

**Welcome to the Community Church of Richmond
United Church of Christ**

Our Church at Worship on The Festival of the Transfiguration

February 27, 2022

10:00 A.M.

***Our Mission: To be an inviting, caring faith community
connecting with Christ.***

Tune into Facebook at 10:00 on Sunday to share this time of worship.

You can access that video even if you don't have a Facebook account –
just type in <https://www.facebook.com/CommunityChurchOfRichmond/>

WE GATHER TO WORSHIP GOD

PRELUDE

Penny Kraft

WORDS OF WELCOME

Rev. Hope Molozaiy

GATHERING SONG “Hallelujah (Your Love Makes Me Sing)”

Kim May

HALLELUJA

Verse 1: Your love is amazing, steady and unchanging;
Your love is a mountain, firm beneath my feet.
Your love is a myst'ry, how You gently lift me;
When I am surrounded, Your love carries me.

Chours: Hallelujah, hallelujah, hallelujah,
Your love makes me sing.
Hallelujah, hallelujah, hallelujah,
Your love makes me sing.

Verse 2: Your love is surprising, I can feel it rising;
All the joy that's growing deep inside of me.
Ev'ry time I see You, all Your goodness shines through.
I can feel this God song rising up in me.

Chorus 2X

Tag: Your love makes me sing
Your love makes me sing

Words and music by: Brenton Brown | Brian Doerksen, © 2000 Vineyard Songs (Admin. by Vineyard Music UK
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One: There is mystery at the heart of things;
 it is alive and sings its song into all that is dull and dreary.
 It's born of a wonder that only increases:
 for in exploring, the wonder grows,
 and in understanding, a greater puzzle is revealed.

So we gather around the greatest mystery,
 where faith can offer belief and wonder enough
 to transfigure the whole universe in resurrection truth.
 Come, let us wonder into the mystery of God.

One: Let us pray:
 Lord God, we come here with longing,
 and hearts full of things we can't always share with others;
 you greet us with love and care.

**All: Today, may we know you better.
 May we be emptied of the burdens we carry
 and the regrets that we cling to.
 May we meet your love and forgiveness,
 as you meet us here.**

One: With you, O Lord, it is never too late;
 you always hold out one more opportunity
 for us to find our way home to you.

**All: So today, may we be healed,
 restored,
 forgiven,
 as we worship you.
 Amen.**

HYMN

"I Heard the Voice of Jesus Say"

#489

WE LISTEN TO THE WORD OF GOD

SCRIPTURE READINGS

Psalm 27:1-4

The LORD is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear?
 The LORD is the stronghold of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?
 When evildoers assail me to devour my flesh—
 my adversaries and foes— they shall stumble and fall.
 Though an army encamp against me, my heart shall not fear;
 though war rise up against me, yet I will be confident.

One thing I asked of the LORD, that will I seek after:
to live in the house of the LORD all the days of my life,
to behold the beauty of the LORD, and to inquire in his temple.

John 9: 1-38

As he walked along, he saw a man blind from birth. His disciples asked him, “Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?” Jesus answered, “Neither this man nor his parents sinned. So that God’s works might be revealed in him, we must work the works of him who sent me while it is day; night is coming when no one can work. As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world.” When he had said this, he spat on the ground and made mud with the saliva and spread the mud on the man’s eyes, saying to him, “Go, wash in the pool of Siloam” (which means Sent). Then he went and washed and came back able to see.

The neighbors and those who had seen him before as a beggar began to ask, “Is this not the man who used to sit and beg?” Some were saying, “It is he.” Others were saying, “No, but it is someone like him.” He kept saying, “I am the man.” But they kept asking him, “Then how were your eyes opened?” He answered, “The man called Jesus made mud, spread it on my eyes, and said to me, ‘Go to Siloam and wash.’ Then I went and washed and received my sight.” They said to him, “Where is he?” He said, “I do not know.”

They brought to the Pharisees the man who had formerly been blind. Now it was a sabbath day when Jesus made the mud and opened his eyes. Then the Pharisees also began to ask him how he had received his sight. He said to them, “He put mud on my eyes. Then I washed, and now I see.” Some of the Pharisees said, “This man is not from God, for he does not observe the sabbath.” But others said, “How can a man who is a sinner perform such signs?” And they were divided. So they said again to the blind man, “What do you say about him? It was your eyes he opened.” He said, “He is a prophet.”

