

Sixth Sunday after
Epiphany
February 16, 2025



We Gather in Response to God's Invitation

THE GIFT OF MUSIC TO GATHER US

WELCOME, ANNOUNCEMENTS AND AFFIRMATION OF MISSION:

We declare ourselves to be a Christ-centered Open and Affirming Congregation, welcoming persons into full membership and participation in the Body of Christ regardless of race, age, gender, sexual orientation, gender identities and expressions, ability, culture, economic status, ethnicity, or family composition.

We recognize that there are differences among us, but believe that we can love alike even though we may not think alike. We proclaim this covenant of welcome to all who have known the pain of exclusion or discrimination in church and society. We invite all people to join us in our faith journey toward greater love, understanding, and mutual respect.

*CALL TO WORSHIP (*RESPONSIVE, BASED ON PSALM 1*)

**An asterisk indicates when the people stand in body or spirit.*

One: Happy are those who delight in the law of the Holy One. Meditate on God's word day and night.

All: **Our Sovereign God watches over the way of the righteous, but the way of the wicked will perish.**

Happy are those who delight in the law of the Holy One. Plant yourself like a tree and yield good fruit in due season.

Our Sovereign God watches over the way of the righteous, but the way of the wicked will perish.

Happy are those who delight in the law of the Holy One. Prosper in all that you do according to kingdom measures.

Our Sovereign God watches over the way of the righteous, but the way of the wicked will perish.

Because of who YOU are and where YOU are on life's journey, YOU ARE WELCOME HERE!

*OPENING PRAYER (TOGETHER)

Righteous God, you create us for community, and you commune with us. May we seek your presence anew this day and in the time to come. Help us to recognize you in the sound and feel of our own breath and in the movement or noise of those around us. Embolden us to faith that surpasses understanding and ministry that reflects radical trust in you and the path of abundance, compassion, and connection. Let our worship in song and prayer be a foreshadowing of our worship in action and witness. Transform us from despair to hope, complacency to courage, and indifference to love in your name. Amen.

*SINGING TOGETHER:

“Come, We That Love the Lord”

Brown #550

**Come, we that love the Lord, And let our joys be known;
Join in a song with sweet accord, Join in a song with sweet accord
And thus surround the throne, And thus surround the throne.**

(Chorus) **We’re marching to Zion, Beautiful, beautiful Zion;
We’re marching upward to Zion, The beautiful city of God.**

**Let those refuse to sing Who never knew our God;
But children of the heavenly King, But children of the heavenly King,
May speak their joys abroad, May speak their joys abroad. *(chorus)***

**Then let our songs abound And every tear be dry;
We’re marching through Emmanuel’s ground,
We’re marching through Emmanuel’s ground,
To fairer worlds on high, To fairer worlds on high. *(chorus)***

We Pray for Transformation and New Life

INTRODUCTION

Abiding God, you come near to us.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION (TOGETHER)

We give thanks that you do not turn away from us when our lives reflect messiness, ungraciousness, and complacency. Take us deeper, O God, and help us to confront what needs to be known, addressed, and changed within us, our community, and our world. Forgive us and free us from guilt and shame so that we might embrace a life of accountability and transformation for the glory of God and for the hope of humanity. Amen.

Time for silent reflection.

ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS:

Good creation of God, the Holy One has begun a good work in you and will see it through to completion. You have power to transform and grace to enter the newness of

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life. God is near and comes down with us. Receive God's mercy, forgiveness, and grace as the gift that has been given. It is available, yours, and enough.

***PASSING OF THE PEACE**

The Spirit who named Jesus "beloved," also calls us "beloved." In God's love through Christ we can find peace with God, ourselves, neighbors, strangers, and God's creation. The peace of Christ be with you.

And also with you!

(As a sign of our deep fellowship and communion with God and with one another, let us greet one another with a handshake or peace sign and bless one another with the peace that comes from being in Christ.)

