

November 8, 2026 - Ready for the Wait - Matthew 25:1-13

Congregational United Church of Christ Neenah Menasha
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QUOTE:

"Discipline means to prevent everything in your life from being filled up… In the spiritual life, discipline means to create that space in which something can happen that you hadn't planned or counted on." — Henri Nouwen

WE GATHER

PRELUDE

SINGING BOWL

WORDS OF WELCOME

Welcome to this time of worship and renewal. Life often teaches us that important things require patience, endurance, and preparation. Today we hear Jesus' call to keep our lamps lit and our hearts attentive. May God strengthen us for the journey of faith and sustain us through every season of waiting.

TIME AND TALENT AND PLEDGE CARD OFFERING

CHOIR ANTHEM *Lay Your Treasures in Heaven* Pepper Choplin

CALL TO WORSHIP Mary Janness

One: God gathers us from busy lives and restless hearts.
All: We come to seek God's presence and guidance.
One: The journey of faith is not a sprint but a lifelong pilgrimage.
All: God gives us strength for every step.
One: God's Spirit renews us when our energy fades.
All: We will keep our lamps burning with hope. Let us worship the God who sustains us.

GATHERING HYMN #495 vs. 1, 2 & 4 *Called as Partners in Christ's Service*

PRAYER OF TRANSFORMATION AND NEW LIFE Evie J.

Faithful God, we confess that we often grow weary in well-doing. We seek quick answers and instant results. We neglect the practices that nourish our souls and strengthen our faith. Forgive us when we allow our spiritual lives to run dry. Fill us again with your Holy Spirit. Renew our commitment to prayer,

worship, service, and love. Teach us to trust your timing and remain faithful through every season of waiting. Amen.

WORDS OF GRACE Evie J.

One: Hear the good news: God does not abandon us in the waiting. Christ meets us with mercy, renews our strength, and fills our hearts with hope. Through God's grace, we are forgiven and empowered to continue the journey.

All: Thanks be to God. Amen.

PASSING OF THE PEACE

One: Let us now share the peace of Christ as a sign of reconciliation with God and each other. May the peace of Christ be with you.

All: And also, with you.

WE LISTEN

THE WAY A time for the young and the young at heart.

SCRIPTURE READING Matthew 25: 1-13 Common English Bible Mary Janness

One: Hear what the Spirit is saying to the Church.

All: Thanks be to God!

SERMON

HYMN #588 Let Justice Flow Like Streams

WE RESPOND

LIFE IN THE COMMUNITY

One: Now is the time for us to ask ourselves: How shall we join God's work in the world? This is the time when we share our announcements for the benefit of our beloved community. Please raise your hand if you have an announcement to share so one of our ushers can bring a microphone to you so we can all hear you both in person and online.

INVITATION TO THE OFFERING

The kingdom of God grows through steady, faithful commitment. As we share our gifts today, we participate in God's ongoing work in the world. May our generosity be one way we keep our lamps burning brightly.

OFFERTORY

AT THE PRESENTATION: THE DOXOLOGY

Sung to the tune: Old Hundredth (Words by Mary Luti)

All: Praise God whose love will never cease,
whose justice raises up the least
and sits all creatures at the feast—
God's mercy is our hope and peace! Amen.

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING AND DEDICATION

Loving God, thank you for sustaining us day by day. Bless these gifts and multiply their impact. May they bring hope where there is discouragement, comfort where there is loneliness, and faith where there is uncertainty. Keep us faithful and ready for your coming kingdom. Amen.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Today we offer the following prayers…
Trusting in your love and faithfulness, we pray in the spirit of Jesus.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

One: Now you may join us in praying the Lord's prayer using the words you are most comfortable with:

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, the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.

SENDING HYMN *Lead Me Lord* *see insert*

BENEDICTION

Go forth with lamps lit and hearts prepared. May God's Spirit sustain you in every waiting season. Walk with courage, trust with confidence, and remain steadfast in faith until Christ is revealed in fullness. Amen.

