



**Being human,
Being love**

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Office and Building Hours

Office Monday - Thursday
8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.
Building will be open:
Monday - Thursday,
7:00 a.m. - 9:30 p.m.
Other building hours by
scheduled appointment only.

Welcome to Christ Community!

This community is open to all who would join and continue the human journey, seeking to learn, to grow, to love deeply, and live more meaningfully! We are glad you are here. Let us know how we can connect with you.

Ian Lawton, Executive Minister,
Preaching and Theological Inquiry
Bob Kleinheksel, Minister of Care
and Social Justice
Brigit Hassig Lewis, Administration
and Fundraising
Allison Rockey, Outreach and
Communications Ministry
Brad Vander Ark, Audio/Visual and
Online Ministry
Betty Van Till, Organist and Music
Coordinator
Toni Van Dyken, Spiritual Director
Richard A. Rhem, Minister Emeritus
Peter J. Theune, Minister Emeritus

Inspired By Compassion
Sunday, September 17, 2006
8:30 & 9:30 a.m.
Christ Community Church

Prelude

Gigue

...**Betty Van Till**
...Domenico Alberti

Introit

With Songs of Rejoicing

...**Diane Van Wesep & David Epplert**

...J.S. Bach

With songs of rejoicing, sing praise to our God for God has done marvelous things! Break forth into joy. God's praises the lyre and the trumpet employ. The floods clap their hands and the hills sing for joy. The seas with their roaring speak praise. Come make a joyful noise. Alleluia!

Gathered In Community

There is no need for temples, no need for complicated philosophies. My brain and my heart are my temples; my philosophy is kindness.
--Dalai Lama

One: We experience the God within

All: **As we awaken to the seed of compassion that is within.**

One: We catch glimpses of the God between

All: **When treating people right is more important than being right.**

One: We sense revelations of the God beyond

All: **As we become one with nature and all of life.**

***Opening Hymn**

May We Be Servants

...tune: Slane
...words: Susan Wente

May we be servants to all those in need,
Filled with compassion in thought, word and deed;
Loving our neighbor whatever the cost,
Feeding the hungry and finding the lost.

May we be prophets to cry out the way,
Telling the nations of mercy's new day.
Let us break barriers of hatred and scorn,
Speaking of hope to all people forlorn.

May we be healers of body and mind,
Finding the power to bring sight to the blind,
Love to the loveless and gladness for pain,
Filling all hearts with the joy of love's name.

Welcome and News of the Community

Participants:

Preacher: Ian Lawton

Liturgist: Bob Kleinheksel

Organist: Betty VanTill

Vocalists: Diane Van Wesep and David Epplett

Oboeist: Kathy Bolthouse

Ushers: Jani Ingersoll (Captain), Don Anderson, Dan Bouma, Aaron Dean, Kristin Jolink, Todd Kuypers, Jean McCabe, Marianne Okesik, Bob Scheifele, Tom Webber, Gina Zornes
The white team ushers next week.

Greeters: Jan Basham

Sound Booth: Brian Drabczyk

Camera: Brad Vander Ark, Kate Ujlaky

Growing Place: Cheryl VanAbbema

Ministry Council Hosts: Lynne Deur, Wayne Johnson (tour leader)

Background Information

Karen Armstrong points out that before the Axial Age (800-200 BCE), ritual was central to the religious quest. The Axial sages changed this. While they still valued ritual, they now put morality at the heart of the spiritual life. The way to encounter God was now to live a compassionate life. Religion now centered around compassion rather than correct belief or particular practice. "What mattered was not what you believed, but how you behaved."

Worship Center News

Registration forms are available in the Narthex and in all of the Worship Center rooms.

Children are dismissed during the gathering to attend their program which concludes at 11:30 a.m.

- The three and four-year-olds are introduced to their new Worship Center.

- Kindergarten and first graders will explore the story of creation.

- Second graders will go on a tour of the sanctuary, choir loft, organ, and take a peek in the sound booth.

- Third graders begin their year getting acquainted with each other and enjoying a slide presentation: "Living Water."

- Fourth and fifth graders are encouraged to share with their parents today's "clue" which points them to the story they explored.

Music with Lisa Chorny begins on October 8!

Eucharist

The Spirit of God is ever present; *within* as self-awareness, *between* as intimate connectedness, and *beyond* as the wondrous web of life.

With bread, we taste what Jesus, his disciples, and mystics through the centuries have tasted. With common cup, we renew our unity with one another and with lovers of life and goodness who have gone before us. We renew our communion with the earth and our interdependence on nature's processes. Bread and wine are gifts of the earth and symbols of the patterns of life.

In life and in death, in our shared meals, in work and play, grieving and pain, light and darkness, seeking and loving, let us be awake to our Christ consciousness.

On the night before he died Jesus took bread and cup; when he had given thanks, he broke the bread, gave bread and cup to his disciples, and said: "Do this in remembrance of me."

May we do this in remembrance of the seed of divinity that we are.

Bread broken: a sign of shared humanity.

Wine poured: a sign of love shared.

In celebration of all spiritual paths all are welcome to share in this symbolic meal. Draw near and receive bread and cup as a sign of the one life that we share.

Prayer after Eucharist

Filled with a Spirit that calls us to dwell in possibility, we leave this table strengthened with food for our journey and a taste of life as it is; one diverse family, living in justice and peace. Amen

Readings

[Marcus Borg interprets Jesus' teachings such as this one, as the shift from religion as ritual to religion as compassion.]

