



**February 8, 2026**

## **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 8, 2026**  
**5<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Epiphany**

**Meditation**

“The servant leader is servant first...it begins with the natural feeling that one wants to serve, to serve first.”  
Robert Greenleaf

**Chimes**

**Prelude**                    *Holy, Holy, Holy* – arranged by Mark Hayes

**Welcome and Announcements**

**✠Opening Hymn #350**        *The Summons*

Will you come and follow me, if I but call your name?  
Will you go where you don't know and never be the same?  
Will you let my love be shown, will you let my name be known,  
Will you let my life be grown in you and you in me?

Will you leave yourself behind if I but call your name?  
Will you care for cruel and kind and never be the same?  
Will you risk the hostile stare should your life attract or scare?  
Will you let me answer prayer in you and you in me?

Will you let the blinded see if I but call your name?  
Will you set the prisoners free and never be the same?  
Will you kiss the leper clean, and do such as this unseen,  
And admit to what I mean in you and you in me?

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Lord, your summons echoes true when you but call my name.  
Let me turn and follow you and never be the same.  
In your company I'll go where your love and footsteps show.  
Thus I'll move and live and grow in you and you in me.

## Lifting Up Our Joys

## Passing of the Peace

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

Psalm 100

Shout for joy to the Lord, all the earth. Worship the Lord with gladness;  
come before him with joyful songs.

**Know that the Lord is God. It is he who made us, and we are his;  
we are his people, the sheep of his pasture.**

Enter his gates with thanksgiving and his courts with praise;  
give thanks to him and praise his name.

**For the Lord is good and his love endures forever; his faithfulness  
continues through all generations.**

### ✠Opening Prayer

Kay Jones

Thank you, Lord for bringing us all together as a congregation again this morning.  
It is a joy to worship you together. Please inspire us to not only worship you in our  
time together this morning but help us to continue to worship you with our actions  
all week long. Help us to live out Jesus' call to us to follow him in our daily lives,  
every day. Amen

### ✠Prayer of Confession

**Holy One, we confess that we have not always followed the way that Jesus set  
before us. We become distracted with all there is to do each day. Instead of  
centering in you as we move through the day, we fill our hearts and minds  
with all the demands and noise around us. Help us to refocus ourselves as  
children of your kingdom instead of children of this world.**

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*Silent pause for reflection*

**Amen.**

### **✠ Assurance of Forgiveness**

We know that Jesus taught us that we need to “seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you.” We can turn to God at any time to seek that which is our real purpose. God is always there to guide us and always there to forgive us and welcome us back.

**Children’s Message**

*Talents*

Kay Jones

**Bible Readings**

*1 Peter 4:10-11 - Matthew 25:14-30*

Eileen Rump

### **1 Peter 4:10-11**

As every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God.

If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God; if any man minister, let him do it as of the ability which God giveth: that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom be praise and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.

### **Matthew 25:14-30**

For the kingdom of heaven is as a man travelling into a far country, who called his own servants, and delivered unto them his goods.

And unto one he gave five talents, to another two, and to another one; to every man according to his several ability; and straightway took his journey.

Then he that had received the five talents went and traded with the same, and made them other five talents.

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And likewise he that had received two, he also gained other two.

But he that had received one went and digged in the earth, and hid his lord's money.

After a long time the lord of those servants cometh, and reckoneth with them. And so he that had received five talents came and brought other five talents, saying, Lord, thou deliveredst unto me five talents: behold, I have gained beside them five talents more.

His lord said unto him, Well done, thou good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord.

He also that had received two talents came and said, Lord, thou deliveredst unto me two talents: behold, I have gained two other talents beside them.

His lord said unto him, Well done, good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord.

Then he which had received the one talent came and said, Lord, I knew thee that thou art an hard man, reaping where thou hast not sown, and gathering where thou hast not strawed:

And I was afraid, and went and hid thy talent in the earth: lo, there thou hast that is thine.

His lord answered and said unto him, Thou wicked and slothful servant, thou knewest that I reap where I sowed not, and gather where I have not strawed: Thou oughtest therefore to have put my money to the exchangers, and then at my coming I should have received mine own with usury.

Take therefore the talent from him, and give it unto him which hath ten talents. For unto every one that hath shall be given, and he shall have abundance: but from him that hath not shall be taken away even that which he hath. And cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

## **Choir Anthem**

*Dear Heavenly Father* – by Lloyd Larson

## **Message**

*Serving the Lord*

Kay Jones

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## ✠The Apostle's Creed

**I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth. I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried; he descended to the dead. On the third day he rose again; he ascended into heaven, he is seated at the right hand of the Father, and he will come again to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.** *(From the UCC Book of Worship)*

## Giving our Gifts to God

**Offertory**                      *Prayer – by Jean Langlais*

## ✠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.**

## Prayers of the People

### **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**

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✠Closing Hymn #592

*Lord, You Give the Great Commission*

(Verses 1,2,4,5)

Lord, you give the great commission:  
“Heal the sick and preach the word.”  
Lest the church neglect its mission  
And the gospel go unheard,  
Help us witness to your purpose  
With renewed integrity:

With the Spirit’s gifts empower us  
For the work of ministry.

Lord, you call us to your service:  
“In my name baptize and teach.”  
That the world may trust your promise,  
Life abundant meant for each,  
Give us all new fervor, draw us  
Closer in community:

With the Spirit’s gifts empower us  
For the work of ministry.

Lord show us love’s true measure:  
“Father, what they do, forgive.”  
Yet we hoard as private treasure  
All that you so freely give.  
May your care and mercy lead us  
To a just society:

With the Spirit’s gifts empower us  
For the work of ministry.

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Lord, you bless with words assuring:  
“I am with you to the end.”  
Faith and hope and love restoring,  
May we serve as you intend,  
And, amid the cares that claim us,  
Hold in mind eternity:

With the Spirit’s gifts empower us  
For the work of ministry.

**✝ Sending Forth and Final Blessing**

**✝ Threefold Amen**

**✝ Chimes/Meditation**

**Postlude**      *They’ll Know We Are Christians*





***The Altar flowers are given to the Glory of God,  
in memory of wife, Karen and son, Chad.  
Presented by Dr. Jim Fridirici.***

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