

Sunday February 1, 2026
Fourth Sunday after Epiphany
We Gather In God's Presence

Prelude: "Be Thou My Vision" John Ritter

Birthdays, Celebrations, and Life and Work of the Congregation

Lighting the Christ Candle:

Jesus Christ, the Light of the world.

Preparing Our Hearts for Worship

Call to Worship

We gather as God's people, seeking happiness, joy, and blessing.

**We come to worship in song and prayer,
and to hear anew the teachings from of old.**

Learning and growing, we try to live the way of Jesus.

**Learning and growing, we become light for others,
and hope for creation.**

Together let us worship God.

Hymn VU 84 "O Radiant Christ, Incarnate Word" Words: Ruth Duck, 1991. Music: Robert Schumann, 1839, adapt.
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O radiant Christ, incarnate Word,
eternal love revealed in time:
come, make your home within our hearts,
that we may dwell in light sublime.

Our bartered, busy lives burn dim,
too tired to care, too numb to feel.
Come, shine upon our shadowed world:
your radiance bathes with power to heal.

Your glory shone at Jordan's stream,
the font where we were born anew.
Attune your church to know you near;
illumine all we say and do.

O Light of Nations, fill the earth;
our faith and hope and love renew.
Come, lead the peoples to your peace,
as stars once led the way to you.

Opening Prayer (unison)

Lord Jesus, you reach out to us in 'our world' from 'your world.' Your world seems like a place of 'make believe' to us, who live in the 'real world.' In actuality, it is our 'real world' that is the place of 'make believe,' and your world that is 'real.' Help us to face the facts, to admit this truth, to get real, and, having seen the

real world that you offer, give us the courage to recreate *this* world as *your* world; part of your blessed realm. Amen.

Anthem: “Walking In The Spirit” Words and music by Mark Hayes

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 223 “Eternal, Unchanging, We Sing” Words: R.B.Y. Scott, 1938. © 1988 Emmanuel College.

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Music: Welsh folk song, arr. John Roberts (Henllan) in *Caniadau y Cyssegr* 1839. Music in the Public Domain.

Eternal, Unchanging, we sing to your praise:
your mercies are endless, and righteous your ways;
your servants proclaim the renown of your name
who rules over all and is ever the same.

Again we rejoice in the world you have made,
your mighty creation in beauty arrayed,
we thank you for life, and we praise you for joy,
for love and for hope that no power can destroy.

We praise you for Jesus, our Master and Lord,
the might of his Spirit, the truth of his word,
his comfort in sorrow, his patience in pain,
the faith sure and steadfast that Jesus shall reign.

We Open Ourselves to Receive God's Blessings

Responsive Reading: Psalm 15

Within your holy place, O God, who shall a dweller be?

God, who may be a guest in your house,

or who may dwell on your holy mountain?

Within your holy place, O God, who shall a dweller be?

One who leads a blameless life,

who does what is right,

who speaks truthfully from the heart;

one whose tongue is free from malice,

who never wrongs a friend,

who utters no reproach against a neighbour;

one who cannot respect the unworthy,

but honours those who fear God;

who stands by a promise given,

though it be to personal disadvantage;

one who will not take interest on a loan,

nor accept a bribe to testify against the innocent.

Whoever does all this shall never be overthrown.

Within your holy place, O God, who shall a dweller be?

Scripture: Matthew 5:1-12 The Beatitudes

When Jesus saw the crowds, he went up the mountain, and after he sat down, his disciples came to him. And he began to speak and taught them, saying:

"Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

"Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.

"Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth.

"Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.

"Blessed are the merciful, for they will receive mercy.

"Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.

"Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.

"Blessed are those who are persecuted for the sake of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

"Blessed are you when people revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

The other lectionary readings for this week are: Micah 6:1-8; 1 Corinthians 1:18-31

Sermon: "B'rakah"

Hymn VU 896 "Blest Are They" Words and Music: David Haan, © 1985 G.I.A. Publications, Inc. OneLicense.net A620168

Blest are they, the poor in spirit,
theirs is the kingdom of God.