The Jews did not believe that he had been blind and had received his sight until they called the parents of the man who had received his sight and asked them, “Is this your son, who you say was born blind? How then does he now see?” His parents answered, “We know that this is our son, and that he was born blind; but we do not know how it is that now he sees, nor do we know who opened his eyes. Ask him; he is of age. He will speak for himself.” His parents said this because they were afraid of the Jewish authorities; for they had already agreed that anyone who confessed

Jesus to be the Messiah would be put out of the synagogue. Therefore his parents said, "He is of age; ask him." So for the second time they called the man who had been blind, and they said to him, "Give glory to God! We know that this man is a sinner." He answered, "I do not know whether he is a sinner. One thing I do know, that though I was blind, now I see." They said to him, "What did he do to you? How did he open your eyes?" He answered them, "I have told you already, and you would not listen. Why do you want to hear it again? Do you also want to become his disciples?" Then they reviled him, saying, "You are his disciple, but we are disciples of Moses. We know that God has spoken to Moses, but as for this man, we do not know where he comes from." The man answered, "Here is an astonishing thing! You do not know where he comes from, and yet he opened my eyes. We know that God does not listen to sinners, but he does listen to one who worships him and obeys his will. Never since the world began has it been heard that anyone opened the eyes of a person born blind. If this man were not from God, he could do nothing." They answered him, "You were born entirely in sins, and are you trying to teach us?" And they drove him out.

Jesus heard that they had driven him out, and when he found him, he said, "Do you believe in the Son of Man?" He answered, "And who is he, sir? Tell me, so that I may believe in him." Jesus said to him, "You have seen him, and the one speaking with you is he." He said, "Lord, I believe." And he worshiped him.

MESSAGE Abundant Life: Invited in to See

WE RESPOND TO THE WORD OF GOD

HYMN

"Amazing Grace"

#547

TIME OF PRAYER

Pastoral Prayer

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 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.**

THE OFFERING

Invitation to Give: We are so thankful for the continued financial support that we have continued to receive during this time! You may always send your check directly to the church at PO Box 246, Richmond IL, 60071.

Prayer of Dedication

NEWS OF THE CHURCH

DISMISSAL WITH BLESSING

Pastoral Benediction

Sending Song "When the Lord's in You"

**When the Lord's in you, and the Lord's in me,
there's a bridge between our spirits, wherever we may be.
'Til we meet again let us hold the Mystery
of the Lord in you and me.**

(Used with permission. Crosswinds Music, Madison WI)

Call to Worship and Opening Prayer, adp. from Spill the Beans, issue 25, p. 98; Music shared under CCLI License #1908882

CHURCH NEWS

BIBLE STUDY: We meet on Zoom each Tuesday at 1:30pm. Our Meeting ID is 896 5130 1635 and the passcode is 003204. No special knowledge is needed! This Tuesday, we'll be studying John 11.

LENT BEGINS THIS WEDNESDAY, MARCH 2:

We will hold worship in-person and online that evening at 7PM, a brief service with some prayers, hymns, and the imposition of ashes. If you would like to receive ashes, but don't plan to attend in-person worship, Pastor Hope will be available in the sanctuary from 5:30 to 6:30 that evening for ashes and a brief prayer. Stop by at your convenience.

As Lent continues, we will hold weekly gatherings on Zoom to nourish our spirits while we explore some themes of love and gratitude. Those gatherings will be at 7:00 for about an hour.

FUNDRAISER BRAINSTORMS – Do you have a suggestion for a fundraiser we could try in these times? Perhaps one that doesn't depend on gathering large crowds of people? Perhaps one that we could target to the wider community to bring in some outside

support for our church? Even if it's an idea you just don't think would work here, go ahead and share it so we get some ideas flowing.

BREAD FOR THE WORLD OFFERING – In the season of Lent, we dedicate ourselves to following Jesus, to prayer, and to action alongside and on behalf of those in need. In that spirit, The Wider Missions Ministry invites you make a special offering to support Bread for the World as they seek to improve global nutrition and end extreme hunger by 2030. For more information, visit www.bread.org. To make your special donation, simply indicate “Bread for the World” on your giving envelope or in the memo line of your check.

WORSHIP & SPIRITUAL GROWTH MINISTRY will meet NEXT Sunday, March 6, in-person, following worship.

IN-PERSON WORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES:

+ After conversation with Worship & Spiritual Growth and with the Cabinet, beginning next Sunday, Feb. 27, we'll welcome up to 3 households of people to worship in the sanctuary. YOU NEED TO SIGN UP IN ADVANCE TO COME. Singles, couples, families – whoever you are, you are welcome to sign up and come worship. To sign up, go to

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/20F094DAEA82DA4FF2-inperson>

There you'll find a list of upcoming Sundays, each with 3 sign-up slots. Select the Sunday you want to come, type in your name and email, click 'sign-up' and you're all set! Bring your mask and we'll see you in worship!

