



**Second Sunday after Epiphany
January 18, 2026**

Gratitude
“Forgiving — Trust the Eternal”

Rev. Barbara Dickason, BCC

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

Second Sunday after Epiphany

January 18, 2026

Singing Prelude

Woke Up This Morning
Strings and Things

Spiritual

**I woke up this morning with my mind (Hallelujah), stayed on Jesus,
Woke up this morning with my mind.....stayed on Jesus,
Woke up this morning with my mind (Hallelujah), stayed on Jesus,
Hallelu (Halle), Hallelu (Halle), Hallelu.....jah.**

2. Singin' and prayin' with my mind.....

3. Can't hate your neighbor with your mind.....

4. My burdens are lighter with my mind.....

Repeat verse 1

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 this morning. I am Pastor Barb, and Ginnie Behan will be our liturgist today. As always, many thanks go out to all of our staff and volunteers who are working tirelessly behind the scenes.

Beautifying our sanctuary today, we have flowers given by Loren Matasek in Honor of Helen Helgren's Birthday.

For those who are worshipping on-line, whether today or at some point in the future, you are invited to like us, to share us, and to 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, 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.

We do have a few upcoming activities to share.

Following Worship, we will be gathering in Naar Hall for Fellowship Time. Thank you to Gayle Davis, other members of our Leadership Council, and everyone else who is pitching in to host Fellowship Time today. The bowls and slips of paper are out on the tables again this week to fill with our gratitude. Please feel free to open, read, and share the reflections on gratitude that were shared last week and then add new ones to the bowl as we practice gratitude together. Crop Walk sign-up will also be available; please see Ross Ament. Today is the last day to order a 2026 CROP T-shirt.

For those of you are interested in either becoming a member or learning more about what that means, we will be gathering briefly in the conference room right off of Naar Hall immediately following worship. Following this meeting, there will still be time to grab some treats and gather in the Fellowship Hall...

For this week, during fellowship time, we are hosting Lucy Tobias, who will be offering us a presentation on Labyrinths and then inviting us to walk the Labyrinth here in front of the church.

We do have a few additional announcements of ways that we all can get involved. This week, we continue to host and sponsor a variety of activities that help to connect us, including Bible studies, Bridge, our Wednesday library time, our Friday men's breakfast and Knit-Wits, so check out the Connect, the bulletin, or the app for more information.

Coming up the next few weeks, there are several great opportunities to put in your calendar. In February, we will be hosting a fabulous Bell Choir Retreat. Lynda Westin, our Bell Choir Director, is on her way up here to tell us more.

As she makes her way up here, please also mark your calendar for Next Sunday, January 25, when Maria Groody, our church moderator and I will be hosting an informal time of conversation in the Conference Room following worship. Sometimes it can feel like the more things stay the same, the more they change. So whether you have questions, would like to simply get to know us better, or would like to set up a time to chat more, feel free to stop by.

Lynda?

Today is the third Sunday of our January sermon series called, 'Grateful'. The third of our four primary pillars in the Big Joy project, we are working with Robert A Emmon's book

entitled, “Thanks! How Practicing Gratitude can make you happier.” However, as Dr Emmons makes abundantly clear, Gratitude is a complex emotion that is often expressed more through the mind than the heart. The first Sunday of January, we approached gratitude through the lens of Awe — noticing and proclaiming the glory of God’s creation around us. Last week, we approached gratitude through the lens of Humility — the point of connection between our fragile humanness and the delight that God has for each us. This week, we are approaching Gratitude through the lens of forgiveness, seeking mercy for the times in which we have failed to recognize the Divine breath of God moving, sustaining, and healing each other.

For we come to worship a generous, steadfastly loving God, who created and names each of us a beloved child of God.

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

We Approach God's Presence

Meditation/Bringing in the Light of Christ

Just as I Am

Bradbury

Responsive Call to Worship

...

We come, just as we are, to respond to God's call to Worship.
With mercy and truth let us unite as Christ's body
while we seek the heart of God.

In Awe, O God, we meet you here.

With humility, we see and honor the unique and beautiful
humanity that surrounds us —
each of us an essential part of your body.

**May our worship align us again with Your holy purpose
— to love one another as Christ loves us.**

As life rises within us,

we sing a new song to You —

**For in You we trust, in You we discover the grace of forgiveness,
and because of You,**

We unite and worship in gratitude and joy.

