

Mark 1:37

"And when they found him [Jesus],  
they exclaimed:  
*'Everyone is looking for  
you!'*

**February 4, 2024**

**St. John's United Church of Christ**

*As believers in Jesus Christ, we strive with unconditional love and selflessness – using our God given gifts – to provide a nurturing shelter for those seeking a Christian home. We offer opportunities for spiritual growth through worship, education, fellowship, prayer and Christian action throughout our community and the world.*

**Called by God  
Sharing with the World**

**February 4, 2024**

**Fifth Sunday after Epiphany**

## **Meditation**

“Everybody can be great...because anybody can serve. You don't have to have a college degree to serve. You don't have to make your subject and verb agree to serve. You only need a heart full of grace. A soul generated by love.” Martin Luther King Jr.

## **Chimes**

## **Prelude**

*There's a Quiet Understanding*

## **Welcome and Announcements**

## **✠ Opening Hymn # 438      *On Eagles Wings***

You who dwell in the shelter of the Lord,  
Who abide in his shadow for life,  
Say to the Lord “My refuge, my Rock in whom I trust

And he will raise you up on eagle's wings  
Bear you on the breath of dawn,  
Make you to shine like the sun  
And hold you in the palm of his hand.

The snare of the fowler will never capture you  
And famine will bring you no fear  
Under his wings your refuge, his faithfulness your shield.

And he will raise you up on eagle's wings  
Bear you on the breath of dawn,  
Make you to shine like the sun  
And hold you in the palm of his hand.

You need not fear the terror of the night,  
Nor the arrow that flies by day  
Though thousands fall about you, near you it shall not come.

And he will raise you up on eagle's wings  
Bear you on the breath of dawn,  
Make you to shine like the sun  
And hold you in the palm of his hand.

## **Lifting up our Joys**

## **February Birthday Blessings**

## **Passing of the Peace**

### **✠ Call to Worship (Congregation reads bold print)**

Come, rejoice and sing! God's love is showered over you this day.

**We gather to praise God and celebrate God's presence with us.**

God shows compassion to all who are weak and downtrodden.

**Jesus Christ offers healing mercies to our troubled souls.**

Praise be to God who has called us here.

**Thanks be to God for God's eternal love.**

### **✠ Opening Prayer**

Pastor Jeff

### **✠ Prayer of Confession** (*unison*)

**O God, we confess that we forget who we are. We don't listen for a still small voice. We walk with our heads down and miss all the stars that could be ours, but we know, O God, that you are a God of Hope who does not forget your covenant with us, a Shepherd-God who looks for lost sheep, a faithful God who keeps calling us in spite of our deafness, a God who enters our history and opens our eyes and heals our blindness. O God, accept us as your stewards and send us out in the hope of your love.**

*Silent pause for reflection*

**Amen.**

## ✠ Assurance of Forgiveness

The grace of God is freely given. We need only open our hearts and accept it. Know that God has forgiven us and cherishes us. **Amen.**

## Children's Message

Pastor Jeff

## Bible Readings

*Isaiah 40:21-31; Mark 1:29-39*

Ellen Kirby

### Isaiah 40:21-31

<sup>21</sup>Have you not known? Have you not heard? Has it not been told you from the beginning? Have you not understood from the foundations of the earth? <sup>22</sup>It is he who sits above the circle of the earth, and its inhabitants are like grasshoppers; who stretches out the heavens like a curtain, and spreads them like a tent to live in; <sup>23</sup>who brings princes to naught, and makes the rulers of the earth as nothing.

<sup>24</sup>Scarcely are they planted, scarcely sown, scarcely has their stem taken root in the earth, when he blows upon them, and they wither, and the tempest carries them off like stubble.

<sup>25</sup>To whom then will you compare me, or who is my equal? says the Holy One. <sup>26</sup>Lift up your eyes on high and see: Who created these? He who brings out their host and numbers them, calling them all by name; because he is great in strength, mighty in power, not one is missing.

