

The Presque Isle Congregational Church



United Church of Christ

January 7, 2024

Prelude

Barbara Merryman

Welcoming Music

You Are Welcome Here

Words of Welcome

Jennifer Gillis-White

Introit

Morning Has Broken

PIUCC Choir

Call to Worship

L: The Lord be with you.

People: And also with you.

L: On this edge of years as 2024 begins, the crossroads between past and future,

P: We commit ourselves to you, O God.

L: In the remembering of the year gone by, In all we have done well and in all that we regret.

P: We commit ourselves to you, O God.

L: In our hopes and dreams for the year ahead, In all that we might yet become,

P: We commit ourselves to you, O God.

L: With hearts full of promise, for a future lived faithfully and well.

P: We step boldly into a new year. God, surround us with your grace.

Opening Prayer (Unison)

God, as this new year dawns, let us give birth to what honors You. Let us give life to what makes your goodness shine. Let us give growth to your emerging eternal world. In the depths of our hearts we cry: Your kingdom come, Your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Amen

Opening Hymn

I Want to Walk as a Child of the Light

Two-Minute Message

Happy New Year!

Prayer of Confession (Unison)

Loving God, as we reflect on a year gone by, and share our hopes for the year to come, we confess our need of you in every aspect of our lives. Lift us from the valleys of despair and hopelessness. Remind us of our baptismal promises and commitment. Release us from shame and fortify us with grace for transformation and new life. Amen.

Assurance of Pardon

Beloved, the Holy One has declared you good in your being as you have been uniquely created. The Holy One companions with you in the process of growth, renewal, and sanctification. And, the Holy One empowers and emboldens us to spread the good news, pursue justice and liberation, and be agents of transformation in the world. Receive the grace God gives us to fail, to learn, and to be more like Jesus Christ.

Musical Offering

Shall We Gather at the River

PIUCC Choir

Scripture Readings

Mark 1:4-11

John the Baptist was in the wilderness calling for people to be baptized to show that they were changing their hearts and lives and wanted God to forgive their sins. Everyone in Judea and all the people of Jerusalem went out to the Jordan River and were being baptized by John as they confessed their sins. John wore clothes made

of camel's hair, with a leather belt around his waist. He ate locusts and wild honey. He announced, "One stronger than I am is coming after me. I'm not even worthy to bend over and loosen the strap of his sandals. I baptize you with water, but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit."

About that time, Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee, and John baptized him in the Jordan River. While he was coming up out of the water, Jesus saw heaven splitting open and the Spirit, like a dove, coming down on him. And there was a voice from heaven: "You are my Son, whom I dearly love; in you I find happiness."

Ecclesiastes 3:1-8

There's a season for everything, and a time for every matter under the heavens:
a time for giving birth and a time for dying, a time for planting and a time for uprooting what was planted,
a time for killing and a time for healing, a time for tearing down and a time for building up,
a time for crying and a time for laughing, a time for mourning and a time for dancing,
a time for throwing stones and a time for gathering stones,
a time for embracing and a time for avoiding embraces,
a time for searching and a time for losing, a time for keeping and a time for throwing away,
a time for tearing and a time for repairing, a time for keeping silent and a time for speaking,
a time for loving and a time for hating, a time for war and a time for peace.

Reflections for a New Year

Originally by Rev. Dr. Susan Macalpine-Gillis

Adapted by Jennifer Gillis-White

Reflective Music

Barbara Merryman

Blessing of our Gifts

Call: As we have reflected on the abundances that last year brought us, let us return a portion of our abundance to the creative and liberating energy and work of God in the world. May our resources be used for the glory of the Holy One and in the name of the One who modeled abiding generosity. *Pause while the offering plate is brought forward*

Response: Holy One, receive our offerings as gifts of ourselves. Increase the gifts and uplift our generosity to new heights. May our giving bear fruit that sustains, nurtures, and feeds a new world into being. Amen.

Pastoral Prayer 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

**Please use whatever name is most familiar/comfortable when you pray to God.*

Closing Hymn

In the Bulb, There Is a Flower

Community News and Announcements

Benediction

Sung Response

God Be With You

God be with you till we meet again; By good counsel guide, uphold you.
With a shepherd's care enfold you; God be with you till we meet again.