



**Transfiguration Sunday**  
**February 15, 2026**

**Rev. Barbara Dickason, BCC**

*United in Christ's love, a just world for all.*

# **Transfiguration Sunday**

**February 15, 2026**

**Singing Prelude**

**Just a Closer Walk with Thee**

**Spiritual**

**Just a closer walk with Thee,  
Grant it, Jesus, is my plea.  
Daily walking close to Thee,  
Let it be, dear Lord, let it be.**

## **Welcome and Announcements**

Good morning, Venice United Church of Christ.

Grace and Peace to you in the name of Jesus who welcomes each and every one of us into this sacred space. I am Pastor Barb, and John Yahres will be our liturgist today. As always, we give thanks for everyone who is working tirelessly behind the scenes so that we can worship and serve God together each week.

Beautifying our sanctuary today, we have flowers given by Marilyn Schwab in Loving Memory of Her Parents, Al and Betty Morris, on their Anniversary and by Dee Rogers for Bob...  
"Happy Birthday, my love."

For those of us who are worshipping online, whether today or some point in the future, I invite you to like us, share us, and let your presence be known in the comments so that we can keep each other in prayer.

For those of us here in this space of stained glass and compassionate friendship, if you have a prayer request or a joy to share, please make sure that you let the office know, or let us know through the app as I want to make sure that we can lift up everyone's prayers as we worship.

For some of you, this is your first time joining us. I hope that you have been warmly greeted and have notated your presence either at our welcome table or through the QR codes found in the pews. We are excited to get to know you. We also have an exciting new gift for you, these gorgeous blue stainless steel water bottles.

For in this holy, wonderful, ordinary space,  
as Venice United Church of Christ,  
we empower and invite everyone  
to join us in this divine place  
that we share on line and in person.

For when we gather, everyone is invited,  
no matter who you are  
or where you are on life's journey,  
and no one is turned away.

There are a few coming events of which to take note.

Following Worship, everyone is invited to gather for a time of fellowship across the lane in Naar Hall. Thanks to our hosts Char, Ellen, Faye and Jane.

For those who are newer to the congregation and would like to either learn more about us or discover what being a friend, associate, or full member is all about, Victoria will be hosting a meet and greet in the Parlor.

This week, as Lent begins, we continue to host and sponsor a variety of activities that help to connect us:

On Tuesday, we will be hosting a Shrove Tuesday Pancake Lunch at 12 noon. There is a rumor going around that this meal will also have several unique dishes to share, from traditions that span from rural Appalachia to the Mardi Gra of the deep South. I hope to see you all there. Please sign up either in the calendar section of the App or on the sign up sheet so we know how many to plan for.

On Wednesday, in addition to our regular Bible study, we will be able to come together to worship God during our contemplative Ash Wednesday Service at 12:30. The imposition of Ashes will also be available between 11:30-12:15 and from 2-4.

Meanwhile, I hope that you are checking out the numerous activities listed in our bulletin, connect, and app, and that you all are continuing to prepare for the upcoming Crop Walk, that the Bell Retreat and Special worship service is on your calendar, and that we are all continuing to reach out and create new connections and relationships with each other.

Finally, "Do you have all of your ducks lined up in a row? On Saturday, February 28th, the Christian Education Committee is



sponsoring a seminar entitled *Aging in Florida...Are You Prepared?* Registration is required either online, through the app, or directly with Gayle Davis following worship.

There is a lot going on — for more information on any of these services or activities please see the Connect, check them out in the calendar portion of the app, or see the information table in Naar Hall.

Today is the third Sunday of our February sermon series called, 'Coming Home' — reflections on community. The third of our four primary pillars in the Big Joy project, I am very aware that talk of 'coming home' means something different for each of us. Throughout the month, we are looking at the idea of 'coming home' through spiritual, emotional, physical, cultural, and scientific lenses, as it impacts our understandings of what it means to be connected to God and to each other.

This week, we are again working with Yolanda Peirce's book entitled, *"In My Grandmother's house: Black Women, Faith, and the Stories We Inherit."* There are several copies available to borrow, along with *Dancing in the Darkness: Spiritual Lessons for Thriving in Turbulent Times* by Otis Moss III and *"Unbroken and Unbowed,"* and excellent read about Black History by a phenomenal black historian, Jimmie R. Hawkins.

And now, we come to worship our extravagantly generous, steadfastly loving God. May our worship align us again with God's holy purpose — to love one another as Christ loves us.

So Come, beautifully authentic, humbly transforming, faithfully  
Good-news following body of Christ, and let us Worship God!