<sup>27</sup>Why do you say, O Jacob, and speak, O Israel, "My way is hidden from the LORD, and my right is disregarded by my God"?

<sup>28</sup>Have you not known? Have you not heard? The LORD is the everlasting God, the Creator of the ends of the earth. He does not faint or grow weary; his understanding is unsearchable. <sup>29</sup>He gives power to the faint, and strengthens the powerless.

<sup>30</sup>Even youths will faint and be weary, and the young will fall exhausted; <sup>31</sup>but those who wait for the LORD shall renew their strength, they shall mount up with wings like eagles, they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint.

## Mark 1:29-39

<sup>29</sup>As soon as they left the synagogue, they entered the house of Simon and Andrew, with James and John.

<sup>30</sup>Now Simon's mother-in-law was in bed with a fever, and they told him about her at once. <sup>31</sup>He came and took her by the hand and lifted her up. Then the fever left her, and she began to serve them.

<sup>32</sup>That evening, at sundown, they brought to him all who were sick or possessed with demons. <sup>33</sup>And the whole city was gathered around the door. <sup>34</sup>And he cured many who were sick with various diseases, and cast out many demons; and he would not permit the demons to speak, because they knew him.

<sup>35</sup>In the morning, while it was still very dark, he got up and went out to a deserted place, and there he prayed. <sup>36</sup>And Simon and his companions hunted for him. <sup>37</sup>When they found him, they said to him, "Everyone is searching for you."

<sup>38</sup>He answered, "Let us go on to the neighboring towns, so that I may proclaim the message there also; for that is what I came out to do." <sup>39</sup>And he went throughout Galilee, proclaiming the message in their synagogues and casting out demons.

### Choir Anthem

*"Holy Manna"*

### Pastor's Message

*"Seeking Christ"*

Pastor Jeff

### Installation of Consistory

There are different kinds of spiritual gifts, but the same Spirit gives them.

**There are different ways of serving, but the same God is served.**

There are different abilities to perform service, but the same God gives ability to each of us for our particular service.

**The Spirit's presence is shown in some way in each person for the good of all.**

Christ is like a single body, which has many parts.

**It is still one body even though it is made up of different parts.**

If one part of the body suffers, all the other parts suffer with it; if one part is praised; all the other parts share its happiness.

All of us are Christ's body, and each one is an important part of it.

## ✠ Reading of the Church Covenant

We covenant one with another to seek and respond to the Word and the Will of God. We purpose to walk together in the ways of the Lord, made known and to be made known to us. We hold it to be the mission of the Church to witness to the Gospel of Jesus Christ in all the world, while worshiping God, and striving for truth, justice, and peace. As did our for bearers, we depend on the Holy Spirit to lead and empower us. We pray for the coming of the kingdom of God, and we look with faith toward the triumph of righteousness and eternal life.

## Giving our Gifts to God

### Offertory

*One Bread One Body*

### ✠ Doxology

Praise God from whom all blessings flow.

Praise God all creatures here below.

Praise God above ye heavenly hosts.

Praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost. Amen.

## Sacrament of Holy Communion

### ✠ Communion Hymn #701

*There's a Quiet Understanding*

There's a quiet understanding when we're gathered in the Spirit;

It's a promise that he gives us, when we gather in his name

There's a love we feel in Jesus, there's a manna that he feeds us;

It's a promise that he gives us, when we gather in his name.

And we know when we're together, sharing love and understanding,

That our brothers and our sisters, feel the oneness that he brings.

Thank you, thank you, thank you, Jesus, for the way you love and feed us,

For the many ways you lead us, thank you, thank you, Lord.

## Invitation to the Table

### ✠ Communion Prayer

Pastor Jeff

May the Lord be with you.

**And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts.

**We lift them up to God.**

Let us give thanks to God Most High.

