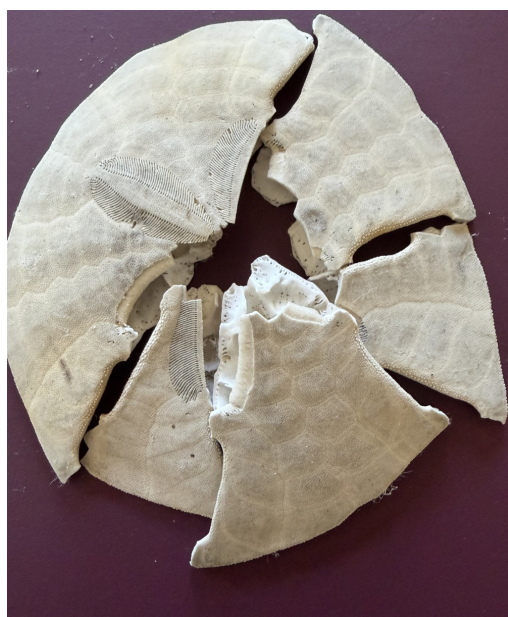




WELCOME TO THE
**COMPASSION
BEAT**
we're so glad you're here!

An Unexpected Gift



Recently, I had the joy of traveling to Puerto Rico—an incredible opportunity to reflect on the past three years of The Compassionate Way. While I was there, I spent time walking along the beach. I absolutely love the ocean; its vastness reminds me of God's nature—something far beyond my comprehension. As I walked, I noticed a shell. When I bent down, I realized it was a whole sand dollar. In all my years, I had never found one intact. I was overjoyed. A little farther down the beach, I found another whole sand dollar. I was thrilled and thanked God for such an unexpected gift.



When I returned to my vehicle, I placed them in the cup holder. Later that evening, I went to retrieve them, only to discover—to my dismay—that both had broken. I later learned that sand dollars sold in stores are often coated with glue or gloss to strengthen them. Otherwise, they are incredibly fragile.

Even so, my joy remained. As I looked more closely, I discovered the five “doves” inside the sand dollar. These delicate forms resonated deeply with me; they were symbolic of the Holy Spirit stirring within me. That moment became a quiet but powerful blessing.

God showed up in so many ways during my time in Puerto Rico—one of them through the simple, fragile gift of a couple of sand dollars.

A Not-So-New Way of Worship



- What if worship was designed to foster connection—with God and with one another?
- What if it invited us to co-labor with the Holy Spirit?
- What if it helped us recognize and respond to our calling?
- What if worship was truly engaging?

Lately, I have been wrestling with the traditional format of worship—not in terms of style, but in how we engage. I sense the Spirit inviting us into something more participatory, more attentive, more shared.

My heart longs to cultivate a way of worship where every person is invited to take part—not as an observer, but as a co-participant in what God is doing.

Recently, on Palm Sunday, I had the opportunity to lead a service shaped around these very questions. It was simple, but something meaningful happened.

People were not just present—they were engaged. They listened, they shared, they reflected.

I left filled with joy—not because everything was perfect, but because it felt alive. It felt closer to what I believe worship is meant to be: a people gathered in the presence of God, attentive to the Spirit, and open to being transformed together.

Imagine stepping into a space like this.

We began with music and a palm branch parade—familiar, joyful, and communal. After prayer, we moved into simple, invitational questions—questions anyone could answer.

What is your favorite part of a parade?

If you were in a marching band, what role would you play?

Continued

Laughter and conversation began to fill the sanctuary. People were connecting.

Then we listened to the Scripture. Instead of moving quickly past it, we lingered. Through a series of “Would You Rather?” questions, people entered the story:

Would you rather lay down your coat or wave a palm branch?

Would you rather stand at the front of the crowd or watch from a distance?

Suddenly, the passage was no longer distant—it was personal.

We then moved into a brief time of teaching. Rather than telling people what to do, the focus was on understanding: Why does this text matter? What is happening here? How does it fit within the larger story of Scripture?

From there, we returned again to reflection:

What would you do if you knew Jesus was coming to your town? ~ ~ ~

What would you say if He passed by?



The room came alive with thoughtful responses.

Next, we engaged the Scripture visually—inviting people to notice, to wonder, to listen:

What stands out?

What do you notice?

Where is God capturing your attention?

Finally, we created space to receive. To slow down. To discern.

What is God saying to us?

How is God inviting us to live?

The service ended simply—with music, receiving offering (fish banks collected by the children in a net), prayer, and a blessing—but something had shifted. Worship was not something we attended. It was something we entered.

If you are interested in a worship that is centered around connecting with God and others, co-laboring with the Holy Spirit, and being sent to live out your calling, we would love to hear from you. We are currently discerning a time and location in the Baxter and Brainerd area. Please contact Rev. Dr. Candace Adams at 320-905-5453 or revadams@hotmail.com.

Easter Baskets



It is that time of year again to prepare Easter baskets for the children of Stoneybrook Mobile Home Park. The wonderful residents at Good Samaritan Society–Woodland generously helped assemble the baskets, making this outreach even more meaningful.

Each basket includes a beach towel, kite, mystery pop, cup with a straw, candy, and more—simple gifts meant to bring joy and delight. Now that the baskets are ready for delivery, the final and most important touch is being added: a special note sharing the good news of Jesus' resurrection.

It is our hope that, along with the fun and treats, each child will receive a reminder of the true joy of Easter—the love, hope, and new life we have through Christ.



Ecumenical Coffee

**WEDNESDAY, MAY 6, 2026
9:30 A.M.**

First Presbyterian Women
302 Central Lane
Luverne, MN

**LEARN ABOUT
THE COMPASSIONATE WAY**



Thank you for your ongoing financial support of The Compassionate Way. As a reminder, checks must be made out to Lakes Area Presbyterian Church, which acts as our fiscal sponsor. When sending a check, please indicate "For The Compassionate Way" on the memo line. Mail checks to The Compassionate Way, 7761 Excelsior Rd., Baxter, MN 56425.