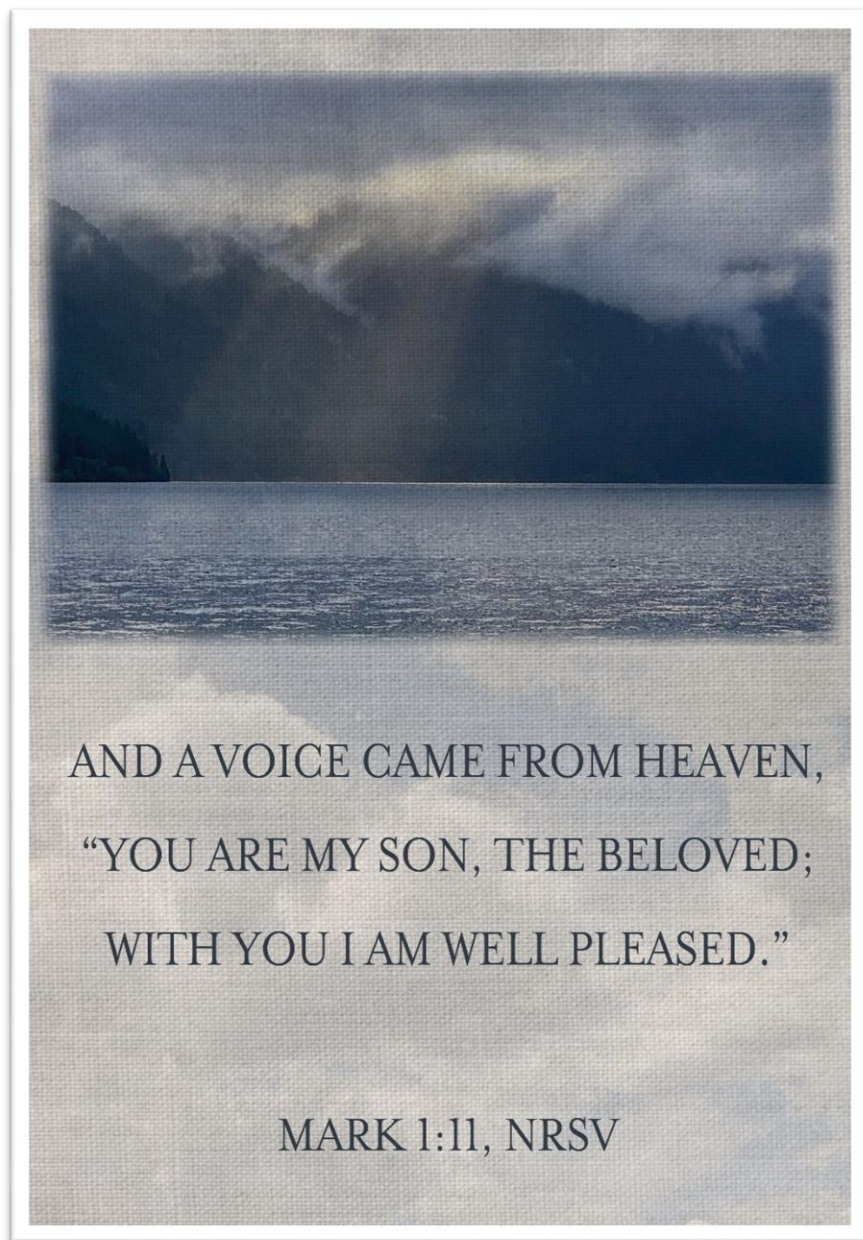


Welcome to St. Paul's United Church of Christ

An Open and Affirming Congregation of the United Church of Christ

January 14, 2024



GOD IS STILL SPEAKING

*NO MATTER WHO YOU ARE, OR WHERE YOU ARE ON LIFE'S
JOURNEY YOU ARE WELCOME HERE!*



Worship Leadership

Preacher: The Rev. John J. Ward-Diorio
The Rev. Allyssa A. Boyer
Lector: Paula Boyer

Ministry of Music

Minister of Music: Eric R. Dundore
Choristers' Director: Jonneke A. Dundore
Assistant Music Director: Mark A. Dundore
Organist: Sarah A. Myers
Assistant Organist: Patrice G. Miller