## **We Approach God's Presence**

### **Bringing in the Light of Christ**

*O Wondrous Sight, O Vision Fair*

15th Century

### **Responsive Call to Worship**

Come up the mountain to God.

Take off your shoes, and stay for a while.

**We rest on holy Ground,**

**and drink from the living spring deep within.**

Swallowed by clouds of God's Glory,

Christ's light shows us the way.

**We sit at table with our ancestors,**

**whose stories connect us to God's grace,**

**and nourish us with spiritual bread.**

And when it is time once again to descend the mountain

and share the Word given to you, do not be afraid:

Know that you are beloved Children of God.

**With Gratitude and Joy we praise God.**

### **\*Hymn**

*Lift Every Voice and Sing vs. 1,3* Johnson

**Lift every voice and sing, till earth and heaven ring,**

**ring with the harmonies of liberty;**

**let our rejoicing rise, high as the listening skies,**

**let it resound loud as the rolling sea.**

**Sing a song full of the faith that the harsh past has taught us,**

**sing a song full of the hope that the present has brought us;**

**facing the rising sun of our new day begun,**

**let us march on till victory is won.**

**God of our weary years, God of our silent tears,**

**God who has brought us thus far on the way,**

**God, who by your might, led us into the light,  
keep us forever in the path, we pray.**

**Lest our feet stray from the places, our God, where we met you,  
lest our hearts, drunk with the wine of the world forget you;  
shadowed beneath your hand, may we forever stand,  
true to our God, true to our native land.**

## **\*Prayer for Transformation and New Life**

Let us pray:

God of Transfiguration,

You meet us in the ordinary as well as the extraordinary moments of life.

**We seek you in the valleys and on the mountaintops.**

**Yet we admit that often our eyes are blind  
and our ears deaf to your Word.**

Long ago, You chose for yourself a people and gave them,  
through Moses, the Law —

that their path might be lit by its wisdom and truth.

And when they preferred to walk in darkness,

in the deceptive comfort of darkness,

you sent them prophets like Elijah and Elisha

to rebuke them, recall them, save them.

**Sovereign God, Creator, Still Small Voice,  
Cloud by Day and Fire by Night,**

**we marvel at your graciousness.**

Long ago, Your Word became flesh and dwells among us,

the brilliance of Your Spirit illuminating the face

of our Messiah, and through Your Law of Love —

transforming the lives of those who love You.

**Thank You for allowing us to see**

**that in his mountaintop transfiguration,**

**even Jesus was nourished by the words of the ancestors.**

We praise you for offering a new way

of being Your light in the world that

opens our ears to the cries

of the hungry and homeless,

those in prison and those all alone.

**May each of our moments be alight**

**with Your justice, truth, mercy and love. Amen**



**\*Words of Grace**

Hear the Good News:

In the blazing light of God's grace,

Jesus touches us to say,

"Get up and do not be afraid."

**God's good Word,**

**God's law of love surrounds us with**

**the glory of God and the faith of our ancestors.**

In the name of Christ, all is forgiven.

**Amen.**

**\*Response**

*Open My Eyes*

Scott

**Silently now I wait for Thee,**

**Ready, my God, Thy will to see;**

**Open my eyes, illumine me,**

**Spirit divine.**

# I Believe

Anonymous Jewish poem

Mark A. Miller

$\text{♩} = 50$

Soprano

Piano

*p*

*8va*

*Ped.* \* *simile*

Solo *p*

I be-

lieve in the sun, I be-lieve in the

sun, e - ven when, e - ven when it's not

*loco*

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17

shin - ing. I be-

22

lieve in the sun, I be-lieve in the

27

sun, e - ven when, e - ven when

32

it's not shin - ing.

37 *mp*

S I \_\_\_\_\_ be - lieve in love, \_\_\_\_\_

A \_\_\_\_\_ *mp* I \_\_\_\_\_ be - lieve in

*mp*

41

I \_\_\_\_\_ be - lieve in love, \_\_\_\_\_ e - ven

love, \_\_\_\_\_ I be - lieve, e - ven

45

when, \_\_\_\_\_ e - ven when I don't

when, \_\_\_\_\_ e - ven when I don't

49

feel it.

feel it.