SUNG RESPONSE

"Children of God"

Sing! #195 chorus, vs 3, chorus

Children of God, let's love one another. Love is a gift, a blessing of God.

Love one another, sisters and brothers. Love is a gift of God.

Let us bear witness to the Light, living in love, doing what is right.

Oh, oh, Children of God, let's love one another. Love is gift, a blessing of God.

Love one another, sisters and brothers. Love is a gift of God.

We Listen for God's Word

MINISTRY THROUGH MUSIC

"This is the Call"

by Keil and Quinlivan

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

Guide us, O God, by your Word, and Holy Spirit, that in your light we may see light, in your truth find freedom and do justice, and in your will discover both peace and purpose; through Christ our Savior, Amen.

HEBREW SCRIPTURE READING:

JEREMIAH 17:5-10

Judah's sin and punishment. Our reading begins.

⁵Thus says the Lord:

Cursed are those who trust in mere mortals
and make mere flesh their strength,
whose hearts turn away from the Lord.

⁶They shall be like a shrub in the desert
and shall not see when relief comes.

They shall live in the parched places of the wilderness,
in an uninhabited salt land.

⁷Blessed are those who trust in the Lord,
whose trust is the Lord.

⁸They shall be like a tree planted by water,
sending out its roots by the stream.

Because of who YOU are and where YOU are on life's journey, YOU ARE WELCOME HERE!

It shall not fear when heat comes,
and its leaves shall stay green;
in the year of drought it is not anxious,
and it does not cease to bear fruit.

⁹The heart is devious above all else;
it is perverse—
who can understand it?

¹⁰I the Lord test the mind
and search the heart,
to give to all according to their ways,
according to the fruit of their doings.

RESPONSIVE PSALTER READING

PSALM 1

The two ways. Our responsive reading begins.

¹Happy are those
who do not follow the advice of the wicked
or take the path that sinners tread
or sit in the seat of scoffers,
**²but their delight is in the law of the Lord,
and on his law they meditate day and night.**

³They are like trees
planted by streams of water,
which yield their fruit in its season,
and their leaves do not wither.

In all that they do, they prosper.

**⁴The wicked are not so
but are like chaff that the wind drives away.**

⁵Therefore the wicked will not stand in the judgment
nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous,
**⁶for the Lord watches over the way of the righteous,
but the way of the wicked will perish.**

GOSPEL READING

LUKE 6:17-26

In what is known as the Sermon on the Plain, Jesus heals and then teaches in the form of blessings and Woes. Hear the Good News.

¹⁷He came down with them and stood on a level place with a great crowd of his disciples and a great multitude of people from all Judea, Jerusalem, and the coast of Tyre and Sidon. ¹⁸They had come to hear him and to be healed of their diseases, and those who were troubled with unclean spirits were cured. ¹⁹And everyone in the crowd was trying to touch him, for power came out from him and healed all of them.

²⁰Then he looked up at his disciples and said:

Because of who YOU are and where YOU are on life's journey, YOU ARE WELCOME HERE!

“Blessed are you who are poor,
for yours is the kingdom of God.

²¹ “Blessed are you who are hungry now,
for you will be filled.

“Blessed are you who weep now,
for you will laugh.

²² “Blessed are you when people hate you and when they exclude you, revile you, and defame you on account of the Son of Man. ²³ Rejoice on that day and leap for joy, for surely your reward is great in heaven, for that is how their ancestors treated the prophets.

²⁴ “But woe to you who are rich,
for you have received your consolation.

²⁵ “Woe to you who are full now,
for you will be hungry.

“Woe to you who are laughing now,
for you will mourn and weep.

²⁶ “Woe to you when all speak well of you, for that is how their ancestors treated the false prophets.

SINGING TOGETHER

Thy Word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path.

Thy Word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path.

CCLI Song # 14301; Amy Grant and Michael W. Smith;

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MEDITATION:

“Woah!”