Ministry of Audio and Video

Jeffrey A. Dundore

Ministry of Service

Lead Greeter: Chris Bowers
Greeters: Corky Short, Patrice Miller, Candy LaRue
Acolyte: Elsa Riesmeyer
Kids' Place: Susan Ward-Diorio
Flower Preparation: Susan Gabriel
Flower Delivery: Winnie and Darryl Wentz
Counting Team: Corky Short, Fenton Fox

Pastor Emeritus

The Rev. Dr. Thomas E. Herrold

Ministers

The Entire Congregation

*Visit the church website, under the 'Sign Up' menu heading, to help
as a Sunday volunteer or Worship Participant.
We're grateful for your generosity.*

ST. PAUL'S UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

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Rev. John: revjohnwd@outlook.com

Rev. Allyssa: allyssaboyer@outlook.com



ST. PAUL'S UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
SERVICE OF WORSHIP

SECOND SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY
BAPTISM OF CHRIST

January 14, 2024

Please note: the livestream broadcast begins with the Announcements.

*If you do not wish to appear in the livestream,
it is best to sit in one of the back three pews of the Sanctuary.*

*Please write up any Prayer Requests ahead of time, leave them in the Red Bowl
or give them to the Welcome Team Leader. They will bring them forward.*

****Those who are comfortable doing so are invited to stand.***

THE RINGING OF THE CHIMES

THE WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

THE ORGAN PRELUDE "Shall We Gather At The River"

Hugh S. Livingston, Jr.

CHORAL INTROIT

*THE HYMN No. 12 "I Sing the Mighty Power of God"

*PRAYER OF INVOCATION (unison)

Gracious God, water has long been a symbol of Your connection with us. As we remember Jesus' Baptism and our own, and the water that marks us, may we feel a connection with You, with each other, and with all people. Amen.

CALL TO CONFESSION

Water is something we can take for granted, until we do not have access to it. Water is essential for life. So too this is true of God. Let us join in a time of Silent Prayers of Confession.

SILENT PRAYERS OF CONFESSION

WORDS OF ASSURANCE (Responsive):

One: God forgives us and continues to connect with us in various and mysterious ways.

ALL: Let us become more and more aware of the true gift that water is, as is God's Presence. Amen.

If you are able, please rise and greet one another with other signs of Peace.

*THE PASSING OF THE PEACE

*THE GLORIA PATRI (#759 is the tune, but not all the same words)

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost;

As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen. Amen.

Children are invited to the front at this time.

Everyone who comes forward will be on camera.

SING THE CHILDREN TO THE FRONT

Jesus Loves the Little Children

Jesus loves the little children, all the children of the world

Shy and Joyful, Bold and Bright

They are precious in his sight

Jesus loves the little children of the world.

THE WORD FOR THE YOUNG

All are invited to come forward and receive a Cowrie shell (or Puka shell as they are known in Hawaii). The water will be blessed by our prayers. As you are given a shell by either Rev. Allyssa or Rev. John, each of us will also be reminded that we are a Beloved Child of God. We encourage you to take your shell home and place it in a location you can see. By looking upon the shell each day, we will be reminded of our Belovedness. Everyone is invited to come forward, whether you remember your Baptism or not, whether you have been Baptized or not. Baptism is the recognition of that which is already true and true for all: We are Beloved Children of God.

If you are uncomfortable coming forward, please let one of the Greeters know and one of our Pastors will come to you.

THE HEBREW SCRIPTURE READING

Genesis 1:1-5

THE PSALM READING

Psalm 29

*THE HYMN “We Enter Your Church, Lord” (to the tune of no. 124, “Away in a Manger”)

We enter your church, Lord, through welcoming doors.

We enter it, too, where you claim us as yours.

It's here at the font that you offer a sign:

You tell us, "My children, you're baptized! You're mine!"

O God, you have called us, inviting us in;

You've made us your household and freed us from sin.

From youngest to oldest, we find in this place

Your waters of welcome, your family, your grace.

We've heard here your welcome, and also your call;

Your Spirit inspires us to share Christ with all.

The life we receive here is life we can share;

We'll carry your message of love everywhere.

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THE RESPONSE:

One: God is Still Speaking.

