

Sunday January 26, 2025
Third Sunday after Epiphany

We Gather In God's Presence

Prelude: "Joyful Hymn of Praise" Faye Lopez

Birthdays, Celebrations, and Life and Work of the Congregation

Lighting the Christ Candle

The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light;

those who lived in a land of deep darkness— on them light has shined.

Isaiah 9:2

Preparing Our Hearts for Worship

Call to Worship

On this day, which is holy, we gather. . .

not alone, but as Christ's body,

as ones who would suffer together, we gather. . .

On this day of celebration, we gather. . .

Not in isolation, but in community,

as those who would care for one another, we gather. . .

On this day of joy, not mourning, we gather. . .

Not with empty hands, or emptier hearts,

but as those baptised in tears of grace, we gather. . .

Hymn VU 312 "Praise with Joy the World's Creator " Words: The Iona Community, 1985.

Music: John Goss, 1868. Words © 1987 WGRG, The Iona Community, GIA Publications Inc.

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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 of both 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*)

Blessed are you, O Lord, creator of heaven and earth, source of all life. In your image you created us; each one of us unique; each one of us with our own unique set of gifts and abilities. Yet, often we do not truly appreciate the gifts and abilities of others. Often we either dismiss the abilities of others, or are envious of the gifts they have. Help us to understand that our uniqueness is part of your plan. If we each had every gift, we would have no need of one another, we would have no need of community. Help us to appreciate and support the gifts of one another. Help us to build a community where all are truly welcome; where all feel needed and appreciated. In Christ's name. Amen.

Ministry of Music: "Worship as One" Pepper Choplin

A New Creed VU 918

We are not alone,
we live in God's world.

We believe in God:
who has created and is creating,
who has come in Jesus,
the Word made flesh,
to reconcile and make new,
who works in us and others
by the Spirit.

We trust in God.

We are called to be the Church:
to celebrate God's presence,
to live with respect in Creation,
to love and serve others,
to seek justice and resist evil,
to proclaim Jesus, crucified and risen,
our judge and our hope.

In life, in death, in life beyond death,
God is with us.

We are not alone.

Thanks be to God.

Hymn VU 766 “As the Deer Pants for the Water” Words: paraphrase Martin Nystrom. Music: Martin Nystrom
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As the deer pants for the water, so my soul longs after you;
you alone are my heart’s desire and I long to worship you.
You alone are my strength, my shield, to you alone may my spirit yield;
you alone are my heart’s desire, and I long to worship you!

I want you more than gold or silver, only you can satisfy;
you alone are the real joy-giver and the apple of my eye.
You alone are my strength, my shield, to you alone may my spirit yield;
you alone are my heart’s desire, and I long to worship you!

You’re my friend and you are my brother, even though you are a king;
I love you more than any other, so much more than anything!
You alone are my strength, my shield, to you alone may my spirit yield;
you alone are my heart’s desire, and I long to worship you!

We Open Ourselves to Receive God’s Blessings

Responsive Reading: Psalm 19

Glory and praise to God whose word brings life!

The heavens declare the glory of God;
and the vault of the sky reveals God's handiwork.

**One day speaks to another,
and night shares its knowledge with night,**

and this without speech or language;
their voices are not heard.

**But their sound goes out to all the lands,
their words to the ends of the earth.**

Glory and praise to God whose word brings life!

In the heavens God has pitched a tent for the sun
which comes out like a bridegroom from under the canopy,
like an athlete eager to run the race.

**Its rising is at one end of the sky,
it runs its course to the other,
and there is nothing that is hidden from its heat.**

Glory and praise to God whose word brings life!

God's law is perfect, refreshing the soul;

**God's instruction is sure,
giving wisdom to the simple;**

God's precepts are right, rejoicing the heart;

God's commandment is pure

giving light to the eyes;

God's fear is clean, enduring forever;

God's judgements are true,

every one of them righteous;

more desirable than gold, even much fine gold;

sweeter also than honey,

pure honey from the comb.

Glory and praise to God whose word brings life!

By them is your servant warned;

for in keeping them there is great reward.

But who can discern unwitting sins?

O cleanse me from my secret faults.

Keep your servant also from presumptuous sins,

lest they get the better of me.

Then shall I be clean and innocent of great offence.

Glory and praise to God whose word brings life!

Let the words of my mouth

and the thoughts of my heart

be acceptable in your sight, O God,

my strength and my redeemer.

Scripture: Luke 4:14-21 The Beginning of the Galilean Ministry & The Rejection of Jesus at Nazareth

Then Jesus, in the power of the Spirit, returned to Galilee, and a report about him spread through all the surrounding region. He began to teach in their synagogues and was praised by everyone.