*cresc.*

53

*mf*

*mf*

*mf*

*mf*

*mf*

I be - lieve in love,

I be - lieve in

I be - lieve in love,

I be - lieve in



57

I be - lieve in love, e - ven  
 love, I be - lieve, e - ven  
 I be - lieve in love, e - ven  
 love, I be - lieve in

61

when, e - ven when I don't  
 when, e - ven when I don't  
 when, e - ven when I don't  
 love, e - ven when I don't

*cresc.*

## **We Encounter God in the Word**

### **First Lesson**

Exodus 24:12-18

*the Voice*

Hear these words from Exodus 24:

<sup>12</sup> Eternal One (to Moses): Come up the mountain to Me and stay here with Me for a while. I will give you stone tablets inscribed with My law and commandments in order to provide instruction and guidance for the people.

<sup>13</sup> So Moses and his assistant, Joshua, got up and began the long climb up toward the summit of the mountain of God.

Moses (to the elders): <sup>14</sup> Wait here for our return. Aaron and Hur will stay with you. If anyone has a complaint, then they can speak to them.

<sup>15-18</sup> Moses made his way up the mountain. A thick cloud blanketed the mountain because the Eternal's glory had settled upon it. The cloud stayed there for six days; and when the seventh day arrived, the Eternal spoke to Moses from the cloud.

For the Israelites below, the Eternal's glory appeared to be a consuming fire on the top of the mountain. As Moses walked further toward the top, he was swallowed by the cloud of God's glory, and he remained there for a total of 40 days and 40 nights.

**God is Still Speaking. Thanks be to God!**

**Anthem**

*I Believe*

Miller

Maria Passarelli, Soloist

65

A few sopranos *f*

I \_\_\_\_\_ be - lieve in love, \_\_\_\_\_

*cresc.* feel \_\_\_\_\_ it. \_\_\_\_\_ *f* I \_\_\_\_\_ be-

*cresc.* feel \_\_\_\_\_ it. \_\_\_\_\_

*cresc.* feel \_\_\_\_\_ it. \_\_\_\_\_ *f* I \_\_\_\_\_ be-

*cresc.* feel \_\_\_\_\_ it. \_\_\_\_\_

70

I be - lieve \_\_\_\_\_

lieve in love, \_\_\_\_\_ I \_\_\_\_\_ be - lieve in \_\_\_\_\_

*f* I \_\_\_\_\_ be - lieve in love, \_\_\_\_\_

lieve in love, \_\_\_\_\_ I \_\_\_\_\_ be - lieve in \_\_\_\_\_

*f* I \_\_\_\_\_ be - lieve in love, \_\_\_\_\_

75

in love, e - ven

love, e - ven when, e - ven when

I be - lieve, e - ven when, e - ven when

love, e - ven when, e - ven when

I be - lieve in love, e - ven when

80

when I don't feel it. *ff* I be - lieve in

*cresc.* I don't feel it.

*cresc.* I don't feel it.

*cresc.* I don't feel it.

*cresc.* I don't feel it.

*cresc.*

95 *dim.*

— e - ven when I don't feel it. —

*dim.*

when I don't feel it. —

*dim.*

when I don't feel it. —

*dim.*

when I don't feel it. —

*dim.*

when I don't feel it. —

101 Solo *p*

I — be - lieve in God. — I — be - lieve in —

*p*



85

love, \_\_\_\_\_ I be - lieve \_\_\_\_\_

*ff* I \_\_\_\_\_ be - lieve in love, \_\_\_\_\_ I \_\_\_\_\_ be -

*ff* I \_\_\_\_\_ be - lieve in love, \_\_\_\_\_

*ff* I \_\_\_\_\_ be - lieve in love, \_\_\_\_\_ I \_\_\_\_\_ be -

*ff* I \_\_\_\_\_ be - lieve in love, \_\_\_\_\_

*ff*

90

\_\_\_\_\_ in love, \_\_\_\_\_

lieve in love, \_\_\_\_\_ e - ven when, \_\_\_\_\_ e - ven

\_\_\_\_\_ I be - lieve, e - ven when, \_\_\_\_\_ e - ven

lieve in love, \_\_\_\_\_ e - ven when, \_\_\_\_\_ e - ven

\_\_\_\_\_ I be - lieve in love, \_\_\_\_\_ e - ven

**1-8** Six days later, Jesus took with him Peter and James and his brother John and led them up a high mountain, by themselves. And he was transfigured before them, and his face shone like the sun, and his clothes became bright as light. Suddenly there appeared to them Moses and Elijah, talking with him. Then Peter said to Jesus, “Lord, it is good for us to be here; if you wish, I will set up three tents here, one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah.” While he was still speaking, suddenly a bright cloud overshadowed them, and a voice from the cloud said, “This is my Son, the Beloved; with him I am well pleased; listen to him!” When the disciples heard this, they fell to the ground and were overcome by fear. But Jesus came and touched them, saying, “Get up and do not be afraid.” And when they raised their eyes, they saw no one except Jesus himself alone.

