

**GAYLORD UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST**  
**Fourth Sunday after Epiphany    January 31, 2021**



**Morning Meditation**

“Any place is sacred ground, for it can become a place of encounter with the divine Presence.”  
- David Steindl-Rast

**Welcome and News of the Church**

**Statement of Welcome**

**No matter who I am, No matter where I am on life’s journey, I am welcome here.  
No matter who you are, no matter where you are on life’s journey, You are  
welcome here!**

**Statement of Purpose**

One: Who are you?	<b>All: I am a beloved child of God!</b>
One: What does that mean?	<b>All: I am a person of worth to be valued!</b>
One: Then what will you do?	<b>All: I will live a life of Love and Acceptance of myself and all God’s people!</b>

- ❖ **We will continue meeting in person for worship** and will be **live streaming** our service each time we meet. The service is also recorded and will be available later for viewing from our web page and Facebook. To view our service on the website click on the link:  
<https://listen2god.org/weekly-message/>
- ❖ **Pastor Dennis will be gone January 31 – February 13. He will preach on Feb. 14<sup>th</sup>.**
- ❖ **Emergency Pastoral needs should be directed to Gail Estenson, Head Deacon.**
- ❖ **Communion will be moved from February 7 to February 14<sup>th</sup> when Pastor Dennis is back.**
- ❖ **Thank you to Todd Iverson who will be preaching on Jan. 31 and Feb. 7<sup>th</sup>.**

**The Call**

PSALM 111

Praise the LORD!

I will give thanks to the LORD with my whole heart, in the company of the upright, in the congregation.  
Great are the works of the LORD, studied by all who delight in them.  
Full of honor and majesty is his work, and his righteousness endures forever.  
He has gained renown by his wonderful deeds; the LORD is gracious and merciful.  
He provides food for those who fear him; he is ever mindful of his covenant.  
He has shown his people the power of his works, in giving them the heritage of the nations.  
The works of his hands are faithful and just; all his precepts are trustworthy.  
They are established for ever and ever, to be performed with faithfulness and uprightness.  
He sent redemption to his people; he has commanded his covenant forever.  
Holy and awesome is his name.  
The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom; all those who practice it have a good understanding.  
His praise endures forever.

**Prelude**

Sandy Wentzloff

**OPENING DIALOGUE: CALL TO WORSHIP**

One:	Friends in Christ, what hopes do you bring to worship?
<b>People:</b>	<b>We bring hope for health and wholeness.</b>
One:	What afflictions do you bring to worship? Physical pain?
<b>People:</b>	<b>From illness and injury.</b>
One:	Emotional pain?

**People: From sad and scary life situations.**

One: Mental pain?

**People: From dis-ease of many kinds.**

One: With all of these afflictions, it's a miracle that any of us have made it to worship this morning!

**People: But where else would we be? We yearn to know God's powerful love and to know that wholeness is possible.**

One: In today's gospel, a person with an *"afflicting spirit"* interrupts Jesus

**People: And Jesus sets the person free.**

One: And where does the miracle of this story and our stories begin?

**People: When we bring all of who we are --Hopeful, afflicted, bold--into relationship with the Divine.**

One: So come, let us enter this sanctuary with our whole selves

**People: --Hopeful, afflicted and bold--**

One: Come, let us worship!

#### GATHERING HYMN

*"IMMORTAL, INVISIBLE, GOD ONLY WISE"*

NCH #1

Piano: Play through hymn

**People: Immortal, invisible, God only wise, in light inaccessible hid from our eyes.  
Most blessed, most glorious, the Ancient of Days,  
Almighty, victorious, your great name we praise.**

Piano: Play stanzas 3 and 4

**People: Unresting, unchanging, and silent as light, not wanting not wasting but ruling  
in might. Your justice like mountains high soaring above,  
Your clouds which are fountains of goodness and love.**

Piano: Play stanzas 3 and 4

#### CONFESSING OUR HUMANNESS

One: O Divine Healer, we confess that sometimes we yearn for you to wave a magic wand on our wounded lives to remove our pain, illness, and suffering. We hear the gospel story of the one seeking healing from Jesus and assume you will perform a similar miracle for all of us – if we just pray hard enough! And we do pray!