Blest are they, full of sorrow,
they shall be consoled.

Rejoice and be glad!

Blessed are you, holy are you!

Rejoice and be glad!

Yours is the kingdom of God.

Blest are they, the lowly ones,
they shall inherit the earth.

Blest are they who hunger and thirst,
they shall have their fill.

Rejoice and be glad!

Blessed are you, holy are you!

Rejoice and be glad!

Yours is the kingdom of God.

Blest are they who show mercy,
mercy shall be theirs.

Blest are they, the pure of heart,
they shall see God!

Rejoice and be glad!

Blessed are you, holy are you!

Rejoice and be glad!

Yours is the kingdom of God.

Blest are they who seek peace,
they are the children of God.

Blest are they who suffer in faith,
the glory of God is theirs.

Rejoice and be glad!

Blessed are you, holy are you!

Rejoice and be glad!

Yours is the kingdom of God.

Blest are you who suffer hate,
all because of me.

Rejoice and be glad yours is the kingdom
shine for all to see.

Rejoice and be glad!

Blessed are you, holy are you!

Rejoice and be glad!

Yours is the kingdom of God.

We Respond To God's Grace

Invitation to Invest in God's Mission

I don't know about you, but I don't give to the church; the local church, the denomination, or even the global church. I do, however, give to God. God has blessed me, and I believe that I have not been blessed for my benefit alone. I believe that I have been blessed in order to share my blessings with others. Our tithes and offerings will be received.

Offertory Hymn: "Star of Wonder" Words: unknown. Music: John Henry Hopkins, Jr., 1857; in the Public Domain.

Star of wonder, star of light,
Star with royal beauty bright,
Grant us God, the grace of giving
Guide us to thy perfect light.

Prayer of Dedication

Blessed are you, gracious God:
you have given us life and freedom to be your people in the world.
Blessed are you, gracious God:
you have called us into the church, and into this community of faith,
pilgrims together on the journey into a new creation.
Blessed are you, gracious God:
you have touched our hearts with hope, so that we long to see the day of your salvation.
Accept now these gifts we bring. Through them may all come to know your blessings as we know your blessings. Through them may your new commonwealth of justice and peace be built. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

Prayers of Thanksgiving and Intercession & The Lord's Prayer

God of the prophets, God of Christ, we are reminded today that your blessings do not necessarily follow the logic of the world. We bring our burdens to you, O God.

The world believes that the rich are blessed, but Jesus reminds us that it is the poor who are blessed, the poor in spirit and the materially poor as well. We pray for a more just world in which all have enough and none are left behind. Today we pray especially for the people of Algeria, Libya, Morocco, Western Sahara, and Tunisia.

Though we fear death and avoid its inevitable arrival, Jesus tells us that those who mourn are blessed. Help us to experience the truth of this mystery; bring healing and wholeness to those who are sick; and comfort those of us who have lost loved ones. We pray especially for the family and friends of Butch Hoxar and Barbara Thompson, and for Arnold, Cindy, Gloria, Julie, Rob, and their loved ones and their caregivers and those known only in the silence of our own hearts.....

While people covet power, Jesus blesses the meek; instruct us, O God, in the ways of humility; help us to stand in solidarity with the oppressed and marginalized; show us your presence in the faces of those the world forgets.

Give us a hunger and thirst for righteousness; fill our hearts with love, overflowing with mercy; make our hearts pure, and give us a vision of your glory.

In a society divided by race, gender, class, ideology, sexual orientation, and so many other labels we alone have created, remind us that we are all created in your image, each of us a beautiful reflection of you, each of us your beloved child. Help us then to end our conflicts and wars, help us to be peacemakers and agents of reconciliation.

