

Welcome to the Community Church of Richmond
United Church of Christ

Our Church at Worship on the 4th Sunday after Epiphany

January 28, 2024

10:00 A.M.

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



Welcome, visitors! Our greeters have welcome bags to share with you, so please make sure they know you are visiting.

WE GATHER TO WORSHIP GOD

PRELUDE

Penny Kraft

WORDS OF WELCOME

Rev. Hope Molozaiv

Sharing of joys and concerns

GATHERING SONG "More Light"

**More light, more truth is breaking from your word.
More light, more truth,
Holy Spirit, help us hear what needs to be heard.**

Words & music by C. Grundy, © Hand and Soil Music, 2012

CALL TO WORSHIP & OPENING PRAYER

George Zimmermann

Leader: Way beyond all journeying,
Truth behind all mystery,
Life within all living:

All: We praise you.

Leader: Salve for every soreness,
mender of every brokenness,
midwife of a better future:

All: We praise you.

Leader: Ground of all being,
judge of all nations,
conscience of the universe,

All: We praise you.

Leader: Maker, Redeemer,
confessor, companion,
befriender, inspirer,
God beyond all names,

All: We praise you.

Leader: Let us pray.

Because God is good,
and has intended us to share that goodness,
we open ourselves
to nothing less than transformation
as together we say:

**All: Holy God,
holy and mighty,
holy and immortal
have mercy on us.**

Leader: You are the Word behind all words,
the calm at the core of the storm,
the energy that sustains creation...

...

And open us up to Jesus,
in whom all things are held together for God
and for our good.

All: Amen.

HYMN

“All Beautiful the March of Days”

#434

WE LISTEN TO THE WORD OF GOD

ANTHEM

Chancel Choir

THE CHANCEL STEPS

The children are invited to join the pastor at the front of the church at this time. Afterwards, they are dismissed to Sunday School for the remainder of worship. They will return upstairs at the end of worship.

SONG RESPONSE “This Little Light of Mine”

This little light of mine, I’m gonna let it shine.

This little light of mine, I’m gonna let it shine.

This little light of mine, I’m gonna let it shine.

Let it shine, Let it shine, Let it shine.

Tune: this Joy irr. | African American Spiritual | Arr. Jeffrey Radford 1993

SCRIPTURE READINGS

Psalm 89:1-4

I will sing of your steadfast love, O LORD, forever;

with my mouth I will proclaim your faithfulness to all generations.

I declare that your steadfast love is established forever;

your faithfulness is as firm as the heavens.

You said, “I have made a covenant with my chosen one;

I have sworn to my servant David:

‘I will establish your descendants forever

and build your throne for all generations.’ ”

The Gospel according to Mark 5:1-20

They came to the other side of the sea, to the region of the Gerasenes. And when he had stepped out of the boat, immediately a man from the tombs with an unclean spirit met him. He lived among the tombs, and no one could restrain him any more, even with a chain, for he had often been restrained with shackles and chains, but

the chains he wrenched apart, and the shackles he broke in pieces, and no one had the strength to subdue him. Night and day among the tombs and on the mountains he was always howling and bruising himself with stones. When he saw Jesus from a distance, he ran and bowed down before him, and he shouted at the top of his voice, "What have you to do with me, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? I adjure you by God, do not torment me." For he had said to him, "Come out of the man, you unclean spirit!" Then Jesus asked him, "What is your name?" He replied, "My name is Legion, for we are many." He begged him earnestly not to send them out of the region. Now there on the hillside a great herd of swine was feeding, and the unclean spirits begged him, "Send us into the swine; let us enter them." So he gave them permission. And the unclean spirits came out and entered the swine, and the herd, numbering about two thousand, stampeded down the steep bank into the sea and were drowned in the sea.

The swineherds ran off and told it in the city and in the country. Then people came to see what it was that had happened. They came to Jesus and saw the man possessed by demons sitting there, clothed and in his right mind, the very man who had had the legion, and they became frightened. Those who had seen what had happened to the man possessed by demons and to the swine reported it. Then they began to beg Jesus to leave their neighborhood. As he was getting into the boat, the man who had been possessed by demons begged him that he might be with him. But Jesus refused and said to him, "Go home to your own people, and tell them how much the Lord has done for you and what mercy he has shown you." And he went away and began to proclaim in the Decapolis how much Jesus had done for him, and everyone was amazed.

MESSAGE Who We Are

WE RESPOND TO THE WORD OF GOD

HYMN "Silence! Frenzied, Unclean Spirit" #176

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

Prayer of Dedication (we say together)

Holy God,

May all that we offer you today

be used for your purposes.

May we each play our part

in providing healing, comfort, and welcome

to our neighbors in this world. Amen.

*HYMN

“A Mighty Fortress is Our God”

#439

NEWS OF THE CHURCH

DISMISSAL WITH BLESSING

Pastoral Benediction

Sending Song “Jesus, the Light of the World”

#160

We will follow the light, beautiful light,

Come where the dew drops of mercy are bright,

Shine all around us by day and by night,

Jesus the light of the world.