**9** As they were coming down the mountain, Jesus ordered them, “Tell no one about the vision until after the Son of Man has been raised from the dead.”

**The Word of the Lord. Thanks be to God!**

Let us pray:

For the words of challenge,  
for the words of blessing,  
for the spirit of wisdom moving in our midst,  
we give you honor and thanks and praise. Amen

I imagine, when the title of my sermon today went out, that there were several of us who imagined the table that our parents or grandparents set. I imagine that some of us were looking forward to me describing the food and smells of our childhood... there is simply something comforting about remembering a time when we were invited to sit around a table, talking, listening, and hearing the stories of our families. And yes, there is something about those experiences that both feeds our bodies and nourishes our being — for it is during those meals and stories that meaning - about who we are and what our purpose on this earth is to be - is handed down from generation to generation.

But this morning is more about the stories that are offered than the food that is served; this morning is about what feeds and nourishes us, and what gives each of us strength for the journeys we are on. This morning is just as much about the stories of our childhood as it is about the tables at which we now sit, telling the stories of when God shows up, even and especially when we least expect it, and how we choose to respond. This morning is about how the glory of God’s radiance shines even through the darkest clouds.

This morning, as I was reflecting on the brilliance of God revealed on the mountaintops, I was reminded of a time when coming

home simply meant going to wherever Rob and our dog Stella happened to be at that moment. I was reminded of a time when I kept longing for home, and God kept saying, ‘not yet, there is more yet to come.’”

For some of us, it’s amazing how much change can happen in a matter of two years. For others of us, two years can feel like an eternity of sameness.

For me, two years ago was a whirlwind. Rob was interviewed and offered his new position as both of us were recovering from a nasty bout of covid, and while the position was technically remote, they still preferred that he be based out of Texas. My residency had just ended, so as he was getting up to speed in his new job I began packing up our lives and looking for a place for us to live. And while it may have not been the same uphill climb that we hear about in both of our scriptures this morning, as the weeks passed with no success it was just as long and just as arduous. With time running short, we settled on an apartment while we kept looking, but even our first apartment ended up being uninhabitable, and we were soon moving again — even if just down the hall — to another apartment. And then, in the middle of our move and preparing to move my niece out to live with us, my mother called and told me that it was her time to die.

And with that phone call, the words “coming home” suddenly took on a whole new meaning. For even though the physical place where Rob and Stella were seemed to change from week to week, the upheaval of our move offered me the luxury of being able to go and simply spend time with Mom.

When I arrived, I quickly discovered that she was using a lot of

oxygen, but she was determined to keep doing what she loved and offering God the service of her hands. She still volunteered every Monday at the gift shop, she had planned particular meals for us to cook, and as her church's pianist, she practiced every day. And as her strength began to ebb each afternoon, we were able to sit together and read a book that she was working on for her book club called: "Living Buddha, Living Christ," by Thich Nhat Hanh. And as we read aloud and were inspired by his words, she told me how hard it had been for her to simply start reading the book, because the title mentioned the Buddha first, in the place where she thought Christ should have been. And she told me how grateful she was that she had started reading it anyway, because his words were connecting in a way that fed her relationship with God.

And during the time that I was with her, she also had a seated massage scheduled, but she wasn't sure if she was going to go. The community had a licensed massage therapist that her friends often saw, and that she had seen before, and the massage had helped with her pain. But, well, he was weird.

And when mom said that, the hair stood up on the back of my neck. 'Weird' was not a term that I had ever really heard my mom use before, and in hearing her use it, I could sense her discomfort. She was my mom. So I asked the safety question: 'Has he ever touched you in a way that made you feel uncomfortable?' Her answer was no. He always asked permission before touching her, and he respected her wishes. He massaged her hands and arms, her calves and feet, her neck and shoulders... only the places she felt comfortable with him touching. But still, she tried again, he was 'weird.'



And as we continued talking, mom started talking about their conversations, and how she thought that maybe he wasn't Christian but he would ask deep questions, and he knew that she was ailing and he had offered her this massage for free. So when the time came, I went with her. Her oxygen tank might need replaced, after all.

And when I saw that he looked at my mom in a way that tenderly saw both her frailty and the closeness of the divine, I was in awe. He knew. He had offered her the massage as a way to help ease her transition from this life to the next. And as his hands gently soothed away her pain, the three of us ended up talking about God, God's faithfulness, and our trust that whatever comes next, God is with us... no matter what that ends up looking like.

