

January 28, 2024
Fourth Sunday after Epiphany

We Gather In God's Presence

Prelude: “

Lighting the Christ Candle

Your Word, O God, is a lamp to our feet, **and a light for our path.**

Moment of Silent Reflection

Birthdays, Celebrations, and Life and Work of the Congregation – see last page ...

Call to Worship *(based on Psalm 111)*

Praise the Lord!

Holy and awesome is his name.

We give thanks to the Lord with all our heart,

In the company of the congregation we give thanks to God!

Great are the works of the Lord.

His righteousness endures forever.

Let us praise the Lord our God!

Hymn: VU 312 “Praise with Joy the World's Creator”

Praise with joy the world's Creator;

God of justice, love, and peace,

source and end of human knowledge,

God whose grace shall never cease.

Celebrate the Maker's glory,

power to rescue and release.

Praise to Christ who feeds the hungry,

frees the captive, finds the lost,

heals the sick, upsets religion,

fearless both of fate and cost.

Celebrate Christ's constant presence:

friend and stranger, guest and host.

Praise the Spirit sent among us,

liberating truth from pride,

forging bonds where race or gender,

age or nation dare divide.

Celebrate the Spirit's treasure:

foolishness none dare deride.

Praise the Maker, Christ, and Spirit,

one God in community,

calling Christians to embody

oneness and diversity.

This the world shall see reflected:

God is One and One in Three.

Opening Prayer (unison)

Light has come into the world, but we seem to prefer the night.
Love has come into the world, yet we continue to hate.
Authority has come into the world, but we seek to resist it.
Grace has come into the world, yet we have difficulty forgiving.
Wisdom has come into the world, but we prefer our ignorance.
Healing has come into the world, yet we wallow in our sickness.
Wholeness has come into the world, but we remain broken.
Hope has come into the world, and we are surrounded by despair.
Peace has come into the world, but conflict continues.
Joy has come into the world, yet we are sad.
Judge us, O God, by your gracious love.
Forgive us, O God, and set us free. Amen.

We Are Blessed By God

Ministry of Music: “Worship As One” Pepper Choplin

Time for the Young and the Young @ 

Hymn: VU 358 “When Jesus the Healer”

When Jesus the healer passed through Galilee,
Heal us, heal us today!
the deaf came to hear and the blind came to see.
Heal us, Lord Jesus!

A paralyzed man was let down through a roof.
Heal us, heal us today!
His sins were forgiven, his walking the proof.
Heal us, Lord Jesus!

The death of his daughter caused Jairus to weep.
Heal us, heal us today!
The Lord took her hand, and he raised her from sleep.
Heal us, Lord Jesus!

When blind Bartimaeus cried out to the Lord,
Heal us, heal us today!
His faith made him whole and his sight was restored.
Heal us, Lord Jesus!

The lepers were healed and the demons cast out.
Heal us, heal us today!
A bent woman straightened to laugh and to shout.
Heal us, Lord Jesus!

The twelve were commissioned and sent out in twos,
Heal us, heal us today!
to make the sick whole and to spread the good news.
Heal us, Lord Jesus!

There's still so much sickness and suffering today.

Heal us, heal us today!

We gather together for healing and pray:

Heal us, Lord Jesus!

Psalm 111 VU 833

R: Hallelujah! Hallelujah! Hallelujah!

I will thank you, God, with my whole heart,
in the company of the upright, in their assembly.

**Great are your works, O God,
studied by all who delight in them.**

Honour and majesty are your work;
your righteousness endures forever.

**You have won renown for your wonders;
you are gracious and full of compassion.**

R: Hallelujah! Hallelujah! Hallelujah!

You give food to those who fear you;
you keep your covenant always in mind.

**You have shown your power in action,
giving your people the heritage of nations.**

The works of your hands are faithful and just;
all your precepts trustworthy.

**They stand fast forever and ever;
grounded in justice and truth.**

You sent redemption to your people;

**you decreed your covenant forever.
Holy and awesome is your name.**

R: Hallelujah! Hallelujah! Hallelujah!

The fear of God is the beginning of wisdom;

**those who practise it have good understanding.
May your praise endure forever.**

R: Hallelujah! Hallelujah! Hallelujah!

Scripture: Mark 1:21-28 The Man with an Unclean Spirit

They went to Capernaum; and when the sabbath came, he entered the synagogue and taught. They were astounded at his teaching, for he taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes. Just then there was in their synagogue a man with an unclean spirit, and he cried out, "What have you to do with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are, the Holy One of God." But Jesus rebuked him, saying, "Be silent, and come out of him!" And the unclean spirit, convulsing him and crying with a loud voice, came out of him. They were all amazed, and they kept on asking one another, "What is this? A new teaching—with authority! He commands even the unclean spirits, and they obey him." At once his fame began to spread throughout the surrounding region of Galilee.

The other readings for this week are: Deuteronomy 18:15-20; 1 Corinthians 8:1-13

Meditation: "In and Out"

Hymn VU 620 "Silence, Frenzied, Unclean Spirit" to tune 198 Ebenezer 8787D

"Silence, frenzied, unclean spirit!" cried God's healing Holy One.

"Cease your ranting! Flesh can't bear it; flee as night before the sun."

