

Community Presbyterian Church  
open hearted, open minded



**January 7, 2024**

Welcome to worship this morning!

Bulletin Cues: **Bold** indicates congregational response, \* indicates please stand, if able

## WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

### PRELUDE

#### \*CALL TO WORSHIP

There are some days when I need the reminder that I belong to God.

Do you ever feel that way?

**Yes. We do.**

**The world can be a harsh place; we often need that reminder.**

Well then, let us care for one another.

Let us speak the truth we each need to hear.

Church, you belong to God. You are God's beloved.

**Friend, you belong to God. You are God's beloved.**

Let us worship the God who knows our names.

**Let us worship the God who calls us beloved. Amen.**

### OPENING HYMN GTG 401

#### Here in This Place



1 Here in this place the new light is stream-ing; now is the dark-ness  
2 We are the young, our lives are a mys-tery. We are the old who  
3 Here we will take the wine and the wa-ter; here we will take the  
4 Not in the dark of build-ings con-fin-ing, not in some heav-en,



van-ish-ed a-way; see in this space our fears and our dream-ings  
yearn for your face. We have been sung through-out all of his-tory,  
bread of new birth. Here you shall call your sons and your daugh-ters,  
light years a-way: here in this place the new light is shin-ing;



brought here to you in the light of this day.  
called to be light to the whole hu-man race.  
call us a-new to be salt for the earth.  
now is the king-dom, and now is the day.



Gath-er us in, the lost and for - sak - en; gath-er us in, the  
Gath-er us in, the rich and the haugh-ty; gath-er us in, the  
Give us to drink the wine of com - pas - sion; give us to eat the  
Gath-er us in and hold us for - ev - er; gath-er us in and



blind and the lame; call to us now, and we shall a - wak - en;  
proud and the strong; give us a heart, so meek and so low - ly;  
bread that is you; nour-ish us well, and teach us to fash - ion  
make us your own; gath - er us in, all peo - ples to - geth - er,



we shall a - rise at the sound of our name.  
give us the cour - age to en - ter the song.  
lives that are ho - ly and hearts that are true.  
fire of love in our flesh and our bone.

## CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

Our scripture passage for today tells the story of Jesus being baptized. The Gospel of Luke tells us that the sky opened up and the voice of God was heard saying, “You are my Son, whom I love; with whom I am well-pleased” (Luke 3:22).

Friends, I don’t think that’s the only time God has said words like that. If I understand the promise of scripture, then I believe God delights in you. God created you. God loves you with the same passion that we hear God express in today’s scripture.

So trusting that good news,  
trusting that we are beloved,  
let us go to God in prayer.

For we know that the one who listens, listens with love.  
What greater gift exists than that?

Let us pray:

**Loving God,**

**From the very beginning, you breathed life into us and called us good. However, somewhere along the way we replaced “good” with “not enough.” Somewhere along the way we turned the volume up on that phrase and began to doubt our own self-worth. Forgive us, for this is not what you have taught us. For when the world tells us we are not enough, you call us beloved. Show us how to return to that truth. Show us how to let go of our weariness and rest in that good news. Amen.**

Family of faith, God’s grace and understanding is deeper and wider than we could possibly imagine. So say these words of grace with me:

**Our story begins with belovedness.**

**Even when we lose our way,**

**even if we stumble and fall,**

**God never stops breaking through the clouds to claim us.**

**We are known. We are forgiven. We are beloved.**

**Thanks be to God! Amen.**

## LISTENING FOR GOD’S WORD

### PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

Beloved God, Through the pages of scripture, you have sprinkled your love for us like an echoed refrain. Despite its repeated truth, we too often allow that good news to roll off of us like water, barely allowing it to touch us. Make today different. As we read your Word aloud, let the truth of your love for creation seep into our bones. May we hear your echos of “beloved” deep within us and respond with overflowing joy. We are here. We are listening. Amen.

### SCRIPTURE READING

Acts 19:1–7

While Apollos was in Corinth, Paul passed through the interior regions and came to Ephesus, where he found some disciples. He said to them, “Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you became believers?” They replied, “No, we have not even heard that there is a Holy Spirit.” Then he said, “Into what, then, were you baptized?” They answered, “Into John’s baptism.” Paul said, “John baptized with the baptism of repentance, telling the people to believe in the one who was to come after him, that is, in Jesus.” On hearing this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. When Paul had laid his hands on them, the Holy Spirit came upon them, and they spoke in tongues and prophesied, altogether there were about twelve of them.

GOSPEL READING

Luke 3:21-22

Now when all the people were baptized and when Jesus also had been baptized and was praying, the heaven was opened, and the Holy Spirit descended upon him in bodily form like a dove. And a voice came from heaven, "You are my Son, the Beloved; with you I am well pleased."

A new teaching, with authority!

