



Established 1851  
Madison, Wisconsin

**September 10, 2017**

The Twenty-Third Sunday in Ordinary Time  
**Gathering Sunday– Blessing of the Backpacks**  
**10:00 am Worship**



During a time of silent retreat this past year, the Beatles lyric “you say goodbye, and I say hello” was on my mind. Today, we say “goodbye” to each other, to what was, to God’s movement in our lives over these past 15 years. Yet we also say “hello” to a future that God is preparing for all of us! For you see, God is not done with us yet: there is more gathering, growing, and going left for each one of us. And in the end, as the Apostle Paul says, “love never ends” — we will always be a Community Centered in Christ.  
Thanks be to God for all that is, has been, and will be in all of our lives!  
~Pastor Glen

### **The Prelude—CPC Worship Team**

We invite you to personally prepare for worship during the Prelude.  
Please respect the quiet atmosphere of the Sanctuary during this time

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***A Community Centered in Christ:  
gathering in love, growing by grace, going forth to serve.***

## *We Gather in Love*

Welcome and News of the Church

### \*The Call to Worship

~from Isaiah 60: 1-5b

Arise, shine; for your light has come:

and the glory of the Lord has risen upon you!

**For darkness shall cover the earth, and thick darkness the peoples;**

but the Lord will arise upon you, and his glory will appear over you.

**Nations shall come to your light;**

**and rulers to the brightness of your dawn.**

Lift up your eyes and look around;

they all gather together, they come to you;

**your sons shall come from far away,**

**and your daughters shall be carried on their nurses' arms.**

**Then you shall see and be radiant; your heart shall thrill and rejoice!**

### \*Singing Praise to God

*Praise Ye the Lord, the Almighty* (Lobe den Herren)

Hymnal No. 482

*Oceans* (Where Feet May Fail)

Crocker, Houston, Lighthelm

### The Prayer of Confession

**God, you know all too well that none of us is perfect;**

**all of us are in need of your grace. There are ill-advised moments**

**when we send e-mails of irritation at 5am when we should not.**

**There are moments when we feel disrespected and forget that**

**we are your delight. There are times when anger overwhelms us**

**and we act like children - stomping out of meetings in a huff.**

**We forget too often that you have claimed us, that we are yours.**

**Change our stony hearts into hearts of flesh; help our eyes to see others**

**as you see them—flawed, yet beloved; strengthen our self-control**

**before we make decisions in haste. Open us to more deeply receive**

**your love, your grace, your hope. Amen.**

### Our Silent Confession and Our Silent Confession

### The Assurance of Forgiveness

Friends, believe the good news of the Gospel.

**In Jesus Christ, we are forgiven.**

### A Moment with the Children

*Packing Up for the Journey*

*Children are invited to come forward to hear the Message*

### The Blessing of the Backpacks

*All are invited to come forward with backpacks, bookbags and briefcases!*

**Welcome-  
We are glad YOU  
are here!**



A Hearing Loop is installed and available. Switch your hearing aid to "T-Cell". Please ask an Usher if you need assistance.

Before worship, please silence cell phones and other electronic devices.

\*Please stand as you are able.

Congregational spoken responses appear in **bold type**.

Hymns and sung responses will be found in the **BLUE HYMNAL** or on the screen.

**Please join us —**

after Worship today for our **All-Church Fall Picnic—** in the courtyard in front of the church.

Whether you are a long-time member, or new to us, we'd like to get to know you!



### A Time for Birth

**To everything there is a season and a time for every purpose under heaven.**

There is a movement to this universe, a flow, a becoming.

The night sky tonight will not be exactly the same night sky as yesterday.

The interstellar clouds swirl and meander around each other like a river through a canyon—newness around each bend—the river changing, the canyon becoming, new stars forming.

Our lives meander and crash through the stardust and take on glory—becoming new stars, newness around each bend.

There is a movement to this life, a flow, a becoming, and all flesh shall see it together.

~Susan Palo Cherwien

\*Sharing the Peace of Christ

The Peace of Christ be with you all. **And also with you.**

\*The Doxology

**Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;  
Praise God, all creatures here below;  
Praise God above, ye heavenly host;  
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.**

### *We Grow by Grace*

A Reading from Scripture Isaiah 2: 3b-5 Pew Bible, page 550

An Anthem *Climb to the Top of the Highest Mountain* Carolyn Jennings

*Climb to the top of the highest mountain, joyous tidings proclaim to the world!  
Lift up your voice, shout the good news: Behold, your Lord comes to you!  
He will feed his flock like a shepherd, he will carry the lambs in his arms,  
He will ever keep them safe from harm. Behold, your Lord comes to you!  
He, who made the stars in the heaven, He, who fashioned the earth  
and the sea, from time eternal, He was Alpha and Omega, He.  
He will come in power and glory, he will rule with mercy and truth.  
Hope of the nations, Light of the world.  
He will love the little children, he will hold them in his arms.  
Love him and trust him as a little child, Behold, your Lord comes to you!  
~adapted from Isaiah 40*

A Reading from Scripture John 1: 14-18 Pew Bible, page 862

Reflection *What are We Thankful For?*

A Reading from Scripture John 1:35-42 Pew Bible, page 862

Reflection *How has God Transformed Us?*

The Invitation for Giving

Musical Offering *The Blessing* Brendan Graham and David Downes

*This is my prayer for you, there for you, ever true.  
Each, every day for you, in everything you do  
And when the day is done, and night falls on you,  
I bless you, and you bless me too.*

A Reading from Scripture Ephesians 4: 4-6 Pew Bible, page 951

Reflection *Saying Goodbye and Hello*