And mom, well mom had been borrowing her best friend's word, because she didn't know how else to describe the therapist's compassion and offer to help chaplain her through this part of her transition. Because mom's friend thought he was weird, her bias influenced mom, too, so that Mom couldn't see that his training in therapeutic massage, this gift of gentle touch and connection was his ministry, his gift from God, that he was sharing with her and with the community there. As a modest pastor's wife, his ministry to her, and to her friends, was not something she had ever experienced before. And it made her uncomfortable, not in a physical way, but in an emotional, spiritual, and mental way, until we were able to talk about it, experience it together, and come to recognize what a great gift of compassion and care he was offering to both her and to us.

In our passage from Exodus today, we hear about Moses' own journey up the mountain to meet with God and about the great

cloud and light on the mountain that made the people of God, Israel, deeply uncomfortable. Afraid that the God who had liberated them from Egypt was just as capricious as the gods they had left on the other side of the Red Sea, they end up pressuring Aaron into allowing them to create a golden statue of Ba'al, hedging their bets just in case Moses' God ended up consuming him with the light and cloud that seemed to swallow him up. Camped at the base, the people watched as Moses ascended the mountain first to worship, and then to receive the tablets of God's covenant with them. How were they to know that there, from the midst of the cloud, God spoke on the seventh day? Who could predict that after a period of forty days and forty nights with God on the mountain, that Moses would return to the people with his face transfigured by the glory of God? Too afraid to speak to God directly lest they die, Moses was their intermediary, their self-created illusion of protection from a God whose steadfast love and care for them they did not understand. So when Moses finally presented them with the word of God as writ upon the stones, the people of God surrounded God's word with laws detailing all of their behavior and all of their worship practice, placing a hedge around the word of God lest they get too close to the power of God's word and die.

So as Jesus ascends the mountain with his disciples In Matthew's story of Good News, we hear echos of the story told around generations of meal tables as families and tribes worshipped God and shared with generations to follow the covenant that Moses had received from God and in which they all shared a part. And as Jesus ascends the mountain with Peter, James, and John, who should he meet there but Moses and Elijah, as God prepares to once again be revealed through a shining cloud of light and a voice that says, "This is my beloved son, with him I am well

pleased, listen to him.” In Jesus, the covenant God had made so many generations before, once written on tablets of stone, was now to be written in hearts and lives, the living Word of God.

And while Peter, James and John initially thought to build a commemorating monument to their experience of the place where heaven and earth met in conversation, the awe of God that laid them out flat with their faces to the earth left them trembling in fear. How could one possibly be in an intimate relationship with such a mighty and powerful God?

And then Jesus, with divine light shining from every pore, raised them up saying, “Get up. Do not be afraid.” They had a mountain to descend.

Now, I will confess that I haven’t always known how to make sense of the story of Christ’s transfiguration in my own life, and maybe I’m still not there completely, but what is apparent to me is that just as something happened in that room during her massage to prepare us for my mom’s final weeks, something happened there on that mountain to prepare the disciples for their final weeks with Jesus. For even through clouds of apprehension, fear, and suffering, the presence of Moses and Isaiah, surrounded by the radiance of the Glory of God, was the light needed to see the disciples through Christ’s crucifixion, resurrection, and ascension; and the presence of God With Us through the once misunderstood hands of the therapist prepared us for Mom’s next steps on her journey as her body was anointed in preparation for her own burial and risen presence with God.

Biblical scholar Maryetta Madeline Anschutz describes “The moment of transfiguration [as] ... that point at which God says to

the world and to each of us that there is nothing we can do to prepare for or stand in the way of joy or sorrow. We cannot build God a monument, and we cannot keep God safe. We also cannot escape the light that God will shed on our path. We cannot escape God, Immanuel among us. God will find us in our homes and in our workplaces. God will find us when our hearts are broken and when we discover joy. God will find us when we run away from God and when we are sitting in the middle of what seems like hell. So “get up and do not be afraid” (v. 7).<sup>1</sup>

God finds us, for God’s walking around covenant with us through Christ is Immanuel — God With Us. Through everything that life throws at us, whether we be on top of the mountain or camped at its base, God’s covenant with us is God’s steadfastly loving presence with us.

And, while there is nothing we can do to prepare for God’s already in-breaking presence among us or for the ways in which we will relive the stories and confusion and grief of the weeks to come as Lent begins Wednesday, there is still much that we can do in tending and caring for each other, members of God’s beloved community, as we hear again Jesus’ words to his disciples: “Get up. Do not be afraid.”