**Thanks be to God.**

SERMON

Pastor Carla

**RESPONDING TO GOD'S GRACE**

\*HYMN OF THE DAY GTG 482      Baptized in Water



1 Bap-tized in wa - ter, sealed by the Spir - it, cleansed by the  
2 Bap-tized in wa - ter, sealed by the Spir - it, dead in the  
3 Bap-tized in wa - ter, sealed by the Spir - it, marked with the



blood of Christ our King; heirs of sal - va - tion, trust - ing the  
tomb with Christ our King; one with his ris - ing, freed and for -  
sign of Christ our King; born of the Spir - it, we are God's



prom - ise, faith - ful - ly now God's prais - es we sing.  
giv - en, thank - ful - ly now God's prais - es we sing.  
chil - dren; joy - ful - ly now God's prais - es we sing.

## AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

**We believe that faith is a journey marked by rituals and rhythms.**

**We come to worship.**

**We confess our sins.**

**We pass the peace.**

**We offer grace.**

**We hear the Word.**

**We baptize children.**

**We break the bread.**

**And we tell the story of a loving God.**

**And through these sacred rituals,**

**we are reminded: we are not alone.**

**God is near, and we have work to do.**

**May this belief shape the rhythm of our lives.**

**Amen.**

## JOYS AND CONCERNS/PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

God, our Savior, **hear our prayer.**

## THE LORD'S PRAYER

**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 debts, as we forgive our debtors;**

**and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.**

**For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory, forever. Amen.**

## SENDING INTO THE WORLD TO LOVE AND SERVE

\*CLOSING HYMN GTG 547

Go, My Children, with My Blessing

*next page*

## \*CHARGE AND BLESSING

Family of faith, as you leave this place,

you go into a weary world—so speak tenderly.

Do the good that is yours to do. Choose connection. Hold onto hope.

And remember that Christ took on flesh for you.

You are God's beloved. So go rejoicing. The world needs it.

**Amen. Thanks be to God!**

## POSTLUDE

1 "Go, my chil-dren, with my bless-ing, nev-er a-lone.  
 2 "Go, my chil-dren, sins for-giv-en, at peace and pure.  
 3 "Go, my chil-dren, fed and nour-ished, clos-er to me.

Wak-ing, sleep-ing, I am with you, you are my own.  
 Here you learned how much I love you, what I can cure.  
 Grow in love and love by serv-ing, joy-ful and free.

In my love's bap-tis-mal riv-er I have made you mine for-  
 Here you heard my dear Son's sto-ry; here you touched him, saw his  
 Here my Spir-it's pow-er filled you; here my ten-der com-fort

ev-er. Go, my chil-dren, with my bless-ing, you are my own."  
 glo-ry. Go, my chil-dren, sins for-giv-en, at peace and pure."  
 stilled you. Go, my chil-dren, fed and nour-ished, joy-ful and free."

## *Beloved*

by Lauren Wright Pittman

Inspired by Luke 3:21-22

Digital painting and collage

Luke's account of Jesus' baptism is brief and vague. He was baptized among "all the people" (Luke 3:21) by an unnamed baptizer, and until he prays, the scene is rather unremarkable. During his prayer, however, an iconic scene unfolds with the heavens opening, the Holy Spirit descending in the form of a dove, and a voice booming from heaven.



As I considered how I might visually respond to this text, it was difficult to imagine this event with a beginner's mind. I've seen lots of imagery of Jesus in the water with clouds breaking open and a dove descending, or Jesus bursting out of water into a beam of light. These images are powerful, but I wasn't sure if creating a similar image would be helpful, or if I'd be offering insight into the text that hadn't already been visually explored.

I began to meditate on what was unspoken and implied in Luke's account, and one moment that stuck out in my imagination was the moment Jesus was underwater. How did Jesus feel when he held his breath and descended into the river?

This image offers a snapshot of Jesus right before he steps into his calling, on the threshold of spectacular affirmation. He is completely suspended, embraced, and upheld by the waters of baptism. The water's surface is choppy. The future is unknown and precarious. His path is a lonely and formidable one, eventually leading to his suffering and death.

Despite what is to come, Jesus reaches toward the surface. Two fish are drawn to the light of his halo, foreshadowing his companionship with fishers and his miraculous feeding of the five thousand. All of creation is leaning into his call.

