

It's August 1, 2021: the 10th Sunday after Pentecost.

Good morning! On behalf of our family of faith at Community United Church of Christ, Medford, WI, welcome to this time of worship! No matter who you are or where you are on your life's journey, you are welcome here. A special welcome to those who are with us on Facebook "Live" and those who are worshipping as you watch the recorded service on our website! Welcome to my cousin, Steve Strasman, who will lead the music today. As we share the Sacrament of Holy Communion...I'd like you to know that, at the UCC, All are welcome to share in the Sacrament.

Today, after worship, there will be time of fellowship! Please stay awhile.

Let's begin with this **Call to Worship**:

One: Morning glories... **All: Birds chirp their praise;** One: Trees lift their limbs in adoration,
All: Stretching as a prayer to heaven; all creation sings praise. One: The hills echo your love,
All: The lakes and rivers wave in constant praise, One: The sky extends in blue wonder.
All: Everywhere we look One: With eyes open to see,
All: There are morning glories One: Stirring us to praise.

Hymn: "*Light Shine In*" by Paul Mabury and Jacob Sooter

1. Arise, for the Light has come darkness bow down to the risen Son, the risen Son.
Arise, raise your hands and sing to the One to the One.

You are, You are the matchless King who tore down the gates of the enemy.

**Make way, make way for Christ and sing
Let your kingdom come Let your kingdom come**

2. Arise, for the battle's won; our hearts bow down to the risen Son, the risen Son.
Arise, raise your hands and sing to the one God, to the one God.

You are, You are the matchless King who tore down the gates of the enemy.

**Make way, make way for Christ and sing
Let your kingdom come Let your kingdom come**

Come let the light shine in	Come let the light shine in
Come let the light shine in	Come let the light shine in
We'll let Your light shine in	We'll let Your light shine in
We'll let Your light shine in	We'll let Your light shine in

Oh, let your kingdom come. Oh, let your kingdom come. Let your Kingdom come!

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This is our Prayer of Confession: Psalm 145:15-16

All: Creator God, the eyes of all look to you, and you give them their food in due season. You open your hand, satisfying the desire of every living thing. We too easily forget that we are your hands. Forgive us for the times we have left the "giving" undone. We pray in the name of Jesus. Amen.

Words of Assurance and Grace: Pastor: God is always ready to hear us and to forgive us. (Pause)
Friends, believe the good news: In Jesus Christ, we are forgiven! **All: Thanks be to God. Amen.**

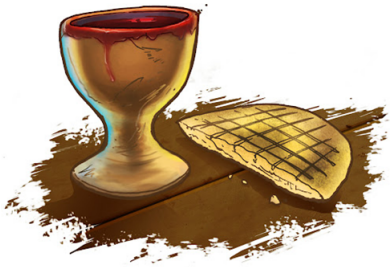
Response: "*Amazing Grace*"

1. Amazing grace! How sweet the sound That saved a wretch like me!
I was lost, but now am found; Was blind, but now I see.

2. 'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear, And grace my fears relieved;
How precious did that grace appear The hour I first believed.

3. Through many dangers, toils and snares, I have already come;
'Tis grace hath brought me safe thus far, And grace will lead me home. **Repeat verse 1.**

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Passing the Peace: After you turn to those near you and offer the words, “Peace be with you,” turn and wave a greeting of peace to others around you... later, call or text someone and continue this “peace passing” throughout this week. **“Peace be with you!”**

Linda Reynolds will be reading the scripture:

This is a reading from the Gospel of **John, chapter 6, verses 24 to 35, from the Common English Bible**

²¹ Then they wanted to take him into the boat, and just then the boat reached the land where they had been heading. ²² The next day the crowd that remained on the other side of the lake realized that only one boat had been there. They knew Jesus hadn't gone with his disciples, but that the disciples had gone alone. ²³ Some boats came from Tiberias, near the place where they had eaten the bread over which the Lord had given thanks. ²⁴ When the crowd saw that neither Jesus nor his disciples were there, they got into the boats and came to Capernaum looking for Jesus. ²⁵ When they found him on the other side of the lake, they asked him, “Rabbi, when did you get here?”

²⁶ Jesus replied, “I assure you that you are looking for me not because you saw miraculous signs but because you ate all the food you wanted. ²⁷ Don't work for the food that doesn't last but for the food that endures for eternal life, which the Human One will give you. God the Father has confirmed him as his agent to give life.”

