. **All children are welcome.** Children are welcome to come as they are no matter their race, gender, sexual orientation, beliefs, or family structure. They are welcome here.
 9. **Volunteer opportunities.** It helps prepare children for a number of life skills. They can volunteer to read scripture and face their fear of public speaking, they can try out the new tech in church and help adults learn how to use it, they can join committees even church council. Regardless of membership status, our children have a voice in church matters, and we need them!
 10. **Because you're busy!** Nowadays, many of us spend our time driving. We drive to our kids' school, work, soccer practice, dance recitals, piano lessons, playdates... we all need a day and time that consistently gives us rest to refuel and feed our spirit. Make yours Sunday mornings at MUCC.
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