

**WELCOME
to WORSHIP**
**First Congregational
United Church of Christ**
Menomonie, Wisconsin

Communion Sunday
Fourth Sunday after Epiphany
February 1, 2026

Welcome and Announcements

Prelude/Candle Lighting "Did You Think to Pray"
(W.O. Perkins, arr. M. Bailey) Oxana Khramova

Ringing of the Bell

***Call to Worship** (*Stand if you are able)

One: When we hunger and thirst for God,
All: **God satisfies us.**
One: When we are weak or brokenhearted,
All: **God comforts and heals us.**
One: When we seek to be peacemakers and do justice, and despair of our smallness,
All: **God empowers us. God we thank you; we praise you; we worship you. Alleluia!**

*Opening Prayer (in unison)

Holy Paradox, we do not come grasping for certainty but seeking to make our home in mystery. We release the illusion of divisions – the false borders drawn between spirit and flesh, between sacred and ordinary. Here, in the space between knowing and unknowing, we open ourselves to the presence that lingers in both. We release the need for either/or. We embrace the both/and. Amen.

***Opening Hymn** "Blessed be the Tie That Binds" attached

Readings Kristen Billingsley
Micah 6:1-8; Matthew 5:1-12; Contemporary Reading: *A story about a woman who weaves the world*

Anthem "We Are Singing, for the Lord Is Our Light"
(Zulu traditional song, arr. H.H. Hopson) Chancel Choir

Sermon "Resisting Empire:
Rejecting Dualism, Embracing Paradox" Pastor René Mehlberg

Transitional Hymn "Dona Nobis Pacem" SoF #36

Ministry Moment "There Your Heart Will Be" Deanna Schultz, Music Deacon

Prayers of the People

Offertory

"Father in Heaven, We Do Believe"
(J.R. Crawford, arr. T. Hutchings)

Oxana Khramova

*Doxology

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

SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION

Invitation

Now we set aside the common for an uncommon purpose as we prepare for Holy Communion, the family meal of Christ's people. In this meal, we remember the life, teaching, witness, and death of Jesus. We celebrate his continued life among us. We remind one another that we are called to participate in Jesus' Way of extravagant welcome and service. Come prepared to be blessed. Come because God has food for you. Come because Jesus invites you...just as you are.

Great Thanksgiving

Leader: God be with you.

People: And also with you.

Leader: Lift up your hearts.

People: We lift them up to God.

Leader: Let us give thanks to God.

People: It is right to give God thanks and praise.

Lord's Prayer

Our Creator, 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.

Breaking Bread and Pouring Wine

Leader: Please join me in the words of institution over the bread:

People: When he was among friends, gathered around a table, Jesus took bread and having blessed it, he broke the bread and gave it to his disciples saying, "Take and eat. This is my body which is given for you."

Servers will pass this gluten free bread among you. As you take a piece of bread, hold it until everyone is Served. We will eat the bread together, as a symbol of our unity, a world-wide Christian community.

Distribution Hymn

"Let Us Break Bread Together"

Hymnal #513

Leader: Please join me in the words of institution over the wine:

People: In the same way, Jesus took wine and having given thanks for it, he poured it out and gave the cup to his disciples, saying, "This cup is the new relationship with

God, made possible because of my life and my death. Take this-all of you-to remember me.”

Servers will pass the juice and wine among you. The juice is dark red; the wine is white. Drink the cup as soon as you have been served in recognition of your individual relationship to God.

Distribution Hymn: “Let There Be Peace on Earth” SoF #82

***Prayer of Gratitude (in unison)**

In deep gratitude for this moment, this meal, these people, we give ourselves to you. Take us out to live as changed people, because we have shared the Living Bread and cannot remain the same. Ask much of us, expect much from us, enable much by us, encourage many through us. So, gracious God, may we live to your glory, both as inhabitants of earth and citizens of your kin-dom. Amen.