²⁸ They asked, “What must we do in order to accomplish what God requires?”

²⁹ Jesus replied, “This is what God requires, that you believe in him whom God sent.”

³⁰ They asked, “What miraculous sign will you do, that we can see and believe you? What will you do?”

³¹ Our ancestors ate manna in the wilderness, just as it is written, *He gave them bread from heaven to eat.*”

³² Jesus told them, “I assure you, it wasn't Moses who gave the bread from heaven to you, but my Father gives you the true bread from heaven. ³³ The bread of God is the one who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world.” ³⁴ They said, “Sir, give us this bread all the time!”

³⁵ Jesus replied, “I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never go hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty.

The title of my **Message** today is: “*Satisfaction*”

Please pray with me. God of Grace and giver of this day, you call us to *share in Christ's baptism, to eat at his table and to unite with Jesus in his passion and victory...* (~from the UCC Statement of Faith) Holy God, it is so obvious that we, too, do not get it...any more than the people who followed Jesus up the mountain, to the lakeshore or to the empty tomb. Help us realize that it is you who is in our midst today; it is you who have been with us in our grief; it is you who whispers those prompts to “love one another.” We were foolish to believe that we accomplished OUR plans; that we know best how to feed our hungry bodies and to restore our drooping spirits...when all along, it has been YOU.

We pray in the name of Jesus who is the way...the truth... and the *hunger and thirst* quencher of our souls! Amen

Today's scripture brought to my mind the Rolling Stones song, “Satisfaction.” Thus, the name of this message today. After looking up the lyrics, I found that Mick Jagger woke up in the middle of one night in 1965 and wrote down these words because he was not satisfied with the ways of the world and the ways of his own life.

The verses of today's scripture that Linda just read, follow last week's story, when we looked in on Jesus taking a few loaves of bread and a couple fish and multiplying them in order to satisfy the hunger of over 5000 people! Those same people came to Jesus the next day, looking for another miracle. They were not satisfied with bread and fish...because they did not quite *get it*, and they craved something more.

A couple days ago, my son, Ben, told me that he would have to take his Golden Retriever, Copper, to be “put to sleep” on Friday. The family began saying their “Goodbyes.” No miracle could have wiped away their tears. I joined them early Friday morning, thinking that I could help out a bit, by surprising them with a

tray of assorted donuts, a gallon of milk and enough boxes of tissues for each one of them. The surprise only enlisted weak smiles while they gobbled down their breakfast. We cried on the way to the veterinary clinic and were still wiping our eyes as we drove back to the house.

Just as we were trying to answer all of the kids' questions and wishing it wouldn't have been like this... we learned that God had arranged, in advance, something to distract us from these sad moments: the blessed commotion of an estate sale at the next-door neighbor's house. There were cars on each side of the lake road as far as we could see! People were coming into the neighbor's yard from every direction. Family members were dropping by with their children and walking through the "secret path" in the bushes to the sale.

We all were enlisted to help bring home the items that had been purchased. What a blessing-in-disguise that crowd was: excited people coming and going, having found treasures of all shapes and sizes and experiencing a certain amount of satisfaction at the "good deals" they had found...all because a family decided to move out of WI and chose to leave many of their belongings behind.

As life comes along, knocking the air out of us, and tears streak our faces; as circumstances beyond our control seep into the corners of our human nature and our need to have life turn out as we had always envisioned it to be... Jesus tells us today that bread for our bodies is not all that we need in order to be satisfied. Donuts and estate sale treasures might bring temporary comfort but, the deep down deep love of God, the comfort of God's spirit in our midst is what more than satisfies us.

Will Willimon writes this commentary: "Jesus launches into an ambiguous and far from the obvious explication on something called the *bread of life*. With focus upon bread and food, this most incarnational of Gospels reframes our notion of the spiritual."

We often find metaphors in the words of Jesus. (dictionary.com) To refresh your memory, a metaphor is a figure of speech in which a word or phrase is applied to an object or action to which it is not literally applicable. These are some of the examples:

- "The day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night."
- "I am the way and the truth and the light."
- "The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field."
- "You are the salt of the earth."
- "I am the good shepherd."

We may not totally understand the words that Jesus has spoken but, as we listen to or read the words, we are able to experience something spiritual when we realize how the stories or the words apply to exactly what we have been doing.

