

**The Presque Isle Congregational Church
United Church of Christ
January 22, 2023 - Fourth Sunday of Epiphany**

Prelude Barbara Merryman

Gathering Music *You Are Welcome Here*

Welcome Melissa Vance

Introit *By the Stream* Christopher Grundy

Call to Worship Regina Bowie

Holy One, who may abide in your sanctuary? Who may dwell in your sacred creation?

Those who do justice. Those who confront inequities and uplift the oppressed.

Holy One, who may abide in your sanctuary? Who may dwell in your sacred creation?

Those who love kindness. Those who love neighbor, friend and foe.

Holy One, who may abide in your sanctuary? Who may dwell in your sacred creation?

Those who walk humbly with you. Those who follow your lead and answer your call.

Opening Prayer (In Unison)

Just and Loving God, we enter into your sacred spaces, in sanctuaries and in homes, in public gatherings and private places. You bridge time and space to forge us as a beloved community. You, O Sovereign, make plain the way of life for us. Encourage us to join your journey, to love your children and creation, and to contribute to your kingdom on earth. Amen.

Opening Hymn *The God of Abraham Praise* Pilgrim Hymnal - 14

Prayer of Transformation and New Life (In Unison) Christine Standefer

Holy Wisdom, you have expressed your hope for us and vision for life abundantly. Many times we settle for a temporary truce over real peace. We avoid confrontation and accountability that builds up and creates a more just world. We refuse to relentlessly pursue your will when discomforted by the cost of discipleship. Forgive us, O God, we pray.

Assurance of Pardon

Receive the good news that each day presents a new opportunity to follow the way of Jesus—to do justice, love kindness, and walk humbly with God. The grace of the Holy One meets us. God embraces and supports us in the turning and will be faithful to strengthen us on the path of righteousness.

Two-Minute Message Christine Standefer

Visual Liturgy *The Beatitudes* The Work of the People

You're Blessed

⁵⁻¹² When Jesus saw his ministry drawing huge crowds, he climbed a hillside. Those who were apprenticed to him, the committed, climbed with him. Arriving at a quiet place, he sat down and taught his climbing companions. This is what he said:

³ "You're blessed when you're at the end of your rope. With less of you there is more of God and his rule.

⁴ "You're blessed when you feel you've lost what is most dear to you. Only then can you be embraced by the One most dear to you.

⁵ "You're blessed when you're content with just who you are—no more, no less. That's the moment you find yourselves proud owners of everything that can't be bought.

⁶ "You're blessed when you've worked up a good appetite for God. He's food and drink in the best meal you'll ever eat.

⁷ "You're blessed when you care. At the moment of being 'care-full,' you find yourselves cared for.

⁸ "You're blessed when you get your inside world—your mind and heart—put right. Then you can see God in the outside world.

⁹ "You're blessed when you can show people how to cooperate instead of compete or fight. That's when you discover who you really are, and your place in God's family.

¹⁰ "You're blessed when your commitment to God provokes persecution. The persecution drives you even deeper into God's kingdom.

¹¹⁻¹² "Not only that—count yourselves blessed every time people put you down or throw you out or speak lies about you to discredit me. What it means is that the truth is too close for comfort and they are uncomfortable. You can be glad when that happens—give a cheer, even!—for though they don't like it, *I do!* And all heaven applauds. And know that you are in good company. My prophets and witnesses have always gotten into this kind of trouble.

Choral Anthem*Breath of God*

PIUCC Choir

Reflection*Blessed to be a Blessing*

Rev. Dr. Robert Grove-Markwood

Prayers of the People and the Lord's Prayer

Melissa Vance

Our **Creator***, 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 forever. Amen

**Please use whatever name is most familiar/comfortable when you pray to God.*

Closing Hymn*Lead Me, Lord***Community News and Announcements****Benediction** (In Unison)

Displayed on Screen

Postlude

Barbara Merryman