



EVERYTHING [IN] BETWEEN

rest & growth

~ Welcome Visitors! ~

**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 next to 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. Children may participate in activities in the Sunday School room that begin after the Message for All. If 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. There is also a [Prayer Ground](#) set up at the front of the sanctuary. There are several quiet activities prepared for children. We know many of us need to wiggle a bit to be comfortable. Kids do too!!! Adults are welcome to sit in this area as well! #ChildofGod. 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**

***Grace Greater than Our Sin***

Larry Shackley

### **Welcome and Community Connections**

**\*Opening Song**

***In the Bulb There is a Flower***

NCH 433 vss 1 & 2

**\*Call to Worship<sup>1</sup>**

**One:** Worship is a place to rest.

**All: We breathe deeply here.**

**One:** We still our aching bones.

**All: We sit in the quiet.**

**One:** We surround ourselves with music.

**All: Worship is a place to rest.**

**One:** Worship is a place to grow.

**All: We listen for God's word.**

**One:** We invite it to challenge us.

**All: We lean in with curiosity.**

**One:** We ask questions.

**All: Worship is a place to grow.**

**One:** So come into this space. Come rest and grow here.

**All: For where two or more are gathered, God is always there.**

**One:** Let us worship our gracious God.

**\*Call to Confession**

**\* Prayer of Confession**

**One:** Holy God, there are days when we fail to rest.

**All: We stretch ourselves too thin. We say "yes" to every invitation.**

**We run a million miles a minute. We ignore your command to rest.**

**One:** There are also days when we fail to act.

**All: We wait for someone else. We take the easy road.**

**We find excuses and justify our inaction.**

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<sup>1</sup> Liturgy adapted from a prayer by Sarah Are | A Sanctified Art LLC | sanctifiedart.org

**One:** God, forgive our imbalance.

**All:** Remind us that birds rest, and they also fly.

**Show us how to do the same. Amen.**

**\* Words of Forgiveness**

**Pastor Kris:** Family of faith, I have good news! Our God does not keep score. Our God does not hold grudges. Our God does not assume the worst about us. No, our God offers grace, and endless second chances, and boundless love. So join me in proclaiming the good news of the gospel:

**All:** God's grace is deeper than the ocean. God's love is wider than the sky. We are seen. We are claimed. We are forgiven. May this realization change and inspire us. Thanks be to God! Amen.

**\*Hymn**

*In the Bulb There is a Flower*

NCH 433 vs 3

**HEARING THE WORD**

**The Good News**

**Luke 13:6-9**

**Special Music**

*The King of Love*

arr. Douglas Mears

**Message for All**

**Prayer of Jesus<sup>2</sup>**

**Holy One, our only Home, blessed be your name,  
May your day dawn, your will be done, here, as in heaven.  
Feed us today, and forgive us as we forgive each other.  
Do not forsake us at the test, but deliver us from evil.  
For the glory, the power, and the mercy are yours, now and  
forever. Amen.**

*After the Message for All, children are invited to participate in Sunday School, sit by their family in the sanctuary, or at the Prayer Ground*

**Reflection**

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<sup>2</sup> Benedictine Women of Madison, Holy Wisdom Monastery, Madison, Wisconsin, 2007

## SHARING OUR LIVES

### Call to Prayer

#### 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 608-438-6307.. She 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](mailto:pastorkris@memorialucc.org) and/or [pastorpeter@memorialucc.org](mailto:pastorpeter@memorialucc.org)*

#### Offering: Extravagant Generosity

*Today's giving opportunity supports the United Church of Christ's **One Great Hour of Sharing**. One Great Hour of Sharing® is one of four special mission offerings of the United Church of Christ. This Lenten Offering supports the disaster, refugee, and development ministries of the United Church of Christ within Wider Church Ministries.*

#### Offertory

#### *Hymn of Promise*

John Carter

#### \*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 Thanksgiving and Dedication<sup>3</sup>

**Dear God, take these offerings of treasure, and our lives, to use for your purposes in the world. Amen**

## GOING OUT TO THE WORLD

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<sup>3</sup> *Cut Down: Service Prayers for the Third Sunday in Lent* was written by the Rev. Ruth Garwood, a transitional pastor in the Heartland Conference, a certified facilitator of Sacred Conversations to End Racism, and a certified InterPlay leader.