We may not totally understand what Jesus means when he says, "I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never go hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty," but we do know that we feel a spiritual connection with Jesus and with one another each time we share the sacrament.

In this morning's Daily Devotional, Vince Amlin wrote this: It turns out that the best gifts are the ones that confuse us, that show up just before we know what to do with them and teach us who we're going to be!

Savor these this beautiful day; breathe in this cool breeze; listen to the birds singing and watch the artwork of the shadows cast by the sun's rays. Give thanks for the blessings that we have received as our many hungers and thirsts have been satisfied and give thanks for the blessings that we have not yet tasted.

May you never wake up in the middle of the night with that song on your mind. ("Satisfaction," that is.)

Morning Prayer: **Take a deep breath...let it out.**

"Beatitudes for This Week" by Maren

Jesus felt the prayers ... sat down to listen to deep cries of the world, this week. Then Jesus taught us, not to hunt for where we fit into receiving a blessing but for whom and how we should bless.

Bless those like Simone Biles and Naomi Osaka who name

the mental impact of spirit on body, changing athletics forever.
Bless comfortless parents of kidnapped children in Nigeria, not returned this week.
Bless Afghans desperate and waiting to be re-homed in safety.
Bless those who hunger in Tigray, Ethiopia.
Bless the mudslide-full of India, those crying and coping because of the Asian cyclone, the European floods, the American wildfires.
Bless those with Covid, with the Delta variant, with no access to vaccines, and all who struggle against the spread of disease.
Bless the weary peace-neederers of Yemen, of Myanmar.
Bless LGBTQ+ people in Ghana who fear persecution, new prison sentences, death, for being themselves.
Bless the Lekie and Weinke family with the loss of their son.
Bless Linda's friends who lost their home in the tornado last week.

Every week, every day, every hour, there are those who need blessing, some far away, some in our own community, some in our own homes. We pray that we will be able to be a blessing to them. Gracious God, it is in trusting you that our spirits are lifted from feeling like we do not have enough of what the world has to offer to a renewed satisfaction with the basics of life around us.

God, help us to recognize that not everyone has the same access to resources. Give us the courage and the discernment to address these inequalities to make sure that everyone has a companion to help them up when they fall, both physically and in spirit. Forgive us, O God, the times that we have been totally convinced that we are in charge. We give thanks for unexpected joys and blessings that have been sent our way in unexpected packaging... for good news, for good friends, for the loving bond of family, the concern and care of those around us. We hold before you, great and gracious God, our needs and our wants...you know them very well.

Let's pray now in the name and in the words of Jesus: Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day, our daily bread, and forgive us our sins, as we forgive those who sin against us. And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory forever. Amen.

Hymn: "Great I Am" by Jared Anderson

1. I want to be close, close to your side So heaven is real and death is, a lie
I want to hear voices of angels above singing as one

**Refrain: Hallelujah, holy, holy God almighty, the great I am
Who is worthy, none beside thee God almighty, the great I am**

2. I want to be near, near to your heart Loving the world and hating the dark
I want to see dry bones living again singing as one **Refrain**

The great I am The mountains shake before you, the demons run in fear
At the mention of the name king of majesty There is no power in hell or any who can stand
Before the power and the presence of the "Great I Am" The great I am, the great I am yeah

Refrain 2x The great I am The great I am The great I am

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The Sacrament of Holy Communion

Invitation: (Pastor) We invite you, though this meal is far more than any of us can understand. We welcome you, whether you are a six-foot away "pod" of one or more God-lovers, or wireless as the Holy Spirit. We want to offer you this good news, whether you long for church or have been damaged by some church-experience in the past. This is Communion. We don't deserve it; we don't define it; we don't own it; but it is the greatest gift we have to give and we want to share it with you.

Prayer of Remembrance and Consecration

Christ, at our table we remember. We remember your “tabling” at Martha’s kitchen and the beach fish-fry at homes of the self-righteous, or the disrespected.

