



**The United Church of Bethel**  
An Open, Affirming Congregation of the UCC/UUA

**1<sup>st</sup> Sunday**  
**After Epiphany**  
**Jan 8, 2023**

**The Brick Church c.1816**  
*Embarking upon our*  
*3<sup>rd</sup> Century of Service in Christ*

Tom Harty, Pastor  
Becky Kondi - Keyboard  
Larry Nobile - Guitar & Vocals  
Stoddard/Apelquist Family – Tech Team



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*Our Faith is 2000 Years Old; Our Thinking is Not*

# The United Church of Bethel

Whoever you are, Wherever you are on life's journey, You are welcome here.

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✠ = *Please Stand If You Are Able*

## **Centering & Prelude** **Welcome & Announcements** **Introit**

### **Responsive Call to Worship**

*L The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.*

**P And also with you.**

*L Lift up your hearts.*

**P We lift them up to the Lord**

*L Let us give thanks to the Lord our God*

**P It is right to give him thanks and praise**

*L Give glory to the Creator and bow in holy splendor!*

**P The voice of the Creator renews and rebirths.**

*L Give glory to the Holy One and bow in holy splendor!*

**P The voice of the Holy One redeems and restores.**

*Give glory to the Living Water and bow in holy splendor!*

**P The voice of the Living Water refreshes and revives. Glory to God!**

## **Invocation & Lord's Prayer**

✠ **Hymn** NCH 423

Great Is Your Faithfulness

## **Prayer of Confession**

*L Holy One, we confess our need for grace and mercy. We seek forgiveness for the ways in which we have drawn away from you and our neighbors. We express remorse for our participation in the systems of the world that are actively opposed to your kingdom.*

**P Transform us to be carriers and promoters of your good news of new life, liberation, and hope in the world. Amen.**

## **Assurance of Pardon**

*L The God of peace is faithful to offer forgiveness and new life in Christ. Receive the good news of new mercies with each new day and a future with hope.*

## **Passing the Peace**

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## Old Testament Reading

Isaiah 42:1-9

## Psalm 29

*r: The voice of God is full of Majesty*

## ✠ Gloria Patri

## Epistle Reading

Acts 10:34-43

## Choral Anthem

## ✠ Gospel:

Matthew 3:13-17

## ✠ Hymn NCH 129

Good Christian Friends, Rejoice

## Sermon

## Joys and Concerns

## Pastoral Prayer

*Choral Response: Hear Our Prayer O Lord.*

## Offering

## ✠ Doxology

## Prayer of Dedication

## Communion

## ✠ Hymn NCH 145

Once in Royal David's City

## ✠ Benediction

## ✠ Choral Benediction

## Postlude

(Please remain seated for a period of quiet meditation and appreciation for the music our worship team provides.)

## OLD TESTAMENT READING

### Isaiah 42:1-9

<sup>1</sup> Here is my servant, whom I uphold, my chosen, in whom my soul delights; I have put my spirit upon him; he will bring forth justice to the nations. <sup>2</sup> He will not cry or lift up his voice, or make it heard in the street; <sup>3</sup> a bruised reed he will not break, and a dimly burning wick he will not quench; he will faithfully bring forth justice. <sup>4</sup> He will not grow faint or be crushed until he has established justice in the earth; and the coastlands wait for his teaching. <sup>5</sup> Thus says God, the LORD, who created the heavens and stretched them out, who spread out the earth and what comes from it, who gives breath to the people upon it and spirit to those who walk in it: <sup>6</sup> I am the LORD, I have called you in righteousness, I have taken you by the hand and kept you; I have given you as a covenant to the people, a light to the nations, <sup>7</sup> to open the eyes that are blind, to bring out the prisoners from the dungeon, from the prison those who sit in darkness. <sup>8</sup> I am the LORD, that is my name; my glory I give to no other, nor my praise to idols. <sup>9</sup> See, the former things have come to pass, and new things I now declare; before they spring forth, I tell you of them.

## PSALM 29

### *r: The voice of God is full of Majesty*

- 1 Ascribe to the LORD, O heavenly beings,  
ascribe to the LORD glory and strength.
- 2 Ascribe to the LORD the glory of his name;  
worship the LORD in holy splendor.
- 3 The voice of the LORD is over the waters;  
the God of glory thunders, the LORD, over mighty waters.
- 4 The voice of the LORD is powerful;  
the voice of the LORD is full of majesty.

### *r: The voice of God is full of Majesty*

- 5 The voice of the LORD breaks the cedars;  
the LORD breaks the cedars of Lebanon.
- 6 He makes Lebanon skip like a calf,  
and Sirion like a young wild ox.
- 7 The voice of the LORD flashes forth flames of fire.
- 8 The voice of the LORD shakes the wilderness;  
the LORD shakes the wilderness of Kadesh.

### *r: The voice of God is full of Majesty*

- 9 The voice of the LORD causes the oaks to whirl, and strips the forest bare;  
and in his temple all say, "Glory!"
- 10 The LORD sits enthroned over the flood;  
the LORD sits enthroned as king forever.
- 11 May the LORD give strength to his people!  
May the LORD bless his people with peace!

### *r: The voice of God is full of Majesty*

## **EPISTLE READING**

### **Acts 10:34-43**

<sup>34</sup> Then Peter began to speak to them: "I truly understand that God shows no partiality, <sup>35</sup> but in every nation anyone who fears him and does what is right is acceptable to him. <sup>36</sup> You know the message he sent to the people of Israel, preaching peace by Jesus Christ--he is Lord of all. <sup>37</sup> That message spread throughout Judea, beginning in Galilee after the baptism that John announced: <sup>38</sup> how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power; how he went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with him. <sup>39</sup> We are witnesses to all that he did both in Judea and in Jerusalem. They put him to death by hanging him on a tree; <sup>40</sup> but God raised him on the third day and allowed him to appear, <sup>41</sup> not to all the people but to us who were chosen by God as witnesses, and who ate and drank with him after he rose from the dead. <sup>42</sup> He commanded us to preach to the people and to testify that he is the one ordained by God as judge of the living and the dead. <sup>43</sup> All the prophets testify about him that everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name."

## **GOSPEL READING**

### **Matthew 3:13-17**

<sup>13</sup> Then Jesus came from Galilee to John at the Jordan, to be baptized by him. <sup>14</sup> John would have prevented him, saying, "I need to be baptized by you, and do you come to me?" <sup>15</sup> But Jesus answered him, "Let it be so now; for it is proper for us in this way to fulfill all righteousness." Then he consented. <sup>16</sup> And when Jesus had been baptized, just as he came up from the water, suddenly the heavens were opened to him and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting on him. <sup>17</sup> And a voice from heaven said, "This is my Son, the Beloved, with whom I am well pleased."