Please rise in body or in spirit as:

"Christ, For the World We Sing"

***Hymn**

"Christ for the World We Sing"

Winter

**Christ for the world we sing,
the world to Christ we bring,
with loving zeal;
the poor, and them that mourn,
the faint and overborne,
sin-sick and sorrow-worn,
whom Christ doth heal.**

**Christ for the world we sing,
the world to Christ we bring,
with fervent prayer;
the wayward and the lost,
by restless passions tossed,
redeemed at countless cost,
from dark despair.**

**Christ for the world we sing,
the world to Christ we bring,
with one accord;
with us the work to share,
with us reproach to dare,
with us the cross to bear,
for Christ our Lord.**

**Christ for the world we sing,
the world to Christ we bring,
with joyful song;
the newborn souls, whose days,
reclaimed from error's ways,
inspired with hope and praise,
to Christ belong.**

Christ for the World We Sing

1. Christ for the world we sing, the world to
 2. Christ for the world we sing, the world to
 3. Christ for the world we sing, the world to
 4. Christ for the world we sing, the world to

Christ we bring, with lov - ing zeal; the poor, and
 Christ we bring, with fer - vent prayer; the way - ward
 Christ we bring, with one ac - cord; with us the
 Christ we bring, with joy - ful song; the new - born

them that mourn, the faint and o - ver - borne,
 and the lost, by rest - less pas - sions tossed,
 work to share, with us re - proach to dare,
 souls, whose days, re - claimed from er - ror's ways,

sin - sick and sor - row - worn, whom Christ doth heal.
 re - deemed at count - less cost, from dark de - spair.
 with us the cross to bear, for Christ our Lord.
 in - spired with hope and praise, to Christ be - long.

WORDS: Samuel Wolcott, 1869
 MUSIC: Felice de Giardini, 1769

CCLI License #11176734

ITALIAN HYMN
 664.6664

***Prayer of Transformation and New Life¹**

God of Vision and New Possibilities,
You fling stars across the sky

and Your light dances across eternity.

Dazzle us into your presence this new day.

Awaken us to your mercy and truth,

Reveal to us what is possible but not present.

Draw us out of the deep dark holes that strand us,

That mire us in muck and clay.

We are not perfect people.

Come through the cracks of our imperfections

and illuminate the dark places of our lives.

We pray for those who suffer discrimination because of gender,
race, sexual orientation, physical or mental impairment.

Give them strength and belief in their worth.

We pray for those who are active in discrimination

and those who allow it to happen,

oblivious to the pain that it causes.

Clothe us with heartfelt compassion,

with kindness, gentleness, and patience.

**Help us to practice each day the forbearance and forgiveness
that you taught us.**

Set us safely down upon a warm rock;

Steady us enough to continue our journey

Together with you.

Clothe us in love. Adorn us with gratitude.

In the name of Christ,

the One who shows us how to be human, we pray.

Amen.

¹ BLD

***Words of Grace**

Beloved of God,

Even when we are empty and need so much,
the Lord is thinking of you.

We trust in God's provision and salvation.

For in God we discover great good news:

We are all created children of God.

All is forgiven. All is being made new.

***Response**

Count Your Blessings

Oatman/Excell

Count your blessings, name them one by one;

count your blessings, see what God has done.

Count your blessings, name them one by one;

count your many blessings, see what God has done .

Count Your Blessings

The musical score is written in 4/4 time with a key signature of three flats (B-flat, E-flat, A-flat). It consists of three systems, each with a vocal line and a piano accompaniment line. The piano accompaniment features a steady bass line of eighth notes and chords in the right hand.

Count your bless-ings, name them one by one; Count your
Count your man-y bless-ings, name them one by one; Count your man-y
bless-ings, see what God has done. Count your bless-ings,
bless-ings, see what God has done. Count your man-y bless-ings,
name them one by one; Count your man-y bless-ings, see what God has done.

TEXT: Johnson Oatman, Jr.
MUSIC: Edwin O. Excell

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BLESSINGS
11.11.11.11. with Refrain

We Encounter God in the Word

From the Psalms

Psalm 40:1-5, 16-17

The Voice

1-5 I waited a long time for the Eternal;
He finally knelt down to hear me.
He listened to my weak and whispered cry.
He reached down and drew me
from the deep, dark hole where I was stranded,
mired in the muck and clay.
With a gentle hand, He pulled me out
To set me down safely on a warm rock;
He held me until I was steady enough to continue the journey again.
As if that were not enough,
because of Him my mind is clearing up.
Now I have a new song to sing—
a song of praise to the One who saved me.
Because of what He's done, many people will see
and come to trust in the Eternal.
Surely those who trust the Eternal—
who don't trust in proud, powerful people
Or in people who care little for reality, chasing false gods—
surely they are happy, as I have become.
You have done so many wonderful things,
had so many tender thoughts toward us, Eternal my God,
that go on and on, ever increasing.
Who can compare with You?