We remember a wedding made more festive and we pray for every human relationship. (pause)
We remember loaves and fish and pray for places where there is no food. (pause)

We remember Passover, when you washed feet, shared gravy with a betrayer, and sang a hymn, and we pray for all who need to learn how to serve or be served, how to turn away from temptation or open up to a song not only vocalized but heart music. (pause)

We remember all tables, from cathedrals to campgrounds --where your children have gathered to eat bread or tortilla, rice cake or cassava, and we lift into your love five-star churches and down-on-their luck holy-diners. (pause)

We join in communion in the remembrance of saints in all times and places, and lift before you those we have loved from the past, our saints who need healing, comfort for loss, guidance in decisions, peace in living, and many others in whom the yeast has not yet risen, though they may feel punched down. (pause) **Christ, yours is the wheat and yours the grape, yours is the leaven and the love.**

Pastor Lift your bread and juice now...God of grace and glory, rest your Spirit on this place of prayer and in-person and online. Shine your blessing on every face, now, every piece of bread and each cup now and whenever food is offered. These are the elements that remind us that you are “the bread of life.” Yours is the kin-dom and it is here and now with us. Amen

Sharing of the Elements

Pastor: The Bread on our tables or in our hands is blessed and broken.

All: Sharing love, we will never be hungry.

Pastor: The Cup on our tables or in our hands is blessed and shared like the overflowing of tears and joy. **All: Even a sip is drinking deeply.**

Prayer of Thanksgiving

We give you thanks, O Christ, for gathering us here for word of life and sacred banquet. As we part from one another with the leftovers of your love, turn our being fed and blessed into holy *takeout*, as we share all we have received, slowly, sweetly, and surely with all of your children. Amen.

Hymn: “What a Beautiful Name”

1. You were the Word at the beginning One with God the Lord Most High
2. Your hidden glory in creation Now revealed in You our Christ

**What a beautiful name it is! What a wonderful name it is! The name of Jesus Christ my King
What a beautiful name it is Nothing compares to this What a beautiful name it is The name of Jesus**

3. You didn't want heaven without us So Jesus, you brought heaven down
My sin was great, your love was greater What could separate us now

**What a wonderful name it is! What a wonderful name it is! The name of Jesus Christ my King
What a wonderful name it is Nothing compares to this
What a wonderful name it is...The name of Jesus**

How sweet is your name, Lord, how good You are Love to sing in the name of the Lord, love to sing for you all? Death could not hold You, the veil tore before you you silenced the boast of sin and grave. The heavens are roaring, the praise of your glory For you are raised to life again.

You have no rival, you have no equal now and forever, our God reigns. Yours is the kingdom, yours is the glory yours is the name, above all names.

**What a powerful name it is! What a powerful name it is! The name of Jesus Christ my King
What a powerful name it is! Nothing can stand against
What a powerful Name it is The name of Jesus.**

3. You have no rival. You have no equal now and forever. Our God reigns.
Yours is the Kingdom, yours is the glory yours is the name, above all names.

What a powerful name it is What a powerful name it is The name of Jesus Christ my King

What a powerful name it is Nothing can stand against

What a powerful Name it is...The name of Jesus

Songwriters: Brooke Ligertwood / Ben Fielding © 2016 Hillsong Music Publishing Australia CCLI Song # 7068424
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Time of Intention and Thanks: We each, as members and friends of this church family, are called to minister to one another and to the world around us. Thank you, to all of you whose various gifts electronically, through the mail and those given in person today have enabled Community United Church of Christ to faithfully serve. **Let us dedicate these gifts: God of mercy and of kindness, help us to be good stewards of all that we have and all that we are. We dedicate our offerings, as we take part in the grace of sharing, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

Benediction: ²⁰⁻²¹ God can do anything, you know—far more than you could ever imagine or guess or request in your wildest dreams! He does it not by pushing us around but by working within us, his Spirit deeply and gently within us. Glory to God in the church! Glory to God in the Messiah, in Jesus! Glory down all the generations! Glory through all millennia! Oh, yes! Ephesians 3:20-21 The Message

This time of worship has ended, let our service continue. Go now in peace and continue to be safe.

Hymn: “*God Be With You*”

**God be with you till we meet again; by His counsels guide, uphold you,
with His sheep securely fold you; God be with you till we meet again.**

Till we meet, till we meet, Till we meet at Jesus’ feet;

Till we meet, till we meet, God be with you till we meet again.

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Thank you, Council Members for set-up, greeting and for turning on Face Book Live; thanks to the Linda for reading scripture and to Steve for sharing music today! Please stay for a while to visit downstairs.

Peace be with you and continue to be safe!

You will find this *service* at 10 am Sundays, “live” on the Community UCC, Medford, WI, Face Book page and later posted on uccmedford.org

Pastor Mary Jo