For while there is a mountain to descend over the next forty days of Lent, it is a descent that we travel together. We walk together through the darkness of the clouds of Lent with the assurance of the Good News, for we know how the story ends, how our story began, and how the Word of God became flesh and dwells among us.

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<sup>1</sup> pg 1066 of 1099

So on Tuesday, we gather to break bread and share pancakes together as we use our hands to mix ordinary ingredients from our cabinets into an extraordinary feast to be shared. On Wednesday, we begin our own forty days of remembrance and preparation for Christ's crucifixion, resurrection, and ascension as we gather in contemplative worship to touch, see, and be reminded of the power of God present in our baptism, the power of Christ's healing in our everyday lives, and the Spirit of God that intercedes as we don oil and ash on our foreheads both in lament and with the assurance that the light of God shines through every suffering, filling us with the steadfast love and peace of God.

And through times of fear, doubt, and confusion, just as Christ lifted up the disciples telling them not to be afraid, so our hands are also to be used to offer such a healing touch for others, just as the therapist's hands eased mom's way.

In her book, *In my Grandmother's house: Black Women, Faith, and the Stories we Inherit*, Yolanda Pierce describes her grandmother's hands:

"My grandmother's hands feel leathery. They are never soft or smooth. No amount of lotion can unhardened the skin after years spent cleaning, scrubbing, cooking. Hands immersed in dirty water, clean water, harsh chemicals—hands that, combined with elbow grease, shined floors and windows and baseboards in white women's kitchens. Hands of an older, Southern Black woman . . . hands that quietly built a nation but whose history is often unrecorded. I have no memory of manicured hands holding mine. Instead, when I remember her hands, I can still feel the calluses of someone who only knew labor her whole life. It is only

now that I am much older that I can piece together the work of her hands. Strong young hands cutting tobacco in Southern fields; brown hands cradling the one long-desired child she dared to love after so many losses; tentative hands signing legal documents she did not understand for a new life up North; gentle hands walking her abandoned granddaughter to school. My grandmother's hands are a love story, but they are not smooth, not soft, not easy. No real love story is. Her hands are a love story of survival in hard places, during hard times.”<sup>2</sup>

We may remember the work that happened at our own grandma's tables differently, but in my house the table was not just for eating. It was where my mom sat early each morning to share her devotion with God, wrote letters to those at a distance and corrected our homework. The table was where we processed food for winter and laid out fabric for cutting as mom taught us all to sew. The table is where mom proofed dad's sermons, where we shared the events of the day, where we learned how to be family, where we grieved the seat dad no longer filled, where we planned mom's celebration of life service, where we learned how to be community together.

And as we gather around our tables here, in this holy place that we keep coming home to, the stories that we share connect us to generations past and generations to come. The journey up the mountain may be slow and arduous, it may be surprising and quick. But when we travel with Jesus, when we listen and follow the Word God revealed through him, then we can rest, assured that nothing, not anything, anywhere, anytime, can separate us from the love of God through Christ. So take the time to reach

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<sup>2</sup> Yolanda Pierce. *My Grandmother's Hands*.

out a hand, sharing in the work that God has set before us, whatever a part of that work is yours to do. For here, at God's table, God offers us a love-story, and it is ours to share with the world. Amen.



## We Respond to God's Grace

### Congregational Prayers

#### Joys

What a wonderful world with God in it. English butter toffee, sisters, our volunteers, healthy family, being here, for moms, this church, phone calls with loved ones, friends, lovely holidays, beautiful weather, getting up each morning, grateful to learn about life from my grandma, fellowship, thankful that the Lord listens to prayers whatever they might be, waking up to spouses and loved ones, **for heartfelt messages of joy**, belief in God, for everyone gathered in our sacred space this morning

Music, kindness, our volunteers who do so much, my healthy family, to be alive, **those who light up our lives**, love, my belief in God, wonderful friends, **visiting family far away and the joy of coming home**, grateful for learning to live a life of joy, coffee and baked goods, playing golf, a place to live, good health, everyone who is here today, the awe of each new day.