Call and opening prayer from A Wee Worship Book, 5th Incarnation: Wild Goose Resource Group, 2015, from “Morning Liturgy B.” Dedication from Spill the Beans, issue, 17, p. 68. Music shared under CCLI #1908882

WORSHIP LEADERSHIP

TODAY

February 4

Liturgist

George Zimmermann Cheryl Kazimier

Video Director

Nicki Carter

Greeter/Usher

Bob Jooss

Fellowship Hosts

Penny Kraft

Sunday School

Mike Kennedy

AT CHURCH THIS WEEK

- Worship & Spiritual Growth Mtg. today at 11:15am
- Choir practice Wednesday at 7pm
- Youth Education Mtg, next Sunday at 11:15am

CHURCH NEWS

CHANCEL NEWS

We would like to start having fresh flowers at the altar again! If you would like to sponsor altar flowers, please let Jonathan Kaman know at 815-347-5035 or jbkaman@gmail.com. Think about sponsoring in celebration or remembrance, individually, with friends or as a family. Arrangements can be made to fit any budget and can be made with your specific thoughts in mind.

Also, if there are any bread bakers, we're hoping someone might be interested in baking our communion bread. Communion is served the first Sunday of each month. Please let Jonathan know if you are interested!

FOR SERVICE

FELLOWSHIP HOSTS and **SUNDAY SCHOOL TEACHERS** are both needed for the month of February. Please sign up in the lounge.

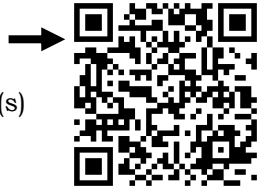
GIFT CARD ORDERING: Contact Penny Kraft to order gift cards for your regular shopping, dining out, gas stations, or, of course, for gifts! You can see a full list of vendors and the % we receive at www.raiseright.com/brands . Contact Penny at 815-236-6172 or mriapk@gmail.com or leave an order form and payment in the mailbox labelled "GIFT CARDS" in the upper hallway.

2024 REFUGEE WELCOME PACK

We have a few items left! Find our sign-up sheet at this link or by scanning the QR code. Click this link to see our

SignUp: <https://signup.com/go/jhLphqR>

- 1) Or Scan this code with your smartphone camera now:
- 2) Review the options listed and choose the spot(s) you like.
- 3) Sign up! It's Easy - you will NOT need to register an account or keep a password on SignUp.



BIBLE BACKGROUND: Earlier this month, we started in the gospel of Mark, where we'll be focused until Easter. Mark is the oldest of the gospels. It was written before Matthew, Luke, or John, probably in the late 60's (about 30 years after Jesus died).

Mark is also the shortest and most direct of the four gospels. It doesn't include any mention of Jesus' birth or childhood, and it uses the word "immediately" 42 times (which is only used 11 times total in the whole rest of the New Testament). It is action-packed.

Jesus' first words in Mark are: "The time is fulfilled. The kingdom of God has come near. Change your hearts and minds and trust the good news." Keep that in mind. As we see how Jesus acts throughout Mark, we can get a better understanding of what it means that "the kingdom of God has come near."

The first half of Mark's telling of the gospel focuses heavily on stories of Jesus healing people. Just in the first 4 chapters, he's healed: a man with an unclean spirit, a woman with a life-threatening fever; "many who were sick"; a man with leprosy; a paralyzed man; and a man with a withered hand. Chapter 5, which we'll focus on this week and next, tell of 3 more dramatic healings.

In this week's reading:

What do we make of descriptions like "a man with an unclean spirit"? In the ancient world, that term could have meant mental illness, or depression or hyperactivity, or conditions like autism or Down's syndrome; it could have described people who were addicted to any sort of substance, or in fact people who were possessed with an evil spirit. With these stories, as with all miracle stories, it's more important for us to ask what the story means, not exactly how the story happened.

In this story, when the people who have known the man who had the unclean spirit see that he has been healed, they are afraid and start asking Jesus to leave town. Over and over in the gospels, people have this kind of reaction to someone Jesus has healed.

Why is it so hard for us to accept this kind of change for the better in someone we've known?

PRAYERS for the WEEK OF JANUARY 28, 2024

If you have prayer updates or announcements to share, please send them to BOTH Pastor Hope (pastorhope@richmonducc.org) AND our office manager, Kathy Smietana (office@richmonducc.org). THANKS!

We will leave a person on our list for four weeks, unless asked to leave them on longer.

JOYS: Birthdays: Debbie Franzone (1/28); Rob Rummel, Jim Valsa, and Ruth Zehr, all on 2/1.
Thanks for Kyle May's first teaching job!

Our sympathies to Penny and her mother, Sandy, on the passing of Penny's father, Carl.

PRAYERS FOR:

Debbie Franzone's brother-in-law, George
Theresa Kaman's friend, Molly
Victims of home invasion, Terri & Ted
Kim May's friend, Tanya
Betty Waspi's relatives, the Stanfel family
Pastor Hope's friend, Ann
Jonathan Kaman's barber, Greg, and family
Carol Richardson
Theresa Kaman's uncle, David

Ongoing Prayers:

Marti Swanson's brother, John Baldwin
Louise Strah's niece, Amy Lenik
Rob Richardson's brother, Dale
Melissa Jones
Pastor Hope

Our Congregational Prayer Partners this week are Karen and Joe Wootton.