***Closing Hymn** “How beautiful, Our Spacious Skies” SoF #63

***Benediction**

***Sung Benediction (unison)**

**God be with you till we meet again;
Loving counsels guide, uphold you,
With a Shepherd’s care enfold you:
God be with you till we meet again.**

Postlude “Rejoice, the Lord Is King” (J. Darwall, arr. M. Hayes) Oxana Khramova

Credits

- Armas, Kat. Liturgies for resisting empire: Seeking community, belonging, and peace in a dehumanizing world. Grand Rapids, MI: Brazos Press, a division of Baker Publishing Group, 2025. Chapter 6: Rejecting Dualism, Embracing Paradox, pgs 93-94.
- Call to Worship Garnaas-Holmes, Steve. “4th Sunday after Epiphany.” 4th Sunday after Epiphany – Unfolding Light, September 12, 2022. <https://unfoldinglight.net/2022/09/12/epiphany-4/>.
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This Week

Tuesday, February 3: Dine to Donate at Applebee’s

Tuesday, February 3, 5:30pm: Mission for Peace and Justice, R1

Wednesday, February 4: 4pm Kid’s Club, **5:30pm** Chancel Choir; **6:30pm** Bell Choir; **7pm** Dance practice

Link to the full church calendar: <https://www.menomonieucc.org/monthlycalendar>

Mission Statement of First Congregational United Church of Christ in Menomonie, WI

We are called together:

To celebrate God’s presence.

To help each person to grow in his or her relationship with God;

To create a welcoming and supportive community of all God’s people, affirming the diversity of race, gender, age, sexual orientation, gender expression, and identity, social and economic status, and the differently abled;

To observe and share life’s passages and our faith traditions;

To reach out in love seeking justice and peace;

And to tell the old story of Jesus and His love.

Land Acknowledgement

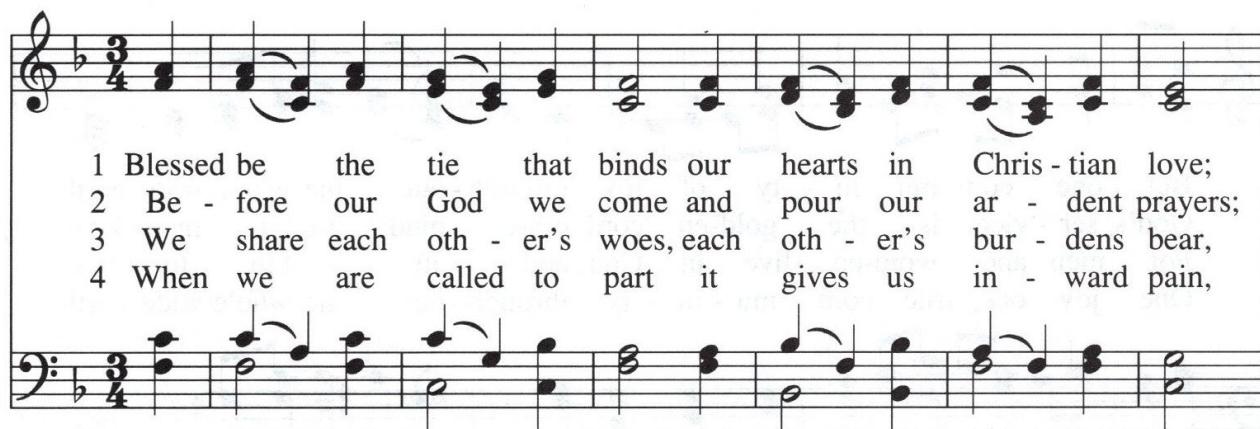
Here we congregate on Ojibwe, Dakota, Menominee, Potawatomi, and Ho Chunk land. Generations of Indigenous people occupied and provided careful stewardship of this land long before Europeans arrived on these shores. The traumatic dispossession of this land by European immigrants and the displacement of countless individuals produced collective suffering that has repercussions for our Indigenous neighbors today. The original inhabitants of this land—known to some Indigenous peoples as Turtle Island—took seriously the Creator's call to be stewards of air, land, water, and creatures. With gratitude, we acknowledge the lessons we continue to learn from our Indigenous neighbors as we seek to be good stewards and pray for guidance in learning how to make reparations.

