

THE
United Church
OF THE **San Juans**



**3RD SUNDAY
AFTER EPIPHANY**

JANUARY 21, 2024

MEDITATION BEFORE WORSHIP

In his New Year's homily from 2020, Father Richard Robr preached on the biblical call to change:

The Greek word for “repent” (*metanoia*) means to change your mind. I’d like to emphasize change, because that’s *not* something we humans as a species are attracted to. We’re much like animals in this regard. Animals are creatures of habit. Those of us with a dog or a cat know their behavior is predictable. If we change some daily routine, they’ll get upset. I’m afraid to say that we’re much the same. We like things the way we like things. And yet the first words out of Jesus’ mouth tell us that he’s come to give us a philosophy of change: “Repent,”—*change your mind*—“for the kingdom of heaven has come near” (Matthew 3:2).

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

REV. HARRY STRONG

PRELUDE *Instrumental Music*

KATY KRISTOFFERSEN, PIANO

CALL TO WORSHIP

TIM SPANGLER

Leader: Leader: Something inside pulls at us and beckons us;

People: Some presence as a new morning dawns;

Leader: A fragment of a dream that holds much promise;

People: A growing faith that we are not alone;

Leader: A sense of wonder that opens new vistas;

People: Let us welcome God’s new day in expectation and joy!

WELCOMING SONG* *O Jesus, I Have Promised* (John E. Bode, words; Arthur H. Mann, music) CONGREGATION

HYMN NO. 458 **Verses 1 and 3**

PRAYER OF PRAISE

TIM SPANGLER

Creator God: The whole universe proclaims Your glory. From pebble to star, all that You have made testifies to Your power and ingenuity. By Your grace, You have given *us* an opportunity to share in your inventive powers, allowing us to re-create the world around us. Inspire us by Your Holy Spirit that we may rise out of our old ruts to glorify You with new songs, new stories, new means of sharing the Good News of Your presence and power, and new efforts to reach out to those in need. Inspire us with Your imagination so, in whatever situation we find ourselves, we may be filled with the abundant life our Lord Jesus Christ promised, until we become the very people You envisioned with our first breath! Amen.

*Indicates we stand - if it is comfortable

- 3:1 The word of the LORD came to Jonah a second time, saying,
 2 “Get up, go to Nineveh, that great city, and proclaim to it the message that I tell you.”
 3 So Jonah set out and went to Nineveh, according to the word of the LORD. Now Nineveh was an exceedingly large city, a three days’ walk across.
 4 Jonah began to go into the city, going a day’s walk. And he cried out, “Forty days more, and Nineveh shall be overthrown!”
 5 And the people of Nineveh believed God; they proclaimed a fast, and everyone, great and small, put on sack cloth.
 6 When the news reached the king of Nineveh, he rose from his throne, removed his robe, covered himself with sackcloth, and sat in ashes.
 7 Then he had a proclamation made in Nineveh: “By the decree of the king and his nobles: No human or animal, no herd or flock, shall taste anything. They shall not feed, nor shall they drink water.
 8 Humans and animals shall be covered with sackcloth, and they shall cry mightily to God. All shall turn from their evil ways and from the violence that is in their hands.
 9 Who knows? God may relent and change his mind; he may turn from his fierce anger, so that we do not perish.”
 10 When God saw what they did, how they turned from their evil ways, God changed his mind about the calamity that he had said he would bring upon them, and he did not do it.

Leader: This is the Word of the Lord.

People: **Thanks be to God, Amen.**

ANTHEM *Grow* (Faisal Abdi Salah; Arr. K. Kristoffersen)

UCSJ CHOIR

Don't be afraid
 After the darkness is light
 So don't you be afraid
 And there comes the long night
 Oh, long night

Have faith, journey along
 If you don't know, the path is long
 But if you try, you'll surely grow
 To heal past the sorrow
 That's been keeping you low, you low, so

Grow, grow, grow, grow
 Grow, grow, grow, grow
 Grow, grow, grow, grow
 You've got to grow, grow, grow, grow

Even if you're on your own
 Even if you can't find your way
 Even if the journey is cold
 Believe in this, to death:
 I know that you will grow day by day
 If you walk with love
 You'll never be strangers

Grow, grow, grow, grow
 You've got to grow, grow, grow, grow
 You've got to grow.

- 14 Now after John was arrested, Jesus came to Galilee proclaiming the good news of God
15 and saying, “The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God has come near; repent, and believe in the good news.”
16 As Jesus passed along the Sea of Galilee, he saw Simon and his brother Andrew casting a net into the sea, for they were fishers.
17 And Jesus said to them, “Follow me, and I will make you fishers of people.”
18 And immediately they left their nets and followed him.
19 As he went a little farther, he saw James son of Zebedee and his brother John, who were in their boat mending the nets.
20 Immediately he called them, and they left their father Zebedee in the boat with the hired men and followed him.

Leader: This is the Gospel of the Lord

People: **Thanks be to God. Amen.**

SERMON

“To Live Is To Change”

REV. HARRY STRONG

RESPONDING TO GOD’S GRACE WITH OUR TITHES AND OFFERINGS

Thank you for your continued support of the church and our mission.

PRAYER OF DEDICATION

DOXOLOGY*

*Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;
Praise Christ, all people here below;
Praise Holy Spirit evermore;
Praise Triune God, whom we adore. Amen*

THE LORD’S PRAYER

Our Father, 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 sins, as we forgive those who sin 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.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

TIM SPANGLER AND REV. HARRY STRONG

CLOSING SONG* *Revive Us Again* (William P. Mackay, words; John J. Husband, music)

CONGREGATION

HYMN NO. 463 Verses 1, 2 and 4

CLOSING PRAYER

TIM SPANGLER

Lord of our lives, You are the Word that informs our words and that gives them life. Teach us to speak softly and listen with love. Teach us to hear the silence of Your presence and to recognize Your voice. And teach us to speak the words and to embody the actions that bring healing to our hurting world. Amen.

POSTLUDE *Instrumental Music*

KATY KRISTOFFERSEN, PIANO

CHARGE AND BLESSING

REV. HARRY STRONG

OUR MISSION

- We are a loving and compassionate church family that *respects the dignity and integrity* of each individual.
- We find our joy and meaning through faith in God and Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit.
- We seek to promote Christian unity and to encourage understanding and cooperation with those from different traditions.
- We seek to foster deeper relationships with God and each other through worship, fellowship, growth and service.



WE ARE AFFILIATED WITH

THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH USA ~ THE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH ~ THE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA



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