POSTLUDE



COMMUNITY TABLE……SPECIAL OFFERING FOR NOVEMBER

For many years CUCC N/M has supported the Community Table by preparing and serving 6 meals a year and by our financial support for this organization that serves our community. Please consider contributing to this program during the month of November

Worship Volunteers

November 8th

Liturgist: Mary Janness
Head Usher: Byron Burrier
Usher: Cindy Anderson, Sue Knuth, Alan Gear
Acolyte: Sophie R.
Singing Bowl: Chloe R.
Reader: Evie J.
Projection: Marilyn Kostrzak
Audio: Art Puguh
Refreshments: Mary Liesch
Nursery:

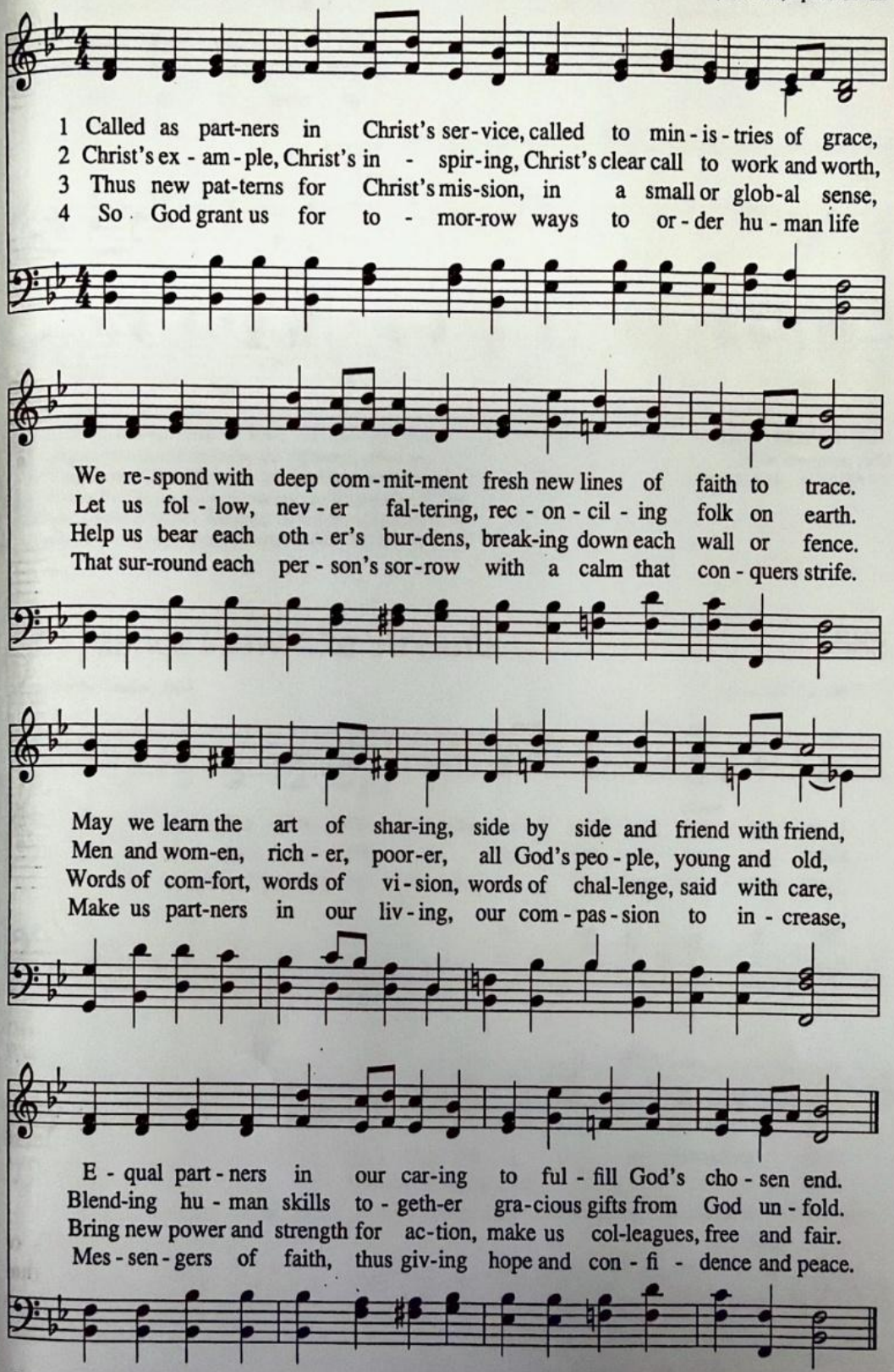
November 15th

Liturgist: Debi Brandenburg
Head Usher: John LaPrairie
Usher: Jack Fry, Chris & Darrell Parson
Acolyte: Kit S.
Singing Bowl: Colin S.
Reader: Colin S.
Projection: Kevin Shumann
Audio: Darrell Parson
Refreshments: Bonnie Pozolinski
Nursery:

Called as Partners in Christ's Service 495

Jane Parker Huber, 1981

John 15:12–17; Gal. 6:2; Eph. 2:14–22



One of Jane Parker Huber's most widely sung texts, this hymn was originally written for a women's breakfast at the 1981 Presbyterian General Assembly meeting to celebrate the partnership of women and men in service of the church.

