

Around the **TABLE**

**WHAT DOES JESUS
HAVE TO DO WITH US?**



~ Welcome Visitors! ~

We are glad that you chose to join us for worship this morning. We hope that whoever you are, wherever you are on life's journey, you will feel welcome here.

TODAY following service, please stay for our Annual Meeting held in-person and on Zoom. Visitors and friends are welcome to stay and watch as this is a wonderful way to learn about our faith community.

If you are a member who normally worships with us on YouTube, we encourage you to log into Zoom, as you will need to present on Zoom to participate. The same link on Zoom will be used for both worship and the Annual Meeting.

Guide to the bulletin: An asterisk (*) indicates an invitation to rise in body and/or spirit. Text printed in **BOLD** indicates everyone says them together. **NCH** is the New Century Hymnal under your pew chair.

Children: Children are always welcome here. We know youth grow – in the love of God and the love of others – when they have opportunities to worship in community. That is why we are excited to have children of all

ages with us throughout the service on the first Sunday of each month. On other Sundays, children are invited to attend Sunday School following the message for all—though they are still welcome in worship. If the youth in your family would like to stay in worship there are a variety of quiet activities and fidgets the youth (and adults!) can do available by the sanctuary doors. You and/or your children are welcome to get up during the service to select something to do. If you want to have your younger children (ages 0-4) taken care of during the service, we have a nursery available at 9:30 am.

GATHERING TOGETHER

Prelude

Welcome and Community Updates

***Call to Worship¹**

One: Creating God, you made us in the image of your good love.
You know what is in us.

All: We open our hearts to your grace.

One: Loving Jesus, you reach out to us with tender mercy and healing.
You set us free.

All: We open our hearts to your grace.

One: Life-giving Spirit, you fill us with your mercy and power.
You bear us on a journey of grace.

All: We open our hearts to your grace.

***Opening Prayer**

God of Truth, you speak your word and bring us to life. You lay your hand upon us and heal us. You walk with us and show us the way of compassion. We open our hearts to you, to hear your Word, to be shaped by your Word, to be made new by your Word. Bless us, for we are listening. Amen.

***Hymn**

Be Now My Vision

NCH 451 vss 1-2

¹ Adapted from Garnaas-Holmes, Rev. Steve, "Unfolding Light," Jan 28, 2024, <https://unfoldinglight.net/2023/05/01/4th-sunday-after-epiphany/>

HEARING THE WORD

First Bible Reading

Psalm 111

Special Music

Softly and Tenderly

arr. by William Ringham

Second Bible Reading

Mark 1:21-28

Reflection

Around the Table: *What Does Jesus Have to do with Us?*

SHARING OUR LIVES

Call to Prayer

Spirit of the Living God

NCH 283

Spirit of the living God, fall afresh on me;

Spirit of the living God, fall afresh on me.

Melt me, mold me, fill me, use me,

Spirit of the living God, fall afresh on me.

Prayers of the People

During our online worship service, we invite you to type your prayers in the comments section on your screen. Or you can text prayers to Pastor Kris at 608-571-5870. Pastor Kris will collect the petitions and read them during the service. Know that prayers shared this day are public. If you have prayer request you would like to remain private, you may email them to: pastorkris@memorialucc.org

Prayer of Jesus²

For the season of Epiphany, we will be using this prayer written by Parker Palmer. It is inspired by Matt 6:9-13 and Luke 11:2-4

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.

2 Parker Palmer, "Prayers and Meditations for Wartime - 3: Spiritual Literacy in Today's World: Spirituality & Practice," Prayers and Meditations for Wartime - 3 | Spiritual Literacy in Today's World, accessed December 31, 2023, <http://www.spiritualityandpractice.com/practices/wartime.php?id=15807>.

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

Offering: Extravagant Generosity

We respond with our giving and gratitude

Offertory

***Doxology**

*Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;
Praise God, all creatures here below;
Praise God, for all that love has done;
Creator, Christ and Spirit, One. Amen.*

***Prayer of Dedication and Sending³**

Gracious God, we thank you for the mystery that you give yourself to us. You bless us by your grace and your presence, heal us of our demons, and empower us to work with you for the healing of this world. We listen for your Word. Amen.