When he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up, he went to the synagogue on the Sabbath day, as was his custom. He stood up to read, and the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was given to him. He unrolled the scroll and found the place where it was written:

“The Spirit of the Lord is upon me,

because he has anointed me

to bring good news to the poor.

He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives

and recovery of sight to the blind,

to set free those who are oppressed,

to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor.”

And he rolled up the scroll, gave it back to the attendant, and sat down. The eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed on him. Then he began to say to them, “Today this scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing.”

*The other readings for this week are: **Nehemiah 8:1-4a, 5-6, 7b-10; 1 Corinthians 12:12-31a***

Meditation: “Change vs. Transformation”

Hymn VU 632 “O Blessed Spring” Words: © 1993 Susan Palo Cherwien.
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O blessed spring, where Word and sign
embrace us into Christ the Vine,
here Christ enjoins each one to be
a branch of this life giving tree.

Through summer heat of youthful years,
uncertain faith, rebellious tears,
sustained by Christ’s infusing rain,
the boughs will shout for joy again.

When autumn cools and youth is cold,
when limbs their heavy harvest hold,
then through us warm the Christ will move
with gifts of beauty, wisdom, love.

As winter comes, as winters must,
we breathe our last, return to dust;
still held in Christ, our souls take wing
and trust the promise of the spring.

Christ, holy Vine, Christ, living Tree,
be praised for this blest mystery:
that Word and water thus revive
and join us to your Tree of Life.

We Respond To God’s Grace

Invitation to Invest in God’s Mission

We are many members, but we are all part of the body of Christ.

If one member suffers, all suffer together. Let us offer what we have in solidarity with those members who are suffering in many places, in this community and around the world. Our tithes and offerings will be received.

Offertory Hymn VU 81 “As with Gladness Men of Old” vs. 3 Words: William Chatterton Dix, ca. 1858.
Music: Conrad Kocher, 1838. Adapted William H. Monk, 1861.
Words, Music and Adaptation in the Public Domain.

As they offered gifts most rare at that manger crude and bare,
so may we with holy joy, pure and free from sin’s alloy,
all our costliest treasures bring, Christ, to you, our heavenly King.

Prayer of Dedication

Holy and Gracious God, we are thankful for your many gifts to us. We thank you that, in Christ, we are one. Accept these gifts as symbols of our gratitude and love. Use these gifts to bless all those who are in need. In Jesus’ name we pray. Amen.

Prayers of Thanksgiving and Intercession & The Lord's Prayer

God of community, Creator, Christ, and Spirit; One. Through your Holy Spirit you become one with us. Through Christ you call us to be one with you and with one another. We are gathered here as one body, and as one we lift our prayers to you.

By your Holy Spirit inspire your church with courage, imagination, and energy. May it maintain the diversity of over 30,000 denominations and, for the sake of the world, may it act as one.

Sovereign God, grant both wisdom and compassion to the leaders of this world that they may lead in righteousness, and that all peoples may live in peace, security, and prosperity. We pray especially, this week, for the people of Cyprus, Greece and Türkiye.

Compassionate God, you sent your son, our Saviour, to cure the lame, give sight to the blind, feed the hungry, clothe the naked, and heal the sick, for you know that when one of us suffers we are all affected. We pray for those in our community who are mourning, especially the family and friends of Beth Killins. Comfort them and grant them peace.

We pray also for those in our community who are ill or dying, awaiting medical intervention or recovering from treatment, especially we pray for: Christa, Kurt, and David Johnson, and their loved ones and caregivers, and those known only in the silence of our hearts.....

Heal them in mind, body, or circumstance.

Restore all for whom we pray that they and we may be made whole. This we pray in the name of the one who came to teach us how to renew our relationship with you, 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 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 trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us;
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.**

Hymn VU 625 "I Feel the Winds of God" License not available.

Please use Hymn Books

Commissioning

People of God, be attentive to the Word of God;

for day after day, God speaks to our hearts.

People of God, rejoice and be glad;

for the joy of God is our strength.

People of God, go, share your joy with the world!

We go, sharing all of our blessings with a world in need.

Response: VU 298 “When You Walk from Here” Words & Music: Linnea Good, 1991.

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When you walk from here, when you walk from here,
walk with justice, walk with mercy, and with God’s humble care.

Postlude: “Joyful Joyful We Adore Thee” Ludwig van Beethoven Arr. Martha Mier

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The **Spiritual Formation Group** meets Wednesday, January 29th at 2:00 p.m.

LECTIONARY READINGS: February 2 – Fourth Sunday after Epiphany

Jeremiah 1:4-10; Psalm 71:1-6; 1 Corinthians 13:1-13; Luke 4:21-30