**\*Affirmation of Faith**

We believe in a God who loves and tends to us like a gardener.  
We believe that like the trees,  
some seasons are for growth, and some seasons are for rest.  
Some days require pruning, and some require planting.  
Fortunately, we believe that our green-thumbed God sees us and  
cultivates the sweetest fruit.

So may we plant roots, reach for the sky,  
grow where we can, and rest when we need,  
for we believe there is holiness in the pruning and in the planting.  
And we do not grow alone. Thanks be to God, amen.

**\*Song for Going Out**      *Sent Forth by God's Blessing*      NCH 76

**\*Benediction**

**\*Postlude**      *Grace Greater than Our Sin*      Larry Shackley

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**Worship Leaders:** Jonathan Schroerlucke (Dir. of Music), Jeff Darwin (Pianist), Betsy Robbins (Bell Choir Dir.), Pastor Kris Gorton, and Pastor Peter Morris

**Readers:** Barb Gallogly-Turner and Terry Hoffman

**Ushers:** Roger Elver and Robin Fick

**Media Room:** Jordan Baumgart

**Fellowship:** Potluck hosted by Amy Boutelle

Memorial UCC uses photographs and video for social media communication with our members and friends. If someone does not wish to be photographed or in a video, ushers will help them find a seat out of camera view.

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](http://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](mailto:halpincjo@gmail.com), and she will get you signed up.

**Want to Know More About Us?** Co-pastors Kris and Peter would be happy to set up a time to chat further. Feel free to contact either of them at [pastorkris@memorialucc.org](mailto:pastorkris@memorialucc.org) or [pastorpeter@memorialucc.org](mailto:pastorpeter@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](http://www.memorialucc.org). You can also follow us on Facebook (@FitchburgMemorialUCC), Twitter (@MemUCC), or join our Facebook group Memorial UCC: Ever-Widening Circles.



**BE THE LIGHT**

**One Great Hour of Sharing (OGHS)** is a vital special mission offering of the United Church of Christ. It connects you to disaster relief, refugee assistance, and development efforts around the globe. When disasters strike, or when individuals are displaced due to violence or poverty, OGHS ensures immediate response and ongoing recovery.

Through your support, OGHS funds comprehensive development programs in areas such as healthcare, education, agriculture, food security, microfinancing, and women's empowerment. By partnering with Global Ministries and international response networks, OGHS maximizes its impact. Your contributions help meet urgent needs while addressing the root causes of vulnerability, ensuring long-term, sustainable solutions for affected communities.

### **EVENING OF MUSIC**

Join us for this year's Evening of Music, **Saturday, March 29 at 5pm!** Performers and volunteers, please click [this link](#) to sign up (check the bottom of the spreadsheet and click the appropriate tab). If you have any questions, please email [kelly.jetzer@gmail.com](mailto:kelly.jetzer@gmail.com).





## LENT 2025: EVERYTHING [IN] BETWEEN

Meeting God in the midst of extremes

### **Soup, Supper, and Stories**

**Wednesdays, 6-8 pm, March 12-April 9**

**Enjoy homemade vegetable soup** as Pastor Peter & Pastor Kris host our midweek gatherings. Near the end of the meal we will make time to discuss Sunday's Bible reading or the weekly Lenten theme. This is a drop-in, open *conversation, come when you can, bring the kids, invite friends, & stay as long you want Connection Series!*

**Palm Sunday - April 13**

*shouting & silence*

**Maundy Thursday, 6-8 pm - April 17**

*power & humility*

Soup, Supper, and Stories moves to Thursday during Holy Week as we retell the story of Jesus's final meal with his friends. After dinner we will gather for a brief service to remember Jesus's Passion

**Easter - April 20**

*grief & hope*