16-17...May all who look for You
discover true joy and happiness in You;
May those who cherish how You save them
always say, "O Eternal One, You are great and are first in our hearts."
Meanwhile, I am empty and need so much,
but I know the Lord is thinking of me.
You are my help; only You can save me, my True God.
Please hurry.

God is still speaking. **Thanks be to God!**

Anthem

Way Down Deep in My Soul

Rentz

From the Epistles

Colossians 3:12-18

The Inclusive Bible

12-18 Because you are God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, clothe yourselves with heartfelt compassion, with kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. Bear with one another; forgive whatever grievances you have against one another—forgive in the same way God has forgiven you. Above all else, put on love, which binds the rest together and makes them perfect. Let Christ's peace reign in your hearts since, as members of one body, you have been called to that peace. Dedicate yourselves to thankfulness. Let the Word of Christ, rich as it is, dwell in you. Instruct and admonish one another wisely. Sing gratefully to God from your hearts in psalms, hymns and songs of the Spirit. And whatever you do, whether in speech or in action, do it in the name of Jesus our Savior, giving thanks to God through Christ.

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

Sermon “Forgiving — Trust the Eternal” Pastor Barb

May the words of my mouth
and the meditation of all of our hearts
be acceptable to you, O God,
our truth and our salvation.

When I was ten, my grandma Esther had a stroke. I will be honest... I don't remember much about that time, other than that I was in fourth grade, and our otherwise ordinary, very busy lives were turned upside down again and again as plans and decisions were made about what to do while my parents waited for the next phone call. It was November, and even though I was celebrating finally making it to the double digits, I was also dealing with another disappointing birthday outcome. For each year, as I blew out my candles and made my wish I always wished for the same thing: all I wanted was for the autumn leaves to hold on to their beautiful colors long enough to color my celebration, and each year, that year included, they dropped about a week or two before.

I had also just been told that, now that I was ten, I was finally old enough to spend time during my summer break at grandma and grandpa's — without my parents there. My brothers had been spending summers with my grandparents for years, learning how to repair cars from grandpa and helping them both with the gardening and the cows. I was so excited that it was finally going to be my turn, and then grandma had her stroke.

It was touch and go for a while, and the news came in slowly. They had managed to catch it in time. She was now entirely paralyzed on her right side. Physical Therapy thought that they could help. She was still mostly paralyzed on her right side, but

at least had relearned how to walk with a walker. With her right hand still paralyzed, however, she would no longer be able to continue her embroidery. She could come home, but she really needed to continue her physical therapy. Grandpa rigged up pulleys and ropes in the dining room so that she could keep doing her exercises. She was teaching herself how to write with her left hand. My aunt was helping her discover alternative craft ideas to keep her busy, as she could no longer cook, clean, or garden, leaving all of her work to my grandpa who either made time for it or let it go as no longer essential.

As the months passed and the week I was promised that I could spend with her approached, I became more and more filled with dread. It didn't help that it felt like the rest of the family was going on vacation without me, even if it was technically a week-long work trip for my dad to the annual church conference.

Dread, disappointment, fear... I worked so hard to convince my parents that they were making the wrong decision leaving me there in the summer for a week that even decades later, my mom wondered if she had done the right thing.

For, truth be told, I was miserable. And I made sure everyone knew about it.

And, while I was probably too young to understand at the time, my misery probably also made it miserable for my grandparents to be around me that week. Grandpa, of course had work to do in the shop. But grandma, well, she couldn't go anywhere, fast.

And yet, as grandma set me to all the tasks that grandpa no longer had time for: cleaning, weeding, and learning to cook butter noodles with hot dogs just the way she liked them, she also showed me the books that dad had left at their place. As I

dusted them, I was able to take time to start reading them. And while she couldn't use her right hand, she could still talk me through some of the embroidery stitches based on what she had shown me before. And... when the two of us were alone, we had a heart to heart conversation about the damage complaining does to both relationships with others, with God, and within ourselves. And grandma, well, grandma told me a story. It was her story: about how it felt to not be able to get up and do so many things she loved to do, and how she was learning to be less impatient with the stuff left undone around the house.