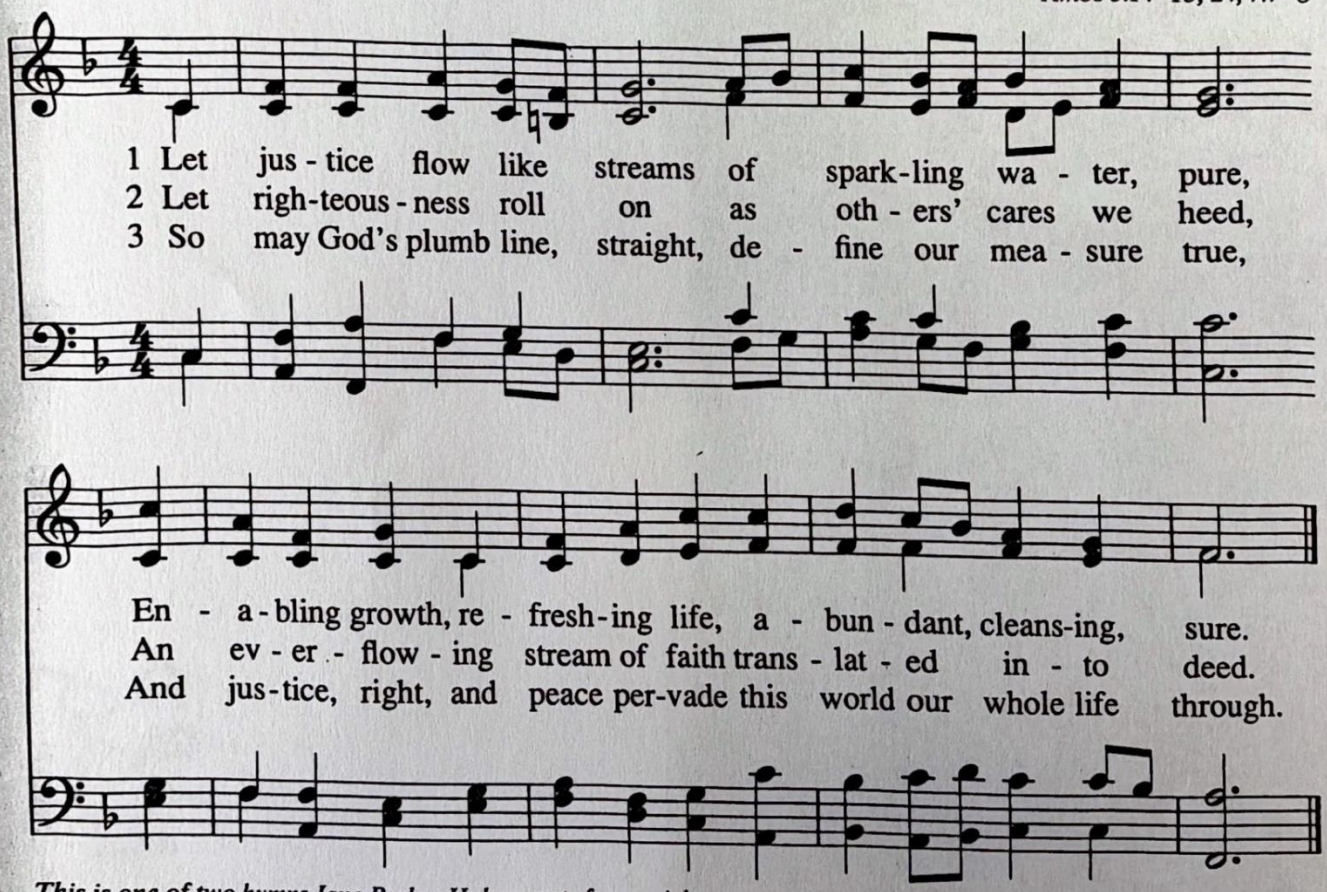
Tune: BEECHER 8.7.8.7.D.
John Zundel, 1855
For another key, see 43, 368

Let Justice Flow like Streams

588

Jane Parker Huber, 1984

Amos 5:14–15, 24; 7:7–8



This is one of two hymns Jane Parker Huber wrote for special events emphasizing economic justice for women at the time of the reunification of two Presbyterian denominations in 1983. The text's brevity underscores the urgency of Amos' pronouncements against injustice.

Tune: ST. THOMAS S.M.
Aaron Williams' New Universal Psalmodist, *1770*

LEAD ME, LORD

John D. Becker



Text: Matthew 5:3–12; 7:7, 13; John 14:6. Text and music © 1987, John D. Becker.
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