

**A SERVICE TO UNITE US IN SPIRIT
FOR SUNDAY MAY 7, 2023
FIFTH SUNDAY OF EASTER**

**Plymouth Congregational
United Church of Christ
2401 Atwood Avenue, Madison WI**

Ministers: All the people of Plymouth
Congregational UCC
Pastor: Rev. Leslie Schenk
Accompanist: Lyle Anderson

Worship Help: Libby Spetz (reader and greeter),
Ann Lacy (usher), Marleen Lippert (choir director), Bill Mollway/Kat Klafka (tech
and audio support), volunteers (Social Hour hosts)



The Community Gathers

Lighting of the Candles
Ringing of the Bell
Welcome

♪Prelude *Bread for the World* (Chancel Choir)

Gathering Word

Pastor: O God, our God, you are our refuge and our hope.

All: **We gather today that we might feel especially close to you.**

Pastor: We come in all our need and with all we have to offer.

All: **Be for us a constant presence of hope and care.**

Pastor: Into your hands, O God, we place our spirits and our lives.

All: **In you, O God, we place our faith and trust!**

The Community Shares at the Lord's Table

Pastor: As we come to the table, we see it is set with gifts from our lives:
bread, fruit of the vine, and ourselves. It is set for us and for others in our
community, and for those whom we can help. All are welcome here.

All: **May these gifts feed all who hunger and refresh all who thirst.**

Pastor: Jesus said: I am the bread of life; those who come to me will never hunger; those who believe in me will never thirst.

All: **We come to this table to celebrate Christ's presence in our lives.**

Prayers of Institution and Consecration; Sharing the Bread and Cup

Pastor: Let us pray...as Jesus taught us to pray to you, saying:

All: **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, for ever. Amen.**

♪Hymn No. 346 *Bread of the World, in Mercy Broken*

**Bread of the world, in mercy broken,
Wine of the soul in mercy shed,
By whom the words of life were spoken,
And in whose dearth our sins are dead.**

**Look on the heart by sorrow broken,
look on the tears by sinners shed,
and be your feast to us the token
that by your grace our lives are fed.**

Sharing the Bread and Cup

Prayer of Thanksgiving

Pastor: In memory and in hope, O Holy One, we have come to your table.
With wonder and awe and deep gratitude,

All: **we have received the grace you offer.**

Pastor: You turn scarcity into plenty and give us the opportunity and strength to help others.

All: **May our words and deeds proclaim your love and mercy. Amen.**

The Community Shares God's Word

Pastor: Prepare us, merciful God, to hear your Word and be blessed and moved by it. Open our minds and our hearts to receive the grace offered us here today.

All: **Help us to envision anew what you have prepared for us for all our**

days. Amen.

Scripture Reading: John 14:1, 6-12

“Do not let your hearts be troubled. Believe in God, believe also in me...I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. If you know me, you will know my Father also. From now on you do know him and have seen him.”

Philip said to him, “Lord, show us the Father, and we will be satisfied.” Jesus said to him, “Have I been with you all this time, Philip, and you still do not know me? Whoever has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, ‘Show us the Father’? Do you not believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me? The words that I say to you I do not speak on my own; but the Father who dwells in me does his works. Believe me that I am in the Father and the Father is in me; but if you do not, then believe me because of the works themselves. Very truly, I tell you, the one who believes in me will also do the works that I do and, in fact, will do greater works than these, because I am going to the Father.”

Sermon

The Community Responds to God’s Word

♪Hymn of Response No. 492 *I Would Be True*

**I would be true, for there are those who trust me;
I would be pure, for there are those who care;
I would be strong, for there is much to suffer;
I would be brave, for there is much to dare,
I would be brave, for there is much to dare.**

**I would be friend of all, the foe, the friendless;
I would be giving and forget the gift;
I would be humble, for I know my weakness;
I would look up, and laugh, and love, and live,
I would look up, and laugh, and love, and live.**

**I would be prayerful through each busy moment;
I would be constantly in touch with God;
I would be tuned to sense God’s slightest whisper;
I would have faith to keep the path Christ trod,
I would have faith to keep the path Christ trod.**

**Announcements; Joys and Concerns;
Prayers of the People**

Passing of Christ's Peace

Offering

Thank you for your offerings; through your generosity, we are doing God's work in the world.

Prayer of Thanksgiving and Dedication

Pastor: We bring our offerings

All: to feed your lambs and tend your sheep, gracious God.

Pastor: May these gifts extend our love to your world

All: in the form of nourishing food, pure water, protective shelter, and nurturing acceptance.

Pastor: May our offerings support our efforts for spiritual growth for this congregation, and for all who seek a spiritual home here.

All: Help us focus on what is vital, that we may work together to make a difference in the world. Amen.

The Community Goes Forth

♪ **Sending Hymn No. 495 *Called as Partners in Christ's Service***

**Called as partners in Christ's service, called to ministries of grace,
We respond with deep commitment fresh new lines of faith to trace.
May we learn the art of sharing, side by side and friend with friend,
Equal partners in our caring to fulfill God's chosen end.**

**Christ's example, Christ's inspiring, Christ's clear call to work and worth,
Let us follow, never faltering, reconciling folk on earth.**

**Men and women, richer, poorer, all God's people, young and old,
Blending human skills together gracious gifts from God unfold.**

**Thus new patterns for Christ's mission, in a small or global sense,
Help us bear each other's burdens, breaking down each wall or fence.
Words of comfort, words of vision, words of challenge, said with care,
Bring new power and strength for action, make us colleagues, free and fair.**

**So God grant us for tomorrow ways to order human life
That surround each person's sorrow with a calm that conquers strife.
Make us partners in our living, our compassion to increase,
Messengers of faith, thus giving hope and confidence and peace.**

Blessing and Sending Prayer

Pastor: We go forth, walking with the living Christ.

All: **We go forth, in faith and hope and joy!**

Pastor: Love to you, from God our Creator. Peace to you, from the one who shows us all that we can be. Grace to you, from the Spirit who blesses you, now and always.

All: **Our worship has ended, our service begins, as we take God's light out into the world with us!**

♪ **Postlude** *Festival March* by G. F. Handel