Sunshine, rain, quiet still mornings, family, healthy family, wonderful friends, church friends, **fog turned to sunshine**, **friends and neighbors who are like family**, sisters, being able to come to church, my dog, being alive, beautiful weather, lovely holiday, getting up in the morning, health, spouse, place to live, the love between spouses and soulmates, grapes and fellowship, belief in God, **being able to express ourselves to God**, a van that works, love, everything, the beauty of the palms, sunrise, **banyan trees**, diversity of the congregation, God's new morning painting, the awe of the moon shining through the clouds and pointing to the star, music, **kindness**, learning to walk backwards, sunshine through the window and a peaceful household



Each beautiful new day, slow mornings, gorgeous sunsets, that we are able to celebrate our joys — for celebrating joy reminds us that we share the same source of our joy, **the depth of human creativity and spirit, skilled medical professionals,** friendship, safe travels, gathering together to study God's word, rebirth and recreation in communities that empower and hold us as we ask tough questions of God and each other, those who pitch in and help out, birthdays, anniversaries, milestones...

**When we pray for our loved ones, we have a duty of care to not share identifying details publicly, which is why we only share first names. Instead, as we pray, we hold these loved ones close to our heart and lift them up to God, trusting that the Spirit intercedes in all of our prayers, especially those unknown and too deep for words.**

### **Intercessions:**

Jim	Rosetta	Scotty
Joan	the family and friends of Carol	
Nancy	Dee	Sheree
Roni (Ronnie	Jimmy	Christine
Barbara T	Stacy	Mac
Graham and his family	the family and friends of Scott	
The family and friends of Kory		Mark
Cerenity's friend		
Rev. Ryan's her family		
Gay, Vicki, Pam, Jack, Pastor Attila		

We pray for those people who have lost their jobs and their means of supporting their families, ... pets that need homes

Everyone impacted by the decisions of governments that choose violence and war instead of diplomacy; all essential workers and

all frontline healthcare workers; everyone impacted by recent hurricanes, fires, tornadoes, and flooding;  
and

The staff and participants of Word Made Flesh in Sierra Leone, Immokalee Farm Workers, black and brown fathers and their sons, everyone living through domestic violence, people of all religions who are being persecuted because of their faith, all who struggle with or are affected by mental illness and depression. We also pray for law enforcement officers, service men and women, missionaries and rescue workers doing God's work in dangerous places.

(Third Sunday: trespasses...)

## **Silent Prayer**

### **Prayers of the People and our Lord's Prayer**

Brilliant Light and Deepest Shadows,

You are with us. We give thanks, O God, for your living presence among us. We are grateful, O God, for the example of the hands of Christ, who reached out to feed, heal, free, and transform us into your beloved community. Fill our hands, no matter what they look like, with overflowing grace and joy so that we might offer to others your overflowingly steadfast love each day.

We pray this morning for those who are grieving, for those who are suffering, for those who are sitting in that place of waiting and not knowing. Soothe our fears, nourish our bodies, and feed our souls with the bread and cup of your compassion and mercy.

We praise you for your vision of a new heaven and a new earth,  
in which everyone treats each other as your beloved children, as  
together we sing the prayer that you have taught us:

**Our Father which 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.**

### **Musical Response**

*We Have Come at Christ's Own Bidding*      Daw/Pritchard

**We have come at Christ's own bidding  
to this high and holy place,  
where we wait with hope and longing  
for some token of God's grace.**

**Here we pray for new assurance  
that our faith is not in vain,  
searching like those first disciples  
for a sign both clear and plain.**

## We Share God's Love

### **Invitation to Generosity**

In God's presence, everything is gift. In gratitude, may these offered gifts continue to bathe the world in the light of God's love.

*(The offering plates are found by each doorway for your use. For those of us online, please follow the QR code.)*

### **\*Song of Gratitude**                      *Doxology*

**Praise God from whom all blessings flow,  
praise God all creatures here below,  
Praise God above, ye heavenly host,  
Creator, Christ, and Holy Ghost. Amen.**

### **\*Responsive Prayer of Thanksgiving and Dedication**

**Luminous Giver of all good things,  
Bless these gifts, that our giving may nourish us  
for the work of healing your creation,  
in the name of Christ, our light  
and the light of the world. Amen**

## **We Go to Carry the Light**

**\*Hymn**

*Shine, Jesus Shine*

Kendrick

**Lord, the light of your love is shining,  
in the midst of the darkness shining;  
Jesus, light of the world, shine upon us,  
set us free by the truth you now bring us,  
shine on me, shine on me.**

**Shine, Jesus, shine, fill this land with God's Holy glory;  
blaze, Spirit, blaze, set our hearts on fire.  
Flow, river, flow, flood the nations with grace and mercy;  
send forth your Word, Lord, and let there be light.**

**Lord, I come to your awesome presence,  
from the shadows into your radiance;  
by your love I may enter your brightness,  
search me, try me, consume all my darkness,  
shine on me, shine on me.**