If you have problems with the online sign-up, contact the church office (Tues – Thurs AM) or Pastor Hope directly, and we'll get you signed up.

+ As for 'no-sign-up-required' worship: will be back soon!

Bible Background

- This healing is one of the 'signs' John's gospel tells about, which means that while the giving of sight is important in the story, it's not the main point. We see that as the discussion goes on after this man is healed until he finds himself naming himself as disciple of Jesus.

- John wrote a community of Jewish people who had become followers of Jesus, and who had been shunned by their own synagogues because of their faith in Jesus. They were cast out of their communities, and most likely their families as well, in order to live their new faith. They probably sometimes wondered whether faith in Jesus was worth all that they had sacrificed. It's important to remember that this group was the original audience for this gospel when we hear stories like today's that talks about this man being thrown out of his faith community and disowned by his parents for his continued faith in Jesus. (The historical evidence indicates that while groups of Jesus-following Jews were pushed out of their synagogues, that did not happen during the life of Jesus, but several decades after.)

- Healing stories in the Bible often sound simple – along the lines of “Ask and you shall receive” – and they sometimes leave us feeling that our own healing should be that simple too – if we just have faith in Jesus, if we just pray right or wash in the right pool. These stories, though, are meant to indicate the power of God more than they are about how anyone gets healed.

- These stories can also play into a train of thought that might fall under the category of “ableism.” That's the idea, simply put, that people with certain characteristics are 'normal', and therefore 'good' and 'complete' and people with different characteristics are 'abnormal', and therefore 'bad' or 'lacking'. So, that would read today's story as being someone with sight is good and someone with blindness is bad. Many people who live today with a variety of characteristics and conditions, abilities and disabilities, will argue against these broad judgments, and might at times even argue that their 'conditions' are gifts from God. Part of the beauty of stories like this one from John is that Jesus sees this man who was born blind as a mighty work of God, whole and worthy, from the very beginning.

- Do you remember the first words of the gospel of John? “In the beginning...” The same words that start the book Genesis. Through this gospel, John keeps using language and imagery to point to Jesus' ministry as a 're-creation' story. In today's reading, Jesus says he is the light of the world – light is the first thing that God creates in Genesis 1. Then Jesus plays in the mud to bring sight to this man's eyes – the mud is what God uses in Genesis 2 to sculpt the humans. More re-creation connections.

PRAYERS for the WEEK OF February 27, 2022

If you have prayer updates or announcements to share, Please send them to BOTH Pastor Hope (pastorhope@richmonducc.org) AND our office manager, Brandi Pletcher (office@richmonducc.org). THANKS!
We will leave a person on our list for four weeks, unless asked to leave them on longer.

JOYS: Birthdays Ina Obara (Feb 28), James Kraft (March 4), Ava Connerty (March 6)

PRAYERS FOR:

A Richmond family in a time of crisis
Marti Swanson
Kim May recovering from scheduled surgery
Elise Livingston's friend, Jim Wright (Patty's husband)
Debbie Franzone
Deann Workmon

Ongoing Prayers:

Lydia Blanton's friend, Natalie, and Natalie's family
Marti Swanson's brother, John Baldwin
Ella Watts, Melissa Jones's mother
Louise Strah's niece, Amy Lenik

Prayer Partner

Our Congregational Prayer Partner this week is Marcia Becker.

In the Wider Church: We pray for our neighbors in Christ, LifeSpring Community Church in Spring Grove, and their senior pastor, Cabot Ashwill.

We also pray for our Mission Partner: Church World Service, which for more than 70 years has been working toward one goal: building a world where there is enough for all. "We've seen gardens flourishing in barren land. Migrants and refugees finding home even after every door has been closed. Houses standing strong against nature's worst disasters. That's the power of your compassion at work when it links to human resilience." For more info, visit www.cwsglobal.org.