All: **Thanks be to God!**

THE GOSPEL READING & MESSAGE:

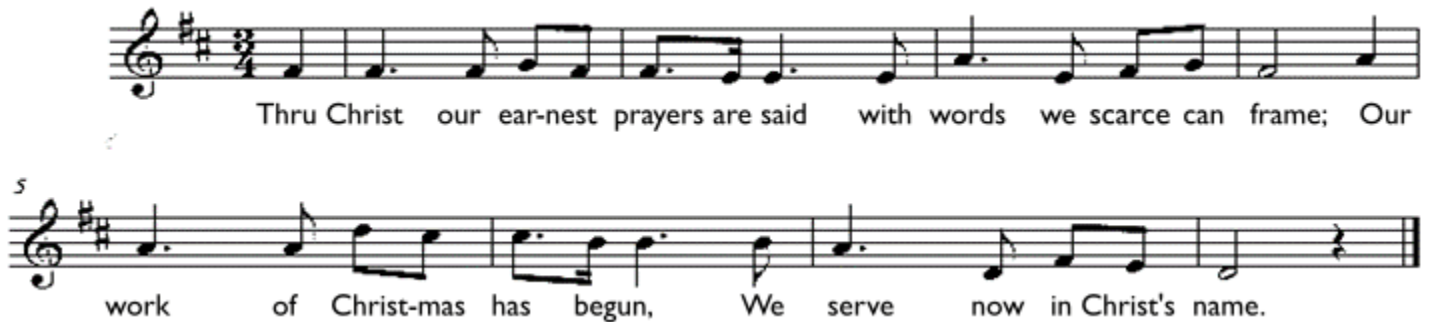
Mark 1:4-11

“The Waters of Baptism”

THE PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE AND THE LORD'S PRAYER

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 debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

THE CHORAL RESPONSE (unison)



Thru Christ our ear-nest prayers are said with words we scarce can frame; Our
work of Christ-mas has begun, We serve now in Christ's name.

Please also place your pew pad sheets in the Offering Plate. Thank you.

THE OFFERTORY "Jesus, the Very Thought of Thee"
Hand Chimes

Thompson

*DOXOLOGY

*From all who dwell beneath the skies,
Let the Creator's praise arise!
Let the Redeemer's name be sung.
Through every land, by every tongue! Amen.*

*THE PRAYER OF DEDICATION (Unison)

O God, from whom comes all the good things we enjoy, we offer our gifts in the spirit of those long ago who opened costly treasures before Jesus. We give in response to Your generosity, identifying with Your pity and compassion for victims of violence, poverty, and oppression. May all who are in need experience the unsearchable riches of Christ and the gift of the Holy Spirit, even as their physical needs are met. May we be coworkers with Christ, whose sacrifice bought our redemption. Amen.

*THE HYMN "Down By the Jordan" (to the tune of no. 22, "Praise to the Lord, the Almighty")

*Down by the Jordan, a prophet named John was baptizing,
Preaching a message the people found bold and surprising:
"God will forgive! Show that you'll change how you live!
Surely God's new day is rising!"*

*There by the river, the crowd came with great expectation:
"Are you God's Chosen One, sent here to rescue our nation?"
"No!" John replied. "He who is mightier than I
Judges and offers salvation."*

(Cont.)

*Jesus, you went to be baptized along with the others,
Taking your place among sinners, God's lost sons and daughters.
Then with great love, God's Spirit came as a dove!
Your work began in those waters.*

*Here in the Church, we are baptized and filled with God's Spirit.
Freed and forgiven, we're welcomed with joy! Can you hear it?
This is God's sign! This is how God says, "You're mine!"
Let's take the good news and share it!*

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*THE BIDDING TO MISSION

*THE WORLD PEACE PRAYER

One: Lead us, O God.

**All: Lead us from death to life, from falsehood to truth.
Lead us from despair to hope, from fear to trust.
Lead us from hate to love, from war to peace.
Let peace fill our hearts, our world, our universe. Amen.**

*THE BENEDICTION

* THE THREE-FOLD AMEN

Please note: the livestream continues until the end of the Postlude.

Please know you are free to leave following the Three-fold Amen and exit to the Narthex to speak with one another. You may be visible and audible on the livestream as you exit early. If you choose to remain, please stay seated and listen quietly to the Postlude.

THE ORGAN POSTLUDE “All Things Bright and Beautiful”

Patricia Lou Harris

References:

The Prayer of Dedication is from “Whispers of God” by Lavon Bayler, 1987, United Church Press.

The World Peace Prayer is a paraphrase of a verse from the Upanishads, the most ancient scriptures of Hinduism, also prayed daily by Roman Catholic Benedictine nuns.