

The Presque Isle Congregational Church
United Church of Christ
August 27, 2023

Prelude

I the Lord of Sea and Sky

Welcoming Music

You Are Welcome Here

Words of Welcome

Melissa Vance

Introit

Where Two or Three Are Gathered

Call to Worship¹

Children of God: welcome!

Welcome to this place of love and grace,

Welcome to this place of hope and perseverance.

God invites all of us to be a part of the beloved community,

God invites all of us to share in the good news:

We are welcome, just as we are. We are loved, just as we are.

In gratitude for all of this, let us worship God.

Invocation²

Eternal God, you are our shield; be present with us now. As we bring our broken hearts and crushed spirits, revive us. As we bring our joys and praises, exalt with us. We come broken and whole, sorrowing and rejoicing. You welcome us home. Thanks be to God. Amen.

Opening Hymn

Glorious Things of Thee Are Spoken

Prayer of Confession³

Gracious God, you are always present and active amid your people. We confess that sometimes we fail to recognize and respond to your saving work in the world. We defer to power and privilege, expect the tried and true, and succumb to doubt and despair when your ways are not clear. Behold, you are doing a new thing: help us to perceive it. Forgive us when we do not respond to your call. Liberate us from our fears and self-imposed limitations. Guide us into the fullness of life and love that you are at work preparing. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

Assurance of Pardon

Hear the good news. Our God makes a way where there is no way, infusing our world with grace and hope when such goodness feels long gone. We are a people redeemed and restored.

In Jesus Christ we are forgiven. Thanks be to God!

¹ Beth Merrill Neel. *Hold Fast to What Is Good*. <https://holdfasttowhatisgood.com/liturgy/call-to-worship/>

² Jean Helmer. *Before the Amen*. Tirabassi, Maren C. and Maria I., Editors. Cleveland, OH: The Pilgrim Press, 2007.

³ Prayer of Confession and Assurance of Pardon. Liturgy written by Ginna Bairby free for distribution. ©Presbyterian Outlook, 2023

Children's Moment

Reflective Music

Amazing Grace

Scripture Reading

Matthew 16:13-20

NRSVUE

Peter's Declaration about Jesus

¹³ Now when Jesus came into the district of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, "Who do people say that the Son of Man is?" ¹⁴ And they said, "Some say John the Baptist but others Elijah and still others Jeremiah or one of the prophets." ¹⁵ He said to them, "But who do you say that I am?" ¹⁶ Simon Peter answered, "You are the Messiah, [a] the Son of the living God." ¹⁷ And Jesus answered him, "Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah! For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you but my Father in heaven. ¹⁸ And I tell you, you are Peter and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not prevail against it. ¹⁹ I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven." ²⁰ Then he sternly ordered the disciples not to tell anyone that he was the Messiah.

Reflection

Who Do You Say I Am?

Daniel Jackson

Prayer of the People and The Lord's Prayer

Our Creator, 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

Community News and Announcements

Closing Hymn

Forward Through the Ages

Benediction and Congregational Response

Go forth from this place, to speak truth to power, to love and serve the least of these, and to seek God's Spirit and embody that Spirit, in the places where God seems absent.

And as we go, may God's creative energy animate us, may Christ's liberating mercy surround us and may the Holy Spirit's subversive presence empower us now and forever more. Amen.

God Be With You