Blessed Be the Tie That Binds

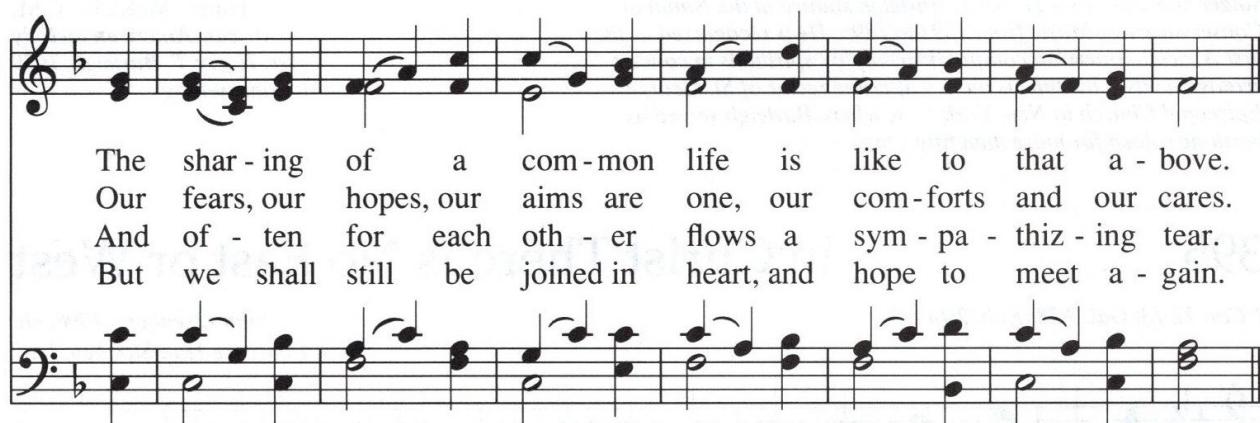
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John Fawcett, 1782; alt.

Gal. 3:28; 6:2; Col. 3:13–15



1 Blessed be the tie that binds our hearts in Chris-tian love;
2 Be - fore our God we come and pour our ar - dent prayers;
3 We share each oth - er's woes, each oth - er's bur - dens bear,
4 When we are called to part it gives us in - ward pain,



The shar - ing of a com-mon life is like to that a - bove.
Our fears, our hopes, our aims are one, our com-forts and our cares.
And of - ten for each oth - er flows a sym - pa - thiz - ing tear.
But we shall still be joined in heart, and hope to meet a - gain.

An English Baptist minister, John Fawcett published a number of poetic works. His entire ministry was spent at a church near Hebden Bridge, Yorkshire, where he wrote most of his hymns to follow his sermons.

Tune: DENNIS S.M.
Melody by Johann G. Nägeli (c. 1768–1836)
Adapt. Lowell Mason, 1845

Dona Nobis Pacem

1
Do - na no - bis pa - cem, pa-cem. Do - na no - bis pa -

2
cem. Do - na no - bis pa-cem. Do-na no-bis pa - cem.

3
Do - na no - bis pa-cem. Do-na no-bis pa - cem.

This song with Latin text, is often sung as a canon or round. The words, which mean "Grant us peace", part of the Agnus Dei from the Roman Catholic Latin Mass.

Dona Nobis Pacem. Composer: Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart. In the Public Domain.

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Let Us Break Bread Together

LET US BREAK BREAD 10.10 with refrain

African-American spiritual

African-American spiritual

Arr. Melva Wilson Costen, 1988



1. Let us break bread to - geth-er on our knees; (on our knees;)
 2. Let us drink wine to - geth-er on our knees; (on our knees;)



Let us break bread to - geth-er on our knees. (on our knees.)
 Let us drink wine to - geth-er on our knees. (on our knees.)




When I fall on my knees, With my face to the ris - ing sun,




O Lord, have mer-cy on me. (on me.)



Let There Be Peace on Earth

Let there be peace on earth, and let it begin with me;
Let peace begin with me; let this be the moment now.

let there be peace on earth, the peace that was meant to be.
With every step I take, let this be My solemn vow.

With God our creator, children all are we.
to take each moment and live each moment in peace eternally.

Let us walk with each other - in perfect harmony.
Let there be peace on earth, and let it be begin with me.

How Beautiful, Our Spacious Skies

1 How beau - ti - ful, our spa - cious skies, our am - ber waves of grain;
2 In - dig - e-nous and im - mi - grant, our daugh - ters and our sons:
3 How beau - ti - ful, sin - cere la - ment, the wis - dom born of tears,
4 How beau - ti - ful, two con - ti - nents, and is - lands in the sea

our pur - ple moun - tains as they rise a - bove the fruit - ful plain.
O may we nev - er rest con - tent till all are tru - ly one.
the cour - age called for to re - pent the blood - shed through the years.
that dream of peace, non - vi - o - lence, all peo - ple liv - ing free.

A - mer - i - ca! A - mer - i - ca! God's gra - cious gifts a - bound,
A - mer - i - ca! A - mer - i - ca! God grant that we may be
A - mer - i - ca! A - mer - i - ca! God grant that we may be
A - mer - i - cas! A - mer - i - cas! God grant that we may be

and more and more we're grate - ful for life's boun - ty all a - round.
a sis - ter - hood and broth - er - hood from sea to shin - ing sea.
a na - tion blessed with none op - pressed, true land of lib - er - ty.
a hem - i - sphere where peo - ple here all live in har - mo - ny.