**People: Open our eyes to recognize the teachings and tools you have given us with which to seek healing in the midst of our afflictions and dis-eases.**

**You whisper to us that wholeness requires self-care and rest;**

**You nudge us toward caregivers who can support and advise us;**

**You breathe into us energy to move and stretch and reach toward health;**

**You place in us an urgency to seek justice so that all may enjoy adequate health care;**

**Renew our spirits in the midst of our dis-eases and afflicting spirits.**

**Transform us, O Whole-y One, for the health of your creation. Amen.**

## **ASSURANCE OF BLESSING**

One: In the midst of struggle, dis-ease and affliction, know that you are made in God's image and God sees you as whole and good. So may you celebrate God in your midst through opportunities of wholeness and justice.

## **PIANO DOXOLOGY**

### **SCRIPTURE**

Mark 1:21-28

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, throwing him into convulsions 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.

### **MESSAGE**

TODD IVERSON

### **MORNING PRAYER**

God of magnificent power and tender care, we need you in this hour. Gather us up in your loving arms. Embrace us with your love and mercy. Calm us with your grace and mercy. Hear our cries and bless us with your presence.

As we gather in community, we lift up your children who are in great need. We pray for healing to come for those living with Covid-19. Relieve their fear and discomfort. Hold fast their loved ones that they might, also, find comfort and peace. Reassure them of your love abiding with them.

We are aware of violence in our nation and communities. Make us aware of the causes of such violence and empower us to make changes in our lives and governments that would enable violence to cease; that would empower equality, justice, and compassion for all.

In our lives we often feel alone or lonely. It seems we are often working through struggles on our own. Remind us of your spirit within us and around us. May we focus on your spirit that might lift us out of our sense of aloneness and isolation and remind us that your power is always at our disposal. We give thanks for you, for loving us beyond measure, for constantly working for the good in our lives. Give us eyes to see and ears to hear the blessings you are bringing each day.

God of community, gather us in and make us one. For in that uniting we pray today: 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, and the power, and the glory for ever and ever. Amen,

## **PIANO THREE FOLD AMEN**

### **OFFERING**

One: When we give of ourselves to meet the needs of others, we are co-creators in the health of God's creation. As we have been given much, let us give in return.

## DEDICATION (UNISON)

Transforming God, we dedicate our gifts for the health of your creation.  
May those who receive these gifts be blessed by your love and inspired to  
give to others so that your creation will continue to be transformed by your love.

## SENDING

**North Side:** Oh, let the Son of God enfold you with his Spirit and his love;  
Let him fill your heart and satisfy your soul.

South side: Oh, let him have the things that hold you, and his Spirit, like a dove,  
Will descend upon your life and make you whole.

**Unison:** Jesus, O Jesus, come and fill your lambs  
Jesus, O Jesus, come and fill your lambs

**North side:** Oh, come and sing the song with gladness as your hearts are filled  
with joy, lift your hands in sweet surrender to his name.

South Side: Oh, give him all your tears and sadness, give him all your years of pain,  
And you'll enter into life in Jesus' name

**Unison** Jesus, O Jesus, come and fill your lambs  
Jesus, O Jesus, come and fill your lambs

## BENEDICTION

**One:** And now in the wholeness and the goodness of God, go forth.  
Go and laugh with your friends, reconcile with those who have hurt you,  
be kind to strangers, and feel the Divine smile upon us.  
Now and forevermore.

**All:** Amen.

## POSTLUDE

SANDY WENTZLOFF

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**Remember in Prayer:** Bill and Nancy Cowell, Dick Carlson, Eunice Gasow, Aggie Schue, and Greg Armstrong (Howard's brother). We pray for health and healing for all people. Pray especially for those serving on the front lines caring for those with COVID-19. Pray for the ministries of our church. Pray for those serving in the military and for our local and national leaders.

**If you have a prayer request or would like to receive a call from Pastor Dennis call his office at 237-2595 (leave a private voice mail) or his cell 763-258-3371**

**Pastor Dennis is usually in the office each Tuesday and Wednesday from 9:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. He can be reached at the office 237-2595 (private voice mail) or his cell: 763-258-3371. E-mail: [dmckee545@gmail.com](mailto:dmckee545@gmail.com) • Website at [listen2god.org](http://listen2god.org)**

❖ **Our January From the Heart Offering goes to the Salvation Army of Sibley County.**

**Tithes and Offerings can be sent to Gaylord United Church of Christ  
P.O. Box 385 Gaylord, MN 55334. You can also donate on our website  
or drop off at the church office on Wednesday between 10 a.m. – 4 p.m.**