In the Wider Church: We pray for our neighbors in Christ at United Protestant Church of Grayslake and their Pastor, the Rev. Jason Okrzyński.

Members and Friends who are Homebound or in Nursing Facilities: Betty Waspi

All Beautiful the March of Days

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Frances W. Wile, 1910; alt.

1 All beau-ti - ful the march of days, as sea - sons come and go;
 2 O'er bril-liant fields of spar - kling snow the ra - diant morns un - fold;
 3 O you from whose un - fath - omed law the year in beau - ty flows,

the hand that shaped the rose has formed the crys - tal of the snow,
 The sol - emn splen - dors of the night burn bright-ly through the cold.
 your - self the splen - did vi - sion seen in crys - tal and in rose,

Has sent the sil - ver frost of heaven, the flow - ing wa - ters sealed,
 Life mounts in ev - ery puls - ing vein, love deep - ens 'round the hearth,
 The pass - ing days with grace de - clare, and pass - ing nights pro - claim,

And laid a si - lent love - li - ness on hill and wood and field.
 And clear - er sounds the an - gel hymn, "Good will to all on earth."
 In ev - er - chang - ing words of light, the won - der of your name.

Frances Wile wrote this hymn extolling the beauty of winter at the suggestion of her pastor, William Gannett, and Frederick Hosmer, both of whom were hymnwriters.

Tune: FOREST GREEN C.M.D.
 Traditional English melody
 Harm. Ralph Vaughan Williams, 1906

Harmonization Copyright ©, Oxford University Press. From *The English Hymnal 1906*.

"Silence! Frenzied, Unclean Spirit"

Mark 1:21-28; Luke 4:33-37

Thomas H. Troeger, 1984; rev. 1993

1 "Si - lence! Fren - zied, un-clean spir - it," cried God's heal - ing, Ho - ly One.
 2 Christ, the de - mons still are thriv - ing in the grey cells of the mind:
 3 Si - lence, Christ, the un-clean spir - it, in our mind and in our heart.

"Cease your rant - ing! Flesh can't bear it. Flee as night be - fore the sun."
 Ty - rant voic - es, shrill and driv - ing, twist - ed thoughts that grip and bind,
 Speak your word that when we hear it all our de - mons shall de - part.

At Christ's voice the de - mon trem - bled, from its vic - tim
 Doubts that stir the heart to pan - ic, fears dis - tort - ing
 Clear our thought and calm our feel - ing, still the frac - tured,

mad - ly rushed, While the crowd that was as - sem - bled
rea - son's sight, Guilt that makes our lov - ing fran - tic,
war - ring soul. By the pow - er of your heal - ing

stood in won - der, stunned and hushed.
dreams that cloud the soul with fright.
make us faith - ful, true, and whole.

Thomas H. Troeger has stated: "Silence! Frenzied Unclean Spirit" represented my personal desperation to come to terms with the meaning of demons and the profound emotional turmoil I encountered in many people when I was a pastor. I wanted to draw on the strength of Christ's exorcism for facing these painful situations."

Tune: AUTHORITY 8.7.8.7.D.
Carol Doran, 1984
Alternate tune: JEFFERSON

A Mighty Fortress Is Our God

439

*Martin Luther, c. 1529**Ps. 46**Transl. Frederick H. Hedge, 1853; adapt. Ruth Duck, 1981*

1 A might - y for - tress is our God, a bul - wark nev - er fail - ing,
 2 Did we in our own strength con - fide, our striv - ing would be los - ing,
 3 And though this world with dev - ils filled should threat - en to un - do us,
 4 That word be - yond all earth - ly powers for - ev - er is a - bid - ing;

Our pres - ent help a - mid the flood of mor - tal ills pre - vail - ing.
 But there is one who takes our side, the One of God's own choos - ing.
 We will not fear for God has willed the truth to tri - umph through us.
 The Spir - it and the gifts are ours, for Christ is with us sid - ing.

For still our an - cient foe does seek to work us woe with craft and pow - er
 You ask who that may be? Christ Je - sus sets us free! With might - y power to
 The powers of e - vil grim, we trem - ble not for them; their rage we can en -
 Let goods and kin - dred go, this mor - tal life al - so; the bod - y they may

great, and armed with cru - el hate, on earth with - out an e - qual.
 save, vic - to - rious o'er the grave, Christ will pre - vail tri - um - phant.
 dure, for lo, their doom is sure: one lit - tle word shall fell them.
 kill; God's truth shall tri - umph still; God's reign en - dures for - ev - er.

There is speculation that this psalm paraphrase was written in 1527 when Martin Luther's friend was burned at the stake, or in 1529, when Lutheran German princes protested the revocation of their liberties. It has been translated into more than fifty languages.

Tune: EIN' FESTE BURG (isometric) 8.7.8.7.6.6.6.6.7.

Martin Luther, c. 1529

Harm. The New Hymnal for American Youth, 1930; alt.

For another version, see 440