²³One sabbath he was going through the grainfields; and as they made their way his disciples began to pluck heads of grain. ²⁴The Pharisees said to him, "Look, why are they doing what is not lawful on the sabbath?" ²⁵And he said to them, "Have you never read what David did when he and his companions were hungry and in need of food? ²⁶He entered the house of God, when Abiathar was high priest, and ate the bread of the Presence, which it is not lawful for any but the priests to eat, and he gave some to his companions." ²⁷Then he said to them, "The Sabbath was made for humankind, and not humankind for the Sabbath; ²⁸so the Son of Man is Lord even of the Sabbath." --Mark 2:23-28

What are the lessons from 9/11 for American people of faith?

KAREN ARMSTRONG: We have now entered the community of suffering. It is a religious opportunity, because the great religious teachers all say that unless our hearts are awakened to compassion, we cannot begin our religious quest.

Now the people of America know in their own hearts what it might have been for the people of Rwanda, Lebanon, Bosnia to have suffered as they did. This could make for a more compassionate form of religion, a religion that's not concerned just with dogma, identity, or keeping the various institutions going, but that is concerned above all with compassion, the one litmus test of every single one of the world's great traditions. Christianity, Judaism, and Islam all insist that there's no point in being religious or saying your prayers unless you are acting justly and honoring the sacred rights of your fellow human beings.

In our global village, we can no longer afford a parochial or exclusive vision. We must learn to live and behave as though people in countries remote from our own are as important as ourselves. The sages of the Axial Age did not create their compassionate ethic in idyllic circumstances. Each tradition developed in societies like our own that were torn apart by violence and warfare as never before; indeed, the first catalyst of religious change was usually a principled rejection of the aggression that the sages witnessed all around them. When they started to look for the causes of violence in the psyche, the Axial philosophers penetrated their interior world and began to explore a hitherto undiscovered realm of human experience. --Karen Armstrong

Musical Reflection
Come Glad Hearts

...Diane Van Wesep & David Epplert
...W.A. Mozart

Come glad hearts in joyful measure, sing of those who spread the treasure. Which in God's own word we find. Inspiration with elation; Peace on earth our destination. Love from God to all humankind. O may we, all truth confessing and a holy sense possessing, serve and love all humankind. All our thought and words and deeds, may we all inspire and lead. God within, and God between, God beyond forevermore.

Prayers
"Please Call Me By My True Names"

...Thich Nhat Hanh

Sermon
Progressive Religion Part 2, Compassion and the God Between

...Ian Lawton

Offertory
Adagio

...Betty Van Till & Kathy Bolthouse
...W. A. Mozart

Reception of our Gifts

***Closing Hymn**
What Does the Lord Require?

...tune: Darwall
...words: Albert F. Bayley

What does the Lord require, for praise and offering?
what sacrifice, desire, or tribute bid us bring?
but only this: true justice do, love mercy too, and walk with God.

True justice always means defending of the poor,
the righting of the wrong, reforming of the law:
this is the path, true justice do, love mercy too, and walk with God.

Love mercy, and be kind, befriend, forgive, always,
and welcome all who came to sing with us in praise:
and in this way, true justice do, love mercy too, and walk with God.

Yes, humbly walk that way, free from all pompous pride,
in quiet simplicity, God always at our side:
thus evermore, true justice do, love mercy too, and walk with God.

***Blessing**
May Compassion be your companion, holding you close when you are weary and hurt and alone -- when there is rain in your heart. And may you be the warm hands and the warm eyes of compassion for others when they reach out to you in need. May the blessing of COMPASSION be upon you always

***Postlude**
Fantasia

...Betty Van Till
...John Stainer



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Upcoming Sundays at C3/CCC

September 24:
"Inspired by Life and Nature"

We are both inheritors of a particular tradition, and also part of the ever-changing Kosmos. While religion has often been very ego-centric (personal salvation by a God who has special interest in certain people), we now place ourselves in a larger context, one acknowledging our connection with all things seen and unseen. Ian Lawton will be preaching as we awaken to the vast inspiration that is life and nature.

October 1:
"Inspired by an Ever-Expanding Compassion"

As our religious context moves from tribal (exclusively centered on one group), to Kosmic (honoring our connection with all things) our perspective of care and justice also expands. Now the call of the Old Testament prophets for a religion based on care for the needy, along with Jesus' challenge that what we do to the least of these we do to him, become a call to place ourselves in an ever-widening circle of care and compassion. Ian Lawton will be preaching as we explore our role in the action for peace and justice in a connected world.

Church Family

Don Van Hoeven is in Hackley Hospital.

Carl Lundgren turned 95 years old.

If you are interested in the make-up date for the photo directory, please contact Sarah Jane at 842-1985 x118.

Christ Community is an alternative to church as usual.
We live together in the awe of worship
in the Presence of the Mystery of God
Whose inclusive grace moves us to embrace all
with unconditional love and gracious acceptance,
irrespective of race, gender, economic status, age or sexual orientation.

Loving the world as God loves it,
following the way of Jesus,
sensitive to the winds of the Spirit,
seeking to discern the Word of God in the biblical tradition,
the Movement of God in the context of our culture.

Christ Community is an ecumenical community -
in background,
in faith perspective,
in worship expression;
a blending of all the great Christian traditions.

Christ Community finds its window to God in the face of Jesus
while affirming the quest and insight of other faiths;
opening ourselves to dialogue and mutual enrichment in our pluralistic world.

Christ Community is intentionally a community of open mind and warm heart...
where the broken find healing,
the doubting learn to trust,
the anxious find peace,
and the strong are confirmed,
trusting God...

The God of The Beginning,
The God of The End,
The God with us in The Meantime...
this in-between time.

We invite all to join us in this exciting venture of faith.



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