**It is right to give God thanks and praise.**

Nourished at this table, O God, may we know Christ's redemptive love and live a new life in him. Help us who recognize our Lord in the breaking of bread to see and serve him in all whose lives are broken. Give us who are fed at his hand grace to share our bread with the hungry and with the hungry of heart. Keep us faithful in your service until Christ comes in final victory, and we shall feast with all your saints in the joy of your eternal realm. Through Christ, all glory and honor are yours, almighty Father, with the Holy Spirit in your holy church, now and forever. Therefore, we join with all the saints and angels and the whole creation to proclaim the glory of your name.

### ✠ Sanctus

**Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God of Sabaoth; Heaven and earth are full, are full of the majesty of thy glory, Hosanna, hosanna, hosanna in the highest! Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord, Hosanna, hosanna, hosanna in the highest!**

*(the congregation may be seated as the Pastor continues)*

### Words of Institution

Hear the words of the institution of the Holy Supper of our Lord Jesus Christ...Therefore we proclaim the mystery of our faith.

**All: Christ has died, Christ is risen, Christ will come again.**

## The Blessing of the Elements

Pastor Jeff

## Prayers of the People

Pastor Jeff

## **The Lord's Prayer** (*unison*)

**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 gifts of God for the people of God. Come, for all things are ready.

## **Sharing the Elements**

Take and eat; this is the body of Christ, broken for you. **Amen!**

Take and drink; this is the cup of the new covenant, poured out for you. **Amen!**

## **✠Prayer of Thanksgiving** (*unison*)

**Holy God, thank you for your love which lifts us, your presence which fills us  
and your life which empowers us to be your people. Amen.**

## **✠Closing Hymn #698** *Let Us Talents and Tongues Employ*

Let us talents and tongues employ,  
reaching out with a shout of joy;  
Bread is broken, the wine is poured,  
Christ is spoken and seen and heard.

Jesus lives again, earth can breathe again,  
pass the Word around; loaves abound!

Christ is able to make us one,  
at the table he set the tone,  
Teaching people to live to bless,  
love in word and indeed express.

Jesus lives again, earth can breathe again,  
pass the Word around; loaves abound!



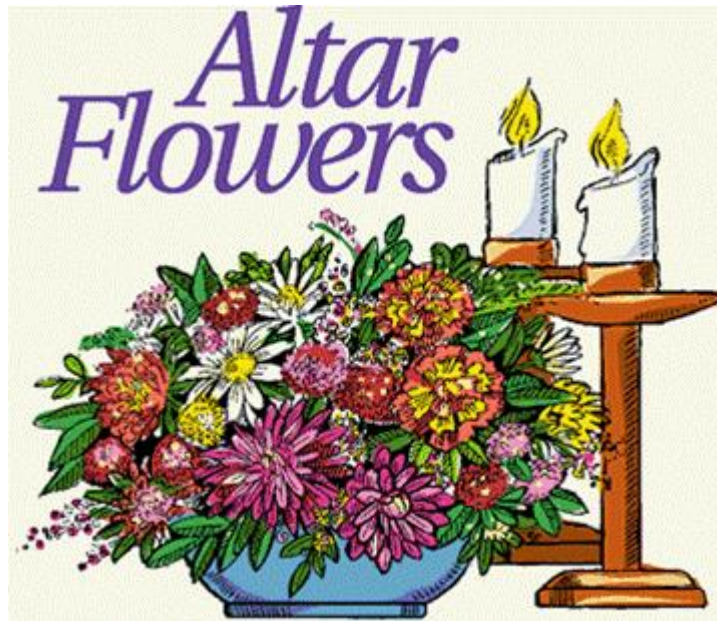
✝ **Sending Forth and Final Blessing**

✝ **Three-fold Amen**

✝ **Chimes/Meditation**

**Postlude**

*Blessed Assurance*



*The Altar Flowers are given to the Glory of God,  
In Memory of Loved Ones  
Presented by George & Deb Wagner*