Rev. Dr. Chris Rodkey

SINGING TOGETHER

“Through It All”

Brown #43

I've had many tears and sorrows, I've had questions for tomorrow,

There's been times I didn't know right from wrong;

But in every situation God gave me blessed consolation

That my trials came to only make me strong.

(Chorus) **Through it all, Through it all, I've learned to trust in Jesus,**

I've learned to trust in God;

Through it all, Through it all, I've learned to depend upon His Word.

I've been to lots of places, I've seen a lot of faces,

There've been times I felt so all alone;

But in my lonely hours, Yes, those precious lonely hours,

Jesus let me know that I was His own. *(chorus)*

Because of who YOU are and where YOU are on life's journey, YOU ARE WELCOME HERE!

I thank God for the mountains, And I thank Him for the valleys,
I thank him for the storms He brought me through;
For if I'd never had a problem I wouldn't know that He could solve them,
I'd never know what faith in God could do. *(chorus)*

We Respond to God's Word

A TIME FOR PRAYER

SHARING OF JOYS AND CONCERNS

You are invited to share joys and concerns we can pray for together. Let our sharing itself be an act of prayer.

PRAYERS ON BEHALF OF THE PEOPLE

THE PRAYER OF OUR SAVIOR

**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 sins as we forgive those who sin against
us. And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For thine is the
kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.**

ENCOURAGEMENT TO SHARING OUR TITHES AND OFFERINGS

You are invited to place your gifts in the offering basket as you arrive or depart from our worship together.

Blessed are we when we bring forth our gifts for the needs of the poor, the pursuit of justice, the nurturing of community, the honoring of difference, and the goal of the common good. Woe to us when we mistake abundance as scarcity and generosity as a handout. God has given enough gifts for all to be well. By sharing our blessings, we demonstrate faith, trust and love.

DEDICATING OUR OFFERING *(TOGETHER)*

Generous God, you have planted generosity in our hearts. Receive our gifts as part of your redemptive work to save the world from inequities, pain, and despair. May our resources be renewed and magnified so that all needs are met and your name be praised. Amen.

We Go Out to Serve

*SINGING TOGETHER

"God's Grace"

Sing! #29

**We're standing in your light, O God, Your glory in the midst of us.
You call us to this sacred space, to live within your grace.**

Refrain: **God's grace, God's grace, the hope by which we are fed.
God's grace, God's grace, with joy may our hearts be led.**

**You strengthen us through fear and doubt, to heal our lives as we reach out.
To welcome to this sacred space, all those who long for grace. *(refrain)***

Because of who YOU are and where YOU are on life's journey, YOU ARE WELCOME HERE!

**Our gifts from you we share with all, to justice work so we are called.
You send us from this sacred space, so all may know your grace. (refrain)**

***GOOD WORDS FOR GOING FORTH**

As you go into the world, remember that
Embodied Love has come down to join you.
God's grace has come down to redeem you.
God's Spirit has come down to empower and equip you
To engage with the world as it is:
In need of hope and encouragement
In need of witness and public proclamation
That God is good and still down with us. Amen.

***BENEDICTION RESPONSE**

"This Little Light" Black #524, vs 1
This little light of mine, I'm gonna let it shine.....
This little light of mine, I'm gonna let it shine.
This little light of mine, I'm gonna let it shine,
Let it shine,... let it shine,... Let it shine, oh, let it shine.

TAKE WITH YOU GOD'S GIFT OF MUSIC

WE RETURN TO THE WORLD

RENEWED AND EMPOWERED BY GOD'S SPIRIT

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Much of the liturgy is adapted from Down with Them: Service Prayers for the Sixth Sunday after Epiphany by the Rev. Dr. Cheryl A. Lindsay, Minister for Worship and Theology for the United Church of Christ.

Because of who YOU are and where YOU are on life's journey, YOU ARE WELCOME HERE!

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