Members and Friends who are Homebound or in Nursing Facilities:

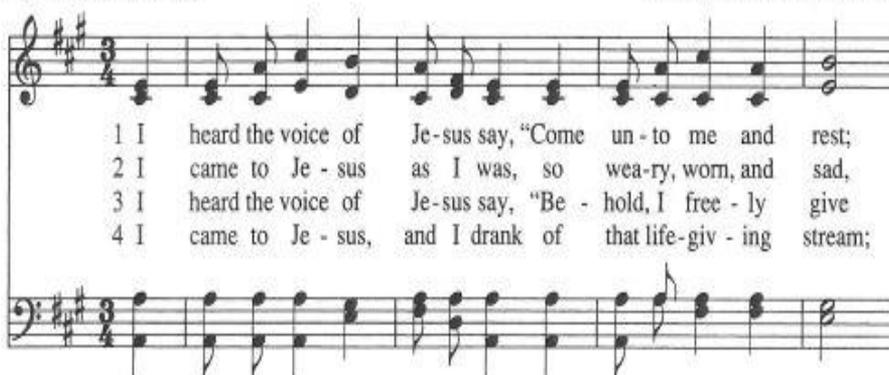
Mercedes Ahlgrim (New Mexico), Sharon Mensing (Sterling), Bob Krueger (Libertyville)

I Heard the Voice of Jesus Say

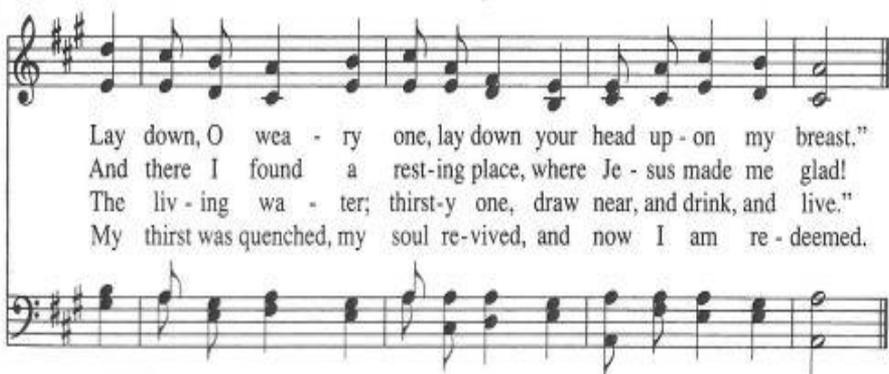
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Horatius Bonar, 1846; alt.

Matt. 11:28-30; John 4:7-15; 8:12



1 I heard the voice of Je-sus say, "Come un-to me and rest;
2 I came to Je-sus as I was, so wea-ry, worn, and sad,
3 I heard the voice of Je-sus say, "Be-hold, I free-ly give
4 I came to Je-sus, and I drank of that life-giv-ing stream;



Lay down, O wea-ry one, lay down your head up-on my breast."
And there I found a rest-ing place, where Je-sus made me glad!
The liv-ing wa-ter; thirst-y one, draw near, and drink, and live."
My thirst was quenched, my soul re-vived, and now I am re-deemed.

5 I heard the voice of Je-sus say,
"I am this lost world's Light,
Look un-to me; your morn shall rise,
and all your day be bright."

6 I looked to Je-sus, and I found
my guid-ing Star, my Sun;
And in that light of life I'll go
till trav-el-ing days are done.

Horatius Bonar was one of the founders of the Free Church of Scotland. A man of wide scholarship and great devotion to his ministry, he wrote nearly one book a year, as well as some 600 hymns.

Tune: EVAN C.M.
William H. Havergal, 1847
Arr. Lowell Mason, 1850
Alternate tune: KINGSFOLD
(Pair stanzas 1-2, 3-4, 5-6)

Amazing Grace, How Sweet the Sound

547

St. 1-4, John Newton, 1779; alt.

St. 5, A Collection of Sacred Ballads, 1790

1 A - maz - ing grace, how sweet the sound, that
 2 'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear, and
 3 Through man - y dan - gers, toils, and snares, I
 4 My God has prom - ised good to me, whose
 5 When we've been there ten thou - sand years, bright

saved a wretch like me! I once was lost, but
 grace my fears re - lieved; How pre - cious did that
 have al - read - y come; 'Tis grace has brought me
 word my hope se - cures; God will my shield and
 shin - ing as the sun, We've no less days to

now am found, was blind but now I see.
 grace ap - pear the hour I first be - lieved!
 safe thus far, and grace will lead me home.
 por - tion be as long as life en - dures.
 sing God's praise than when we'd first be - gun.

John Newton's autobiographical hymn reflects his conversion from his earlier existence as a slave trader. While serving as curate in the English village of Olney, Newton met William Cowper, and together they published Olney Hymns, which included this hymn.

Tune: AMAZING GRACE C.M.
 (NEW BRITAIN)
 Columbia Harmony, Cincinnati, 1829
 Arr. Edwin O. Excell, 1900