

July 2, 2023
"ORDINARY" TIME

Greeting

Welcome Statement (Printed on the bulletin insert)

Prelude and Bringing in the Light

* **Call to Worship** Adapted from Psalm 106

Leader: Give thanks to the LORD, for he is good;
his love endures forever. We have sinned, even as our ancestors did;
we have done wrong and acted wickedly.

People: When our ancestors were in Egypt,
they gave no thought to your miracles;
they did not remember your many kindnesses,
and they rebelled by the sea, the Red Sea

All: Yet God saved them for God's name's sake,
to make God's mighty power known.

* **1st Hymn** *Lift Every Voice and Sing* (NCH# 593)

* **Prayer (Unison)**

Many times God has delivered your people but they were bent on rebellion and they wasted away in their sin.
Yet God took note of their distress when he heard their cry;
for their sake God remembered God's covenant and out of God's great love God relented. Save us, LORD our God, and gather us from the nations, that we may give thanks to your holy name and glory in your praise. Praise be to the LORD, the God of Israel, from everlasting to everlasting. Let all the people say, "Amen!"

* **Assurance:** *We have all sinned but hear the words of the Apostle Paul - ... I am convinced that nothing can ever separate us from God's love. Neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither our fears for today nor our worries about tomorrow – not even the powers of hell can separate us from God's love. No power in the sky above or in the*

earth below – indeed, nothing in all creation will ever be able to separate us from the love of God that is revealed in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Praise Be To God!

Sung Response - Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Ghost; as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen. Amen.

Announcements

Offering Invitation **Matthew 6:28-30**

Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they neither toil nor spin, yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not clothed like one of these. But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which is alive today and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will he not much more clothe you?

Offertory

• **Sung Response** *Praise God from whom all blessings flow...*

• **Gratitude Prayer (Unison)**

Open our hearts, Loving God, to receive all you have to give us; and then open our hands to give it all away. Shape us into a generous people. Teach us to live *by* your grace and *for* those you love we pray, in Jesus' name. Amen.

Kid's Time

Video

Voices of Freedom

1st Scripture Reading

1 John 4:7-21

2nd Scripture Reading

Matthew 22:34-40

Sermon "because I told you so..."

Prayers of the people and the Lord's Prayer

* **Closing Hymn** *How Beautiful, Our Spacious Skies* (NCH#594)

* **Benediction & Postlude**

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Liturgists: Tamara Straub

Radio Broadcast Sponsor: Cliff & Jan Lawton – in memory of their loving son Russell Lawton

If you would like to sponsor a radio broadcast call the church office at 608-643-8387 to check on available dates. Cost is now at \$90.00/week. Your support of this important ministry is much appreciated.

Address Changes—If your phone number, mailing or email address changes please send the new address to the church office so we can keep our records up to date.

Questions? Concerns? Perplexed? Thirsty for some good coffee? Give a call and we'll find a table at a coffee shop where we can talk for a while.
Pastor Brad

Our Pride Coffee Sale continues. First Church and John Joseph Coffee are collaborating on a fund raising effort on behalf of community organizations creating safe spaces for LGBTQ+ youth. Check out the table in the foyer and buy a bag (or two).

Drink Good, Do Good.

First UCC Welcome Statement:

“Love God with all your heart. Love your neighbor as yourself.”

Jesus

First United Church of Christ is an Open and Affirming Congregation. We strive to foster loving and caring relationships in our church and community, and so we welcome and value all people—without regard to sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, race, or faith background. Anyone who covenants with us to “do justice, love kindness and walk humbly” in the way of Jesus is invited to share in every aspect of our life together. No matter who you are or where you are on life’s journey, you are welcome here at First United Church of Christ —Sauk City.

From our Stock the Schools campaign—suggested donations for July: *Food items:* Individual Packages of Applesauce, *Personal items:* STURDY Backpacks with working zippers. Please drop your donations

off in the red tote outside the educational doors during office hours (Monday—Friday, 8am–Noon) or inside during Sunday worship. Thanks for your help.

Our Christian Fellowship group will be hosting a coffee and abbreviated pie social on Sunday July 23rd. We would be very grateful for any pies/slices or whipped toppings you would care to donate. If you have any questions please contact any Member of our Christian Fellowship group. Thank you!

1 John 4:7-21 God Is Love

Beloved, let us love one another, because love is from God; everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. Whoever does not love does not know God, for God is love. God’s love was revealed among us in this way: God sent his only Son into the world so that we might live through him. In this is love, not that we loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the atoning sacrifice for our sins. Beloved, since God loved us so much, we also ought to love one another. No one has ever seen God; if we love one another, God lives in us, and his love is perfected in us.

By this we know that we abide in him and he in us, because he has given us of his Spirit. And we have seen and do testify that the Father has sent his Son as the Saviour of the world. God abides in those who confess that Jesus is the Son of God, and they abide in God. So we have known and believe the love that God has for us.

God is love, and those who abide in love abide in God, and God abides in them. Love has been perfected among us in this: that we may have boldness on the day of judgement, because as he is, so are we in this world. There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear; for fear has to do with punishment, and whoever fears has not reached perfection in love. We love because he first loved us. Those who say, ‘I love God’, and hate their brothers or sisters, are liars; for those who do not love a brother or sister whom they have seen, cannot love God

whom they have not seen. The commandment we have from him is this: those who love God must love their brothers and sisters also.

Matthew 22:34-40 The Greatest Commandment

When the Pharisees heard that he had silenced the Sadducees, they gathered together, and one of them, a lawyer, asked him a question to test him. ‘Teacher, which commandment in the law is the greatest?’ He said to him, ‘ “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.” This is the greatest and first commandment. And a second is like it: “You shall love your neighbour as yourself.” On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.’

Please pick up a “For the Love of Creation” card in the foyer this morning to send your personal message to the Environmental Protection Agency. We are participating in a United Church of Christ effort calling on the EPA to set “the strongest science-based pollution standards as soon as possible.” Fill out a card and leave it on the table. We will take it from there. Thanks.