She told me how she was learning to complain less. After all, who would know better than she, when she had just lost half the use of her body? And yet, I don't remember hearing her complain at all that week.

And, as she continued to tell me her story, she described to me how special the iris bed was to her, positioned just outside the window in a way that she could see it from the spot on the divan that she would occupy for the next ten years. And as she told me about those irises, I resolved to weed them for her. It took me two whole days, as the bulbs were densely packed and much to my alarm, the critters liked to explore my hands and forearms just a bit too often.

And yet. Something was happening there as I crouched and sat next to that patch of iris removing those weeds. Peeking through my misery I discovered gratitude. Gratitude that I could spend time with my grandma. Gratitude that I was hearing stories about my dad that I otherwise would have missed. Gratitude that, even dodging those big hairy jumping spiders, I could do something that would bring grandma a spot of joy and remind

her that I loved her as she sat there on that couch each day. Sure. The weeds would probably regrow, but that wasn't the point.

For I was learning that sometimes, confession, forgiveness, and reconciliation aren't just about the ways that we have accidentally or deliberately hurt someone — sometimes, it's about the way that we choose to show up in the world God has created.

In our passage from the letter to the Colossians this morning, we are encouraged to show up clothed in compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience. We are encouraged to bear with each other — seeing and recognizing the beautiful humanity God has created in each of us. And we are told to forgive, just as we are forgiven by God.

We are instructed to put on love, the love of God which holds all of these practices and all of us together as Christ's body, writing and bearing the peace of God within our hearts, dedicating our lives to the practice of gratitude.

But that summer, as much as I was swallowing my complaints and doing my best to help grandma, that summer, even as I was grateful for the stories and learning to use their new microwave, it was not peace that was written in my heart, and it was not compassion, kindness, forbearance, or forgiveness that clothed me. Sure, I may have dusted the books, and I may have felt compassion for grandma's paralysis, but I felt just as sorry for myself.

My mind was so engaged in comparison thinking — on constantly listing what I was missing out on by not being with my

family on vacation, that instead of a general positive outlook, my negativity bias was affecting not just my relationship with my grandparents, but the entire way that I viewed the world. I was so focused on what I did not have and was no longer able to receive from my grandma, that it took me years to look back and reflect upon all the gifts and the lesson on gratitude she gave me that summer — simply by being her.

In Robert A Emmon's book, "Thanks!," he lists multiple things that get in the way of our ability to give thanks. Negativity bias and comparison thinking, which I just mentioned, are two ways of showing up in the world that not only destroy the peace of Christ within us, but break apart the bonds of God's love. Choosing to blame others for our negative perceptions in our lives often leads to resentment and alienation, which also blocks our ability to be grateful. Expecting others to be grateful to us for any acts of compassion or kindness that we might have extended ultimately unravel the very acts of kindness and compassion that we offered... leaving only the threads of discouragement, insecurity, and feelings of being taken advantage of.

Last week, as we looked at gratitude through the lens of humility, I led you all through a scientifically researched meditation designed to help you feel the emotion of appreciation, of gratitude — even if only for a short time. You all were asked to think of someone who had done something for you, and how that made you feel.

This week, as we are delving deeper into Gratitude, Emmons makes a distinction between the feeling of gratitude, which is wonderful yet fleeting, and gratitude as a way of showing up in

the world. This attitude of Gratitude clothes us in the fruit of the Spirit of God and can sustain us through times of suffering and hardship. We hear this attitude of Gratitude this morning in our psalm, as the psalmist is drawn out of a time of suffering by the hand of God, steadied and tended until continuing their journey onward, trusting in the Eternal.

And while we give thanks to God for the gifts of the spirit — for compassion and kindness, for forbearance and patience and forgiveness — we also acknowledge that rather than simply being rewards for a life well lived, they are also faithful practices that nurture and shape us into members of God's beloved community.

And we have a choice to make. Will we hold on to the attitudes and emotions that lift up everything that is wrong in the world? Or, being mindful of the many ways that many around us choose to look at the world through lenses of scarcity and competition, will we choose instead to dress as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, gifted and blessed? Will we choose to complain about the ways that the world is not measuring up to our expectations, or will we instead remember the way that we are all connected, all beloved by God, and give thanks?

