

February 4, 2024

5TH SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY

Greeting and Announcements

Welcome Statement *(Printed on the bulletin insert)*

Silence *...a time to breathe...*

Prelude and Bringing in the Light

Call to Worship (Joanna Harader, 2011)

Leader: We are branches, rooted in the vine of Christ.

People: We come because we seek to abide in Christ.

Leader: The branches that remain in the vine bear much fruit.

People: We come because we long to be spiritually vibrant, alive, productive.

Leader: If we abide in Christ, then Christ's words will abide in us.

People: We come because we strive to be faithful disciples.

Leader: We gather for worship now to the glory of the One God: Creator, Redeemer, Sustainer.

All: May we grow wildly as God tends us lovingly.

* 1st Hymn *Joyful, Joyful, We Adore You* (NCH #4)

• Prayer (Unison)

God, we have been praying for a long time. We have prayed for peace in our world, wisdom for our leaders, justice in our politics. We have prayed for food for hungry children, water for thirsty families and a healthy, sustaining Creation for all. We have prayed for miracles. Today we pray for ourselves to be made into the miracle we seek—to be formed as people of peace and wisdom and grace and generosity. Open our hearts to those who suffer. Give us the courage to stand against all harm. Forgive us, loving God, when we cannot. Amen.

* The Promise

Here is the gospel—the good news: God loves this world; God has redeemed this world; God is re-making this world. In this we are being made whole, and for this we all say—

Thanks be to God!

* Sung Response

*Breathe on me breath of God; fill me with life anew
That I may love what you do love, and do what you would do.*

Invitation to the Table *At this Table*

Without exception, everyone is welcome at this table. So if you're hungry, or even just curious, please come and taste.

Kid's Time

1st Scripture Reading **Mark 4:1-9**

...A sower went out to sow...

2nd Scripture Reading **Mark 4:14-20**

...thirty, sixty and a hundredfold...

Sermon

Prayers of the people and the Lord's Prayer

Offering **Come. . .** Rumi

Come, come, whoever you are.

Wanderer, worshipper, lover of leaving—

• Sung Response

Praise God from whom all blessings flow...

• Gratitude Prayer (Unison)

Open our hearts, Loving God, to neighbors near and far, neighbors new and old and neighbors strange and familiar. May your generosity flow freely through us to bless them we pray, in Jesus' name. Amen.

* **Closing Hymn** *The Garden Song* (on Screen)

* **Benediction**

• **Postlude**

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Liturgists: Rose Kleinert & Emily Fuchs

Radio Sponsor: Steve & Marcy Thurwachter in memory of the February 7 wedding anniversary of Marcy's parents, Merton & Shirley Moely.

First UCC Welcome Statement:

“Accept one another, just as Christ accepted you, in order to bring praise to God.”
Romans 15:7

We at First United Church of Christ—Sauk City have been embraced by the inclusive love of Jesus, and so we strive, as an Open and Affirming congregation, to be a welcoming presence in Sauk City and beyond. We invite anyone and everyone to worship and serve with us. *Everyone* who covenants with us to “do justice, love kindness and walk humbly” in the way of Jesus will be a valued member of this fellowship—without regard to sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, race, or faith background.

If you would like to sponsor a radio broadcast call the church office at 608-643-8387 to check on available dates. Cost is now at \$90.00/week. Your support of this important ministry is much appreciated.

Here are the available dates for February:

Feb 11: **Open**

Feb 18: **Open**

Feb 25: **Open**

Mar 3: Sharal Steuber

Address Changes—If your phone number, mailing or email address changes please send the new address to the church office so we can keep our records up to date.

Questions? Concerns? Perplexed? Thirsty for some good coffee? Give a call and we'll find a table at a coffee shop where we can talk for a while. All perplexities allowed. (608) 669-2926.

Pastor Brad

From Members in Ministry—if you know someone who would benefit from a visit or phone call, or who would like to receive Communion in their home, please let Debbie Tschudy know. Call her at: (608) 963-4873.

From our Stock the Schools campaign—suggested donations for February: *Food items:* Individual fruit cups. *Supplies:* NEW brushes, combs, headbands and barrettes. Please drop your donations off in the red tote outside the educational doors during office hours (Monday—Friday, 8am—Noon) or inside during Sunday worship. Thanks for your help.

1st Scripture Reading:**Mark 4:1-9**

Again he began to teach beside the lake. Such a very large crowd gathered around him that he got into a boat on the lake and sat there, while the whole crowd was beside the lake on the land. He began to teach them many things in parables, and in his teaching he said to them: 'Listen! A sower went out to sow. And as he sowed, some seed fell on the path, and the birds came and ate it up. Other seed fell on rocky ground, where it did not have much soil, and it sprang up quickly, since it had no depth of soil. And when the sun rose, it was scorched; and since it had no root, it withered away. Other seed fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up and choked it, and it yielded no grain. Other seed fell into good soil and brought forth grain, growing up and increasing and yielding thirty and sixty and a hundredfold.' And he said, 'Let anyone with ears to hear listen!'

2nd Scripture Reading:**Mark 4:14-20**

The sower sows the word. These are the ones on the path where the word is sown: when they hear, Satan immediately comes and takes away the word that is sown in them. And these are the ones sown on rocky ground: when they hear the word, they immediately receive it with joy. But they have no root, and endure only for a while; then, when trouble or persecution arises on account of the word, immediately they fall away. And others are those sown among the thorns: these are the ones who hear the word, but the cares of the world, and the lure of wealth, and the desire for other things come in and choke the word, and it yields nothing. And these are the ones sown on the good soil: they hear the word and accept it and bear fruit, thirty and sixty and a hundredfold.'

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