

July 30, 2023

"ORDINARY" TIME

Greeting

Welcome Statement *(Printed on the bulletin insert)*

Silence *...a time to breathe...*

Prelude and Bringing in the Light

* **Call to Worship** *adapted from*
Psalm 13

Leader: How long, O Lord? Will you forget me for ever?
How long will you hide your face from me?

People: How long must I bear pain in my soul,
and have sorrow in my heart all day long?
How long shall my enemy be exalted over me?

Leader: Consider and answer me, O Lord my God!
Give light to my eyes, or I will sleep the sleep of death,
and my enemy will say, 'I have prevailed';
my foes will rejoice because I am shaken.

People: But I trusted in your steadfast love;
my heart shall rejoice in your salvation.
I will sing to the Lord,
because he has dealt bountifully with me.

Leader: In this trust, let us worship God

* **1st Hymn** **Prayer Is the Soul's Sincere Desire** (NCH #508)

• **Morning Prayer (Unison)**

To you, Holy One, we confess our broken promises. We have failed to love our neighbor as ourselves. Sometimes we fail to even *see* our neighbors, near or far. By your healing Spirit refresh our hearts and minds this morning. Forgive us and make us whole. Heal us, our families, our neighborhoods, our country. Awaken us to the presence of the Prince of Peace and bring us into harmony with your dream—the renewing of our shattered

world. We pray in hope because we pray in the name of our Redeemer, Jesus Christ. Amen.

* **Assurance:** *(Psalm 103) As far as the east is from the west, so far does God remove our transgressions from us. As a father (or a mother) has compassion for their children, so the Lord has compassion for us."* By God's grace today we are forgiven and made whole, and so we all say:

Thanks be to God!

* **Sung Response**

*Breathe on me breath of God; fill me with life anew
That I may love the way you love, and do what you would do.*

Announcements & Sunday School Video

Offering

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

1st Scripture Reading **Romans 8:26-39**

2nd Hymn *Eternal Spirit of the Living Christ* (NCH #520)

2nd Scripture Reading **Matthew 13:31-33, 44-52**

Sermon

Prayers of the people and the Lord's Prayer

Closing Hymn *You Are the Seed* (NCH #528)

* **Benediction**

Postlude

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Liturgists: Peggy Ganser

Radio Sponsor: Tamara Straub in memory of Timothy Straub

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.

The Communion table at this church is open to everybody—whether you believe, want to believe or can't believe as we do you are welcome to your share the bread and juice at Jesus' table. Whoever you are, whatever brought you here, however you identify, whoever you love, whatever your circumstances, whether you are hungry or just curious, Jesus himself invites you to this table.

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. (608) 669—2926
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.

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.

First UCC Welcome Statement:

“Accept one another, just as Christ accepted you...” (Romans 15:7)

First United Church of Christ—Sauk City is an Open and Affirming congregation. We have witnessed the inclusive love of God in Jesus and we seek to be an expression of that love. We welcome all into our covenant to “do justice, to love kindness and to walk humbly” in the way of Jesus—whoever you are, whatever brought you here, however you identify, whoever you love, whatever your circumstances. Every part of you is precious to God, and all of who you are is welcome here at First United Church of Christ.

First Scripture Reading: Romans 8:26-39

Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we ought, but that very Spirit intercedes with sighs too deep for words. And God, who searches the heart, knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God...

What then are we to say about these things? If God is for us, who is against us? He who did not withhold his own Son, but gave him up for all of us, will he not with him also give us everything else? Who will bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies. Who is to condemn? It is Christ Jesus, who died, yes, who was raised, who is at the right hand of God, who indeed intercedes for us. Who will separate us from the love of Christ? Will hardship, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?... No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Second Scripture Reading: Matthew 13:31-33, 44-52

He put before them another parable: 'The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed that someone took and sowed in his field; it is the smallest of all the seeds, but when it has grown it is the greatest of shrubs and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and make nests in its branches.'

He told them another parable: 'The kingdom of heaven is like yeast that a woman took and mixed in with three measures of flour until all of it was leavened.'

'The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which someone found and hid; then in his joy he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field.'

'Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant in search of fine pearls; on finding one pearl of great value, he went and sold all that he had and bought it.'

'Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a net that was thrown into the sea and caught fish of every kind; when it was full, they drew it ashore, sat down, and put the good into baskets but threw out the bad. So it will be at the end of the age. The angels will come out and separate the evil from the righteous and throw them into the furnace of fire, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.'

'Have you understood all this?' They answered, 'Yes.' And he said to them, 'Therefore every scribe who has been trained for the kingdom of heaven is like the master of a household who brings out of his treasure what is new and what is old.'