Gratitude is more than an emotion. It is a way of living in true relationship with God and each other. And as we seek to practice this type of gratitude, the Gratitude that clothes us in compassion and kindness, the gratitude that extends forgiveness and practices patience and forbearance with those whose culture, abilities, and values appear different from our own, as we clothe ourselves in the peace and love and Word of Christ, I encourage you to not only keep listing your blessings, but begin

to go deeper. Start getting more specific.

This week, I am grateful for my grandma. For even in the midst of all of my ingratitude, grandma, in her gentle, story-telling way, invited me to replace the misery that my ten year old self was wearing by putting on forgiveness, reconciliation, and gratitude.

This week, I am grateful for our staff, our volunteers, our musicians and vocalists, our acolytes, our tech and usher teams, our greeters, our librarians, those who have prepared treats and will stay to clean up, for new friends and friend of long duration, for those who have reached out to chat this week, for difficult conversations and the love of God that connects and sustains us, for the joy of worshipping God together with each and every one of you. I could simply say that I am grateful for this church and my spouse, but the practice of gratitude encourages us to go deeper, to name and acknowledge the many ways that we are connected, that our attitudes and perceptions affect and shape each other. I am grateful for the ways that we show up for each other when we are hurting. I am grateful for the ways that you all show that you care deeply about each other. I am grateful for the ways that you put on the gifts of gratitude, love and peace... writing them in your hearts and wearing them as a mantle.

So as we go into this coming week, whatever you do, whether in speech or in action, do it in the name of our Savior, giving thanks to God through Christ. Amen.

In Awe, we encounter God. With humility, we see and honor the unique and beautiful humanity that brings us each here. We seek

mercy for the times in which we have failed to recognize the Divine breath of God moving, sustaining, and healing each other. May our worship align us again with God's holy purpose — to love one another as Christ loves us.

We Respond to God's Grace

Prayer

Joys:

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 spread their business without explicit permission. Instead, as we pray, we hold our loved ones close to our heart and lift them up

to God, trusting that the Spirit intercedes in all of our prayers, especially those too deep for words.

Intercessions:

Jimmy
Barbara T
Rev. Kim and Darlyne, their family and friends
The family and friends of Nancy's mother
The family and friends of Dick Matasek
Rev. Ryan's her family
Gay, Vicki, Pam, Jack, Clark, Pastor Attila

Christine

Stacy

Chet and Kathy

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 Prayers

Prayers of the People and the Lord's Prayer²

Holy and merciful God,

in You we recognise what life can be:

Recklessly loving, abundantly forgiving, and limitlessly free.

Thank You for offering this life to us again, now.

Thank You for removing the barriers that

would keep us from this life,

and for making us new again.

We praise You for the way You lived –

opening doors of pain and guilt,

and releasing captives.

We praise You for the way You died –

forgiving sinners,

and denying revenge.

We praise You for the way You returned from death –

opening graves,

and re-awakening hopes and dreams.

And, we praise You for the way You come to us now –

stirring love in our hearts, and passion in our lives.

So we lift our prayers 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,

² John van de Laar <https://sacredise.com/what-life-can-be/>

and together we rise in body or in spirit, to pray the prayer that you have taught us:

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 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 *In Gratitude and Humble Trust* Christiernson

**In gratitude and humble trust
we bring our best today
to serve your cause and share your love
with all along life's way.**

**O God, who gave yourself to us
in Jesus Christ, your Son,
teach us to give ourselves each day**

In Gratitude and Humble Trust Christiernson

In grat-i-tude and hum- ble trust we bring our- best to- day
to serve Your Cause and Share Your love with all a- long life's way.
O- God, who gave Your- self to us in Je- sus Christ, Your Son,
teach us to give our- selves each day un- til life's work is done.

We Share God's Love

Invitation to Generosity³

Beloved of God,

We have a new song to sing. A song that has echoed through the ages and is fresh every morning. A song of Gratitude to the one who forgives and cares for us. For who can compare to our God?

(Offering plates are found by each doorway for your use.)