This is what trusting your belovedness feels like—muscles and bones relieved of gravity's burden, serenity, weightlessness, oneness with creation, and the warmth of God's love permeating every cell of your body and every corner of your soul. —Rev. Lauren Wright Pittman



# Community Presbyterian Church

open hearted, open minded

**Sunday, January 7**

**9:30 am Worship - Onsite and Online**

2:30 pm Building Usage: Labranza de Dios

**Monday, January 8**

9:30 am Mission Prayer Group

**Tuesday, January 9**

12:00 pm Bulletin Information Due

6:30 pm Building & Grounds Committee

7:00 pm Building Use: Mission Aid Network

**Wednesday, January 10**

6:30 am Prayer Group at CPC

**Thursday, January 11**

5:30 pm Building Usage: Labranza de Dios

**Sunday, January 14**

**9:30 am Worship with Communion  
- Onsite and Online**

2:30 pm Building Usage: Labranza de Dios



Judy Leal  
Jane and Ed Burgstaler family,  
especially daughter Jenny  
Connie Holst  
Vera Atkinson's daughter, Teresa  
Shannon Cisewski  
Ron Murray  
Dick and Nancy Massaro  
Nellie Brovold's mother, Jacqueline  
Glenna Muir's sister, Annie  
Mary Alice Richardson

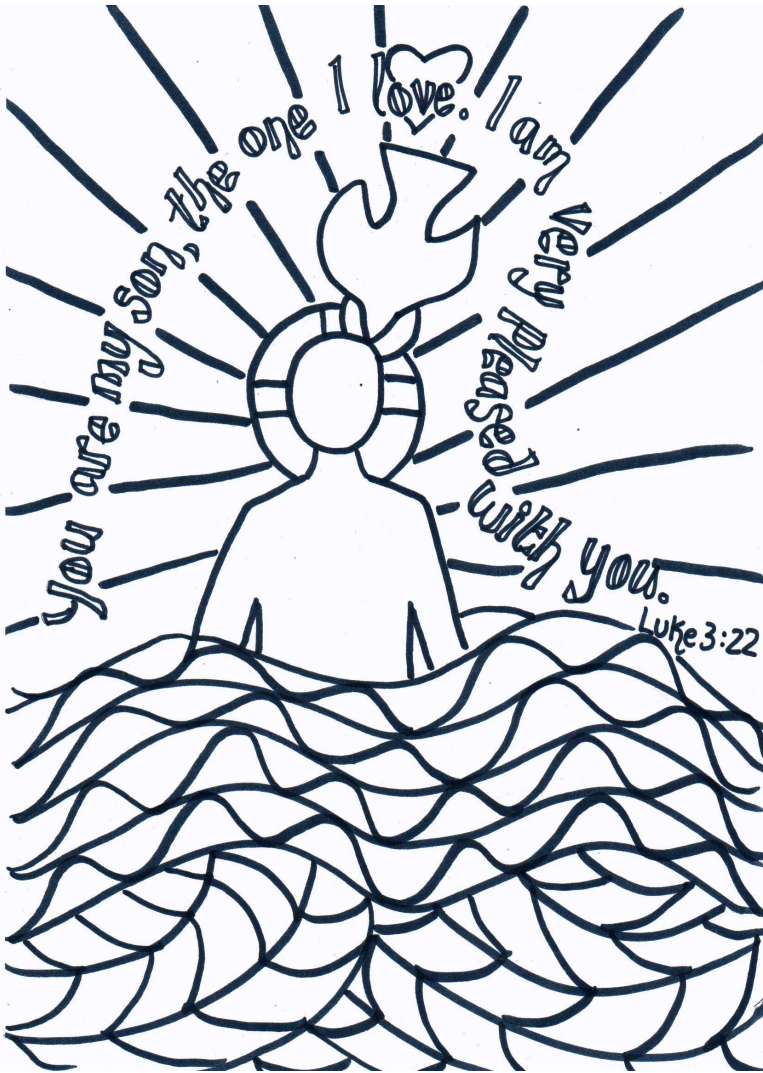
*To be added to the prayer list,  
please contact the office via email:  
office@cpcrochester.org.  
Emergency Pastoral Support:  
Pastor Carla Nelson: 507-254-1254*

## Church Staff

Bridge Pastor	Rev. Carla Nelson
Pianist	Glenna Muir
Custodian	Nancy Sanford
Office Manager	Stephanie Pasch

## Serving in Worship Today

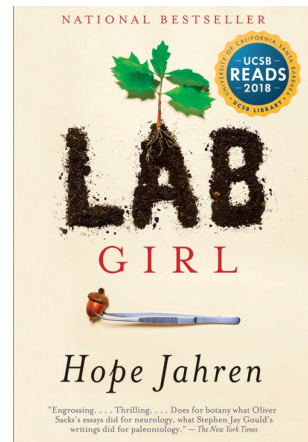
Liturgist	Peggy McCarty
Special Music	Glenna Muir
IT Support	Louis Bouchard



BOOK DISCUSSION  
GROUP 

Join the book discussion group on Sunday, Jan. 21st, after worship to discuss *Lab Girl* by Hope Jahren.

From Goodreads: “*Lab Girl* is a book about work, love, and the mountains that can be moved when those two things come together.”



# ANNUAL MEETING



The **Annual Meeting** of the congregation will be Sunday, **January 28th** after worship.

All are needed to remember the year that has passed and look forward to 2024. The budget will be gone over, in addition to reports for all areas of the congregation.

**Items for the Annual Report** are due to **Stephanie** by **January 16th**.