At Christ's words the demon trembled, from its victim madly rushed,
while the crowd that was assembled stood in wonder, stunned and hushed.

Lord, the demons still are thriving in the gray cells of the mind:
tyrant voices, shrill and driving, twisted thoughts that grip and bind,
doubts that stir the heart to panic, fears distorting reason's sight,
guilt that makes our loving frantic, dreams that cloud the soul with fright.

Silence, Lord, the unclean spirit in our mind and in our heart;
speak your word that when we hear it, all our demons shall depart.
Clear our thought and calm our feeling; still the fractured warring soul.
By the power of your healing make us faithful, true and whole.

We Respond To God's Grace

Prayers of Thanksgiving and Intercession & The Lord's Prayer

O God, lover of the world, you hold all that you have created within your compassionate embrace. As you hold our lives torn by pain, sorrow or hatred within your aching heart, we cry out for wholeness – for ourselves, for those we love, and for our world. May your healing presence gently transform the places of our lives where we hold pain. May your loving presence be a comforting reality for all those who find themselves in despair, lost or alone. May your transforming presence create generosity in place of greed, harmony in place of hatred, and everlasting justice where evil now reigns. We pray for your church, whose mission it is to transform lives. In particular, we pray for St. Andrew's United Church in St. Thomas, and their spiritual leader, who is also president of ARWRC, the Rev. Cheryl Bolton.

We pray for those treasured in your heart, our brothers and sisters around the world. This week we pray for the people of Algeria, Libya, Morocco, Western Sahara, and Tunisia.

O God, lover of the world, we bring before you people and places that that need your healing, loving, transforming peace:

We pray for all who mourn, especially the friends and family of Rev. Lewis Snow and Jack Lorimer

We pray for all who are ill or dying, awaiting medical intervention or recovering from medical treatment, especially and their loved ones and caregivers, and for those known only in the silence of our own hearts.....

O God, lover of the world, this is your world, and we ask for your healing presence to help make it whole, in the name of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever, and who taught us to pray, saying,

**Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be your name.
Your kingdom come,
your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread;
and forgive us our sins,
as we forgive those who sin against us.
And lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil:
for yours is the kingdom the power
and the glory, forever and ever.
Amen.**

Invitation to Invest in God's Mission

When the man with the unclean spirit shouted at the son of God, Jesus did not ignore him, or belittle him, or turn his back on him. Instead, he healed him; made him whole. In doing so, Jesus announced that the man was important in God's eyes, and that God was not done with him. We, you and I, are like that man: we are important in God's eyes, and God is not yet done with us. In pooling our resources to care for the vulnerable and marginalized in our community, like Jesus, we too announce that they are important in God's eyes and that God is not done with them. All that we offer, announces God's grace to those who need to see it, hear it, receive it. Our tithes and offerings will be received.

Offertory Hymn VU 544 "In Gratitude and Humble Trust"

In gratitude and humble trust we bring our best today
to serve your cause and share your love with all along life's way.
O God, who gave yourself to us in Jesus Christ, your Son,
teach us to give ourselves each day until life's work is done.

Prayer of Dedication

Bless, O God, all that we offer for the healing of this world's madness. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

Hymn VU 92 "In the Darkness Shines the Splendour"

USE HYMN BOOKS

Commissioning and Benediction

May the light of God give us hope,
and the power of God protect us;
May the light of God give us joy,
and the peace of God calm us;
May the light of God give us faith,
and the grace of God save us;
This day and evermore.
Amen.

Response: "Go Now in Peace"

Go now in peace. Never be afraid.
God will go with you each hour of ev'ry day.
Go now in faith, steadfast, strong and true.
Know He will guide you in all you do.
Go now in love, and show you believe.
Reach out to others so all the world can see.
God will be there supporting us with love.
Go now in peace, in faith, and in love.
Amen, amen, amen.

Postlude: "

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Vacation

Rev. Mark will be on vacation Monday, January 29 to Sunday, February 4 inclusive. In his absence, for pastoral emergencies please contact Mary Dillon at 519-878-7134.

Central Board meets on Wednesday, February 7 at 7:00 p.m.

Dorchester Presbyterian Church will be holding their final service this afternoon at 3:00 p.m. All are welcome.

Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper

St. Peter's Anglican Church will be holding a pancake supper Tuesday, February 13, 4:30 – 6:30 p.m. by freewill offering. A portion of the proceeds will go to support a hospital in Gaza that is unaffiliated with either Hamas or Israel.

Ash Wednesday Service

A joint worship service with St. Peter's Anglican Church is planned for Ash Wednesday at 7:00 p.m. on Wednesday, February 14, at St. Peter's.

Belmont United Church is hosting a mid-week Lenten supper and worship series on Wednesdays from February 21st to March 20th (with the first session on Tuesday, February 13th at 7 p.m., following Pancake Supper.) A light supper will commence at 6:00 p.m., followed by a brief worship service at 6:45 p.m. Suggested donation for supper is \$5. Worship leaders include Karlene Kimber, Mary Dillon, David Dillon, and Mark Perry.

LECTIONARY READINGS:

February 4 – 5th after Epiphany

Isaiah 40:21-31; Psalm 147:1-11, 20c; 1 Corinthians 9:16-23; Mark 1:29-39