**Shine, Jesus, shine, fill this land with God's Holy glory;  
blaze, Spirit, blaze, set our hearts on fire.  
Flow, river, flow, flood the nations with grace and mercy;  
send forth your Word, Lord, and let there be light.**

## **\*Blessing and Benediction**

*The good news of God's love is not just a message for the mountaintop. It is a glorious charge and a holy calling. As we leave this house of worship, may we be transfigured ourselves, radiant, refreshed for God's mission. Let us depart with fervent hope and renewed energy. Let our lives be witnesses to the gospel; let God's Spirit emanate from each of us!*

## **\*Sending Blessing**

*We Have Come at Christ's Own Bidding* Daw/Pritchard

**Strengthened by this glimpse of glory,  
fearful lest our faith decline,  
we, like Peter, find it tempting  
to remain and build a shrine.**

**But true worship gives us courage  
to proclaim what we profess,  
that our daily lives may prove us  
people of the God we bless.**

## **\*Postlude**

*The Lord Is My Light*

Allison

**Please remain seated in silence for the Postlude as the  
Light of Christ is carried into the world.  
The worship has ended; our service begins.**

## **Supporting Our Service Today**

**Liturgist:** John Yahres

**Welcome Table:** Marilyn Schwab

**Greeters:** John and Toni Yahres

**Acolyte:** Bella Clapham

**Head Usher:** George Ikeda

**Usher Team:** Steve Hempling,  
Dave Jack, Dave Mansfield,  
Bonnie Thistle

### **Technology Team**

Gary Woodrum, Debra Mosely,  
Maria Groody, David Jack,  
Linda Newton, Wally Davis,  
Patty Fjetland

The **Lord's Table** was decorated  
by Victoria Augustine

The **Sanctuary Flowers** are given  
by Marilyn Schwab in loving  
memory of her parents, Al and  
Betty Morris, on their anniversary

The **Church Sign** was changed by  
Faye Newton & Lisa Sclafani

### **Sunday Librarian:**

Helen Markus

### **Fellowship Hosts:**

Char Raitt



## **Senior Minister**

**Rev. Barbara Dickason, BCC**

## **Staff**

**Gary Leidheiser:** *Custodian*

**Barb Quinn:** *Office Assistant*

## **Music Staff**

**Barbara Quinn:** *Music Director*

**Lynda Weston:** *Bella Handbell  
Director*



## **This Week at a Glance**

### **Monday, February 16**

#### **SpiritFed at noon**

Pack a lunch and join us **on ZOOM** for prayer, study and connecting with each other. It's a come-as-you-are space designed to help us confront the loneliness epidemic while growing closer to God.

Click on the link below to join.

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/83576594637?pwd=U2024sKmOPiy3CyMqV4OarYUtofaom.1>

Meeting ID: 835 7659 4637

Passcode: 913882

6:00 PM Bridge — P

### **Tuesday, February 17**

9:00 AM Staff Meeting

10:00 AM Tech Team

11:30 Shrove Tuesday Lunch

4:00 PM Vision Team— Parlor

6:00 PM Audubon

6:00 PM Girl Scouts

### **Wednesday, February 18**

9:00 AM - Noon Library Hours

10:00 AM Bible Study—CR

11:15 AM Ashes to Go

11:30 AM Finance Team

**12:30 Ash Wednesday Service**

1:00 PM Cut-ups

2:00-4:00 Ashes to Go

3:30 PM Shamrock Ringers

6:30 Choir Rehearsal

### **Thursday, February 19**

2:00 PM Human Resources — P

4:00 Baby Basics — NH

4:00 Bell Choir Rehearsal

6:00 Daisies

### **Friday, February 20**

8:30 AM Men's Coffee—Panera

1-3 PM VAGC Crafts

### **Saturday February 21**

10:30 VADC — NH

### **Sunday, February 22**

#### **First Sunday of Lent**

9:00 AM Handbell Rehearsal — S

9:00-9:45 AM Library Hour

10:00 AM Worship

Fellowship Time Follows

11:00-11:15 AM Library Time

#### **Coming Events**

The church office is open

M-Th, 9-1.

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Or...Use your Smart Phone to scan the QR code: and it will take you



directly to our  
donations page.  
It is really easy!

## **2026**

- 8:00 AM-1:00 PM, Saturday, February 14,  
Women's Fellowship Rummage Sale
- Saturday, February 28, Christian Education  
Event TBA
- Sunday, March 8, Immokalee Sunday with  
Alan Penick