GOING OUT TO... THE ANNUAL MEETING and the WORLD

****Don't Go! As church leaders set up for the Annual Meeting, this is a good time for a short wellness break:***

- *Get some water or a warm beverage. You are welcome to bring your drink into the sanctuary for the meeting*
- *Take a bio break (i.e., stop at the bathroom)*
- *Do some simple stretches. This is a no judgement zone!*
- *Practice mindfulness, deep breathing, make time for prayer*
- *Stop by the Prayer Station and write down what you are grateful for today (if you are at home, you can comment in the Chat)*

***Postlude**

³ Garnaas-Holmes, Rev. Steve, "Unfolding Light," Jan 28, 2024,
<https://unfoldinglight.net/2023/05/01/4th-sunday-after-epiphany/>

Worship Leaders: Jonathan Schroerlucke (Dir. of Music), Jeff Darwin (Pianist), Betsy Robbins (Bell Choir Dir), Rebecca Malke (Dir of Faith Development), and Pastor Kris

Readers: John Rosch and Terry Hoffman

Ushers: Jacy and Jon Boldebuck

Media Room: Jordan Baumgart

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

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.



Bathrooms: There are two bathrooms near the main entrance of the church. A third Gender Neutral and Accessible bathroom is in the hallway by the nursery. If you need assistance finding the restrooms, an usher will gladly help you!



Giving Options—Ever-Widening Opportunities:

Checks can be mailed directly to the church or dropped off during office hours. Please indicate any special designation in the memo line. You can give securely via PayPal with your credit card, debit card, or direct withdrawals. Giving online through PayPal is fast and secure, and you do not need a PayPal account to make one-time or recurring donations. Visit memorialucc.org and click the "giving" link in the upper right-hand corner or scan the QR code here. If you are interested in monthly automatic withdrawals, please email Cathy Halpin at halpincjo@gmail.com, and she will get you signed up.

Want to Know More About Us? Pastor Kris would be happy to set up a time to chat further. Feel free to contact her at pastorkris@memorialucc.org. You don't need to be a formal member to get involved here. There is a lot of information on our website at www.memorialucc.org. You can also follow us on Facebook (@FitchburgMemorialUCC), Twitter (@MemUCC), or join our Facebook group Memorial UCC: Ever-Widening Circles.

FAITH and WELLNESS RETREAT at Memorial UCC



Saturday, February 10, 9 am - noon. We are excited to welcome the Rev Dr Scott Stoner to Memorial. Scott will be leading us through a morning that will help you restore, renew

and re-energize your spiritual, emotional, relational, and physical wellness. Each participant will take the Living Compass Self-Assessment. With this assessment each person will receive the tools to create their personal "map" for growth and change. Participants will also be introduced to a variety of spiritual practices. A creative balance of fun and education is the key to helping people discover and rediscover the abundant life that God desires for them and it starts here with this mini retreat. Invite others—family, friends, community connections—to participate in this FREE retreat! Sign up in the narthex niche or call the church office to register.

DONATION ENVELOPES HAVE ARRIVED!

In an effort to be green and not destroy hundreds of unclaimed envelopes, this year we have ordered a smaller number of two types of envelopes. You will find them in the narthex with hints about which of the two types of sets to choose: if you give by electronic transfer directly from your bank account or from another entity (i.e. Vanguard, trust, required minimum distribution), or you give annually, choose the set with only the special giving envelopes. If you give monthly, quarterly, or cash in the offering plate, choose the monthly + special giving envelopes.

ANNUAL FUND DRIVE: FOUNDATION FOR BLACK WOMEN'S WELLNESS

It's already year 4 of our 5-year commitment to the Foundation for Black Women's Wellness! For those of you who are newer to our community, back in 2020, Memorial UCC committed to raising at least \$10,000 per year over 5 years for a group called The Foundation for Black Women's Wellness. We chose the Foundation for Black Women's Wellness because they work to change women's lives in our community through empowerment and health education. We focus our fundraising efforts yearly during the season of Epiphany in recognition of the gifts given to Jesus by the Magi. You can send a check to Memorial UCC with "Black Women's Wellness" in the memo line or you can donate online through Memorial's PayPal account, selecting the option for Black Women's Wellness.