Gracious God, you have so richly blessed us with life, with love and joy, with hope in the midst of despair. Help us to be the salt of the earth. Help us to be the light of the world, sharing with others that which we have received, boldly proclaiming the good news of your love, finding the seeds of your kingdom within us and letting your way grow in our lives and throughout the world.

Give us eyes to see the ways you are changing the world in which we live. Give us ears to hear your call to join with you in the great transformation. All this we pray in Jesus' name, who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever, and who taught us to pray,

**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,
for ever and ever. Amen.**

Hymn MV 12 "Come Touch Our Hearts" Words and Music: Gordon Light, 2002.
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Arrangement: © 2002 Andrew Donaldson.
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Come touch our hearts that we may know compassion,
from failing embers build a blazing fire;
love strong enough to overturn injustice,
to seek a world more gracious,
come touch and bless our hearts.

Come touch our souls that we may know and love you,
your quiet presence all our fears dispel;
create a space for spirit to grow in us,
let life and beauty fill us,
come touch and bless our souls.

Come touch our minds and teach us how to reason,
set free our thoughts to wonder and to dream;
help us to open doors of understanding,
to welcome truth and wisdom,
come touch and bless our minds.

Come touch us in the moments we are fragile,
and in our weakness your great strength reveal;
that we may rise to follow and to serve,
steady now our nerve,
come touch and bless our wills.

Come touch us now, this people who are gathered,
to break the bread and share the cup of peace;
that we may love you with our heart, our soul,
our mind, our strength, our all,
come touch us with your grace.

Commissioning and Benediction

**As we go into the world seeking out our neighbours and serving their needs,
may we encounter the presence of Christ in their lives,
and may they encounter the presence of Christ in us.**

May the blessings of God,
the love of Christ,
and the grace of the Holy Spirit go with us all.

Amen.

Sung Response: VU 886 “Arise, Shine” Refrain Music: Lawrence M. Probes, 1980.

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Arise, be clothed in the light.
Arise, be clothed in the light.
Your light has come.
Your light has come.
Hallelujah.

Postlude: “Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee” Ludwig van Beethoven.

(In a setting of George F. Handel's Prelude in G)

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Annual Congregational Meeting will be held on Sunday, February 15th following worship.

UNJPPI (United Network for Justice and Peace in Palestine and Israel) Presents

A series of nine 90-minute illustrated talks (one hour talk plus 30 minutes Q/A) that traces Zionist /Israeli efforts to occupy historic Palestine, dispossess the Palestinian inhabitants, and deny them human rights and self determination. The talks are introductory and non-academic, and no prior knowledge of the history of Palestine / Israel is necessary.

When: Thursdays from 7:00– 8.30 pm (Eastern) January 15 to March 12, 2026.

To Register, go to:

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSey6TNY9Jwl7VcjUrDaaPxMuyBbhS0zj-pzdigTolTojDEUHA/viewform>

Lenten Study: As we journey toward Lent, the new Lenten devotional [*Bless, Break, Share: Recipes for Faithful Living*](#) invites you to a spiritual practice of reflecting on food and hunger. What do you hunger for? How do you feed others? What feeds your soul? Whether reflecting individually or in a group, this resource helps us discover how every meal provides an opportunity to grow in faith. To deepen your experience, join Rev. Dr. Christine Jerrett for a six-week [online study on CHURCHx](#), on Tuesdays (2:00–3:00 p.m. ET), beginning February 24, focusing on themes of invitation, justice, and solidarity.

Participants receive a 15% discount on the book, with additional bulk savings available for congregational study groups. [Visit the United Church Bookstore to order your copy](#) or head to [CHURCHx to register for the series](#) today!

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Lectionary Readings:

Sunday, February 8, Fifth after Epiphany

Isaiah 58:1-9a (9b-12); Psalm 112:1-9 (10); 1 Corinthians 2:1-12 (13-16); Matthew 5:13-20