

The Presque Isle Congregational Church



United Church of Christ

March 3, 2024

**Prelude**

Barbara Merryman

**Welcoming Music**

**Words of Welcome**

Christine Standefer

**Introit**

*Let Justice Flow Like Streams*

PIUCC Choir

**Call to Worship (Psalm 19:7-10)**

The law of the Lord is perfect, reviving the soul;

**The decrees of the Lord are sure, making wise the simple.**

The precepts of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart;

**The fear of the Lord is pure, enduring forever.**

The ordinances of the Lord are true and righteous altogether.

**They are more desirable than gold and sweeter than honey. Let us worship God!**

**Lenten Candle Liturgy**

Melissa Vance

**Opening Prayer (Unison)**

O God of temples and tables turned over, we enter this sacred space of worship seeking your transformation and healing. Make us ready for the kind of turned upside down world you are seeking to build among us. We have come to this place of worship to be changed, so turn over our tables and make us whole. In the name of Jesus our savior. Amen.

**Opening Hymn**

*God of Grace and God of Glory*

vv. 1,3,5

**Children's Moment**

**Prayer of Confession**

God of righteousness, we confess that we have not kept your commandments. We bow down before idols, declaring our allegiance to other powers and principalities. We take your name in vain, using it to justify our own prejudices and opinions. We do not make adequate time to rest and remember your goodness, nor do we revel in the delight of family and friends. We look the other way in the face of violence and oppression, misogyny and sexual assault, land grabs and unjust economic practices. Our dishonesty and greed get the better of us. Yet you gave us commandments not for condemnation, but so that we might live in justice and joy. Purify us by your righteousness and enfold us in your grace. Sanctify our intentions and actions, that our lives may begin to reflect your Beloved Community

**Words of Grace**

Hear these words from the Apostle Paul, "God's foolishness is wiser than human wisdom, and God's weakness is stronger than human strength." The grace of Christ is sufficient for us. In Jesus Christ, we are forgiven! Thanks be to God!

**Scripture Reading****John 2:13-22****Jesus Clears the Temple Courts**

<sup>13</sup> When it was almost time for the Jewish Passover, Jesus went up to Jerusalem. <sup>14</sup> In the temple courts he found people selling cattle, sheep and doves, and others sitting at tables exchanging money. <sup>15</sup> So he made a whip out of cords, and drove all from the temple courts, both sheep and cattle; he scattered the coins of the money changers and overturned their tables. <sup>16</sup> To those who sold doves he said, "Get these out of here! Stop turning my Father's house into a market!" <sup>17</sup> His disciples remembered that it is written: "Zeal for your house will consume me."

<sup>18</sup> The Jews then responded to him, "What sign can you show us to prove your authority to do all this?"

<sup>19</sup> Jesus answered them, "Destroy this temple, and I will raise it again in three days."

<sup>20</sup> They replied, "It has taken forty-six years to build this temple, and you are going to raise it in three days?" <sup>21</sup> But the temple he had spoken of was his body. <sup>22</sup> After he was raised from the dead, his disciples recalled what he had said. Then they believed the scripture and the words that Jesus had spoken.

**Reflection****Jesus' Humanity**

Christine Standefer

**Reflective Music**

Barbara Merryman

**Blessing of our Gifts**

God's house does not operate according to the logic of the market, but according to the abundance of God's grace. Let us each give what we have, trusting that by God's generosity, it will be enough. Let us receive our morning offering. *Pause while the offering plate is brought forward.* Together let us bless our gifts...

**Response:** God of Grace, multiply these offerings and all our gifts so that this church's ministry and mission may radically change lives and create new opportunities for service.

**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***Christ Is Made a Sure Foundation***Community News and Announcements****Benediction**

Go forth to claim your belovedness, trusting that the God who provided Jesus with strength to overcome the temptations of the desert is the very God who will guide you and lead you this day and always. Amen.

**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.