***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.**

***Unison Prayer of Thanksgiving and Dedication⁴**

**God of truth and mercy, of steadfast loving kindness,
Help us to know the truth of your love in our lives. Enable us to
grow within the grace we need... to be agents of change for a better
world. We dedicate ourselves and our gifts to your service. Amen.**

We Go to Carry the Light

***Hymn** *"I Then Shall Live"* Adams

**I then shall live as one who's been forgiven;
I'll walk with joy to know my debts are paid.
I know my name is clear to my Creator;
I am God's child, and I am not afraid.**

³ **Stretched Them Out: Service Prayers for The Baptism of Christ/Epiphany 1A** was written by Rev. Michael Anthony Howard who serves as Minister of Faith in Action for Living Water Association, Ohio NorthEast. <https://www.ucc.org/worship-way/baptism-of-christ-a-january-11/>

⁴ **Stretched Them Out: Service Prayers for The Baptism of Christ/Epiphany 1A** was written by Rev. Michael Anthony Howard who serves as Minister of Faith in Action for Living Water Association, Ohio NorthEast. <https://www.ucc.org/worship-way/baptism-of-christ-a-january-11/>

**So greatly pardoned, I'll forgive another;
The law of love I gladly will obey.**

**I then shall live as one who's learned compassion;
I've been so loved that I'll risk loving, too.
I know how fear builds walls instead of bridges;
I dare to see another's point of view.
And when relationships demand commitment,
Then I'll be there to care and follow through.**

**Your kingdom come around and through and in me;
Your power and glory, let them shine through me;
Your hallowed name, oh, may I bear with honor,
and may your living kingdom come in me.
The Bread of Life, oh, may I share with honor,
and may you feed a hungry world through me.**

I Then Shall Live

1 I then shall live as one who's been for - giv - en;
 2 I then shall live as one who's learned com - pas - sion;
 3 Your king - dom come a - round and through and in me,

I'll walk with joy to know my debts are paid. I know my
 I've been so loved that I'll risk lov - ing, too. I know how
 your power and glo - ry, let them shine through me; your hal - lowed

name is clear to my Cre - a - tor; I am God's child, and
 fear builds walls in - stead of bridg - es; I dare to see an -
 name, oh, may I bear with hon - or, and may your liv - ing

I am not a - fraid. So great - ly par - doned, I'll for - give an -
 oth - er's point of view. And when re - la - tion - ships de - mand com -
 king - dom come in me. The Bread of Life, oh, may I share with

oth - er; the law of love I glad - ly will o - bey.
 mit - ment, then I'll be there to care and fol - low through.
 hon - or, and may you feed a hun - gry world through me.

WORDS: Gloria Gaither (1942-)
 MUSIC: Jean Sibelius (1865-1957); arr. Hymnal 1933

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***Blessing and Benediction⁵**

Beloved of God,

Trust in the eternal. Remember the times that God has lifted you out of a pit and set you upon a warm rock. And may you, discover true joy and happiness as we go out from this place giving thanks to God and sharing our gratitude for God's eternal gift with others.

***Sending Blessing**

Bound Together

Medema

**Well, we are...bound together and...finely woven;
we're...bound together and...finely woven;
we're...bound together and...finely woven with love.**

***Postlude**

Great is Thy Faithfulness

Runyan

***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.***

⁵ **Stretched Them Out: Service Prayers for The Baptism of Christ/Epiphany 1A** was written by Rev. Michael Anthony Howard who serves as Minister of Faith in Action for Living Water Association, Ohio NorthEast. Michael's work supports congregations as they weave theology, justice, and place-based ministry into faithful action that bears prophetic witness to God's dwelling among us. <https://www.ucc.org/worship-way/baptism-of-christ-a-january-11/>

Supporting Our Service Today

Liturgist: ...

Welcome Table:

...

Greeter: ...

Acolyte: Bella Clapham

Head Usher: Harold Steindam

Usher Team: Mel Burrowes,
Phil Ensue, Jim and Linda
Forrestall, Helen Markus, Holly
Vincent

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

...

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

Sunday Librarian:

...

Fellowship Hosts:



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*

Venice United Church of Christ

620 Shamrock Boulevard

Venice, FL, 34293

Office: 941.493.6741

Email: veniceucc@gmail.com

Website: www.veniceucc.org

This Week at a Glance

Monday, January 19

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.

Go to the website, the Connect, or click on the link that you see below.

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

Meeting ID: 835 7659 4637

Passcode: 913882

6:30 PM Bridge — P

Tuesday, January 20

9:00 AM Staff Meeting

1:00 PM Worship Committee — P

3:00 PM Game Group — Parlor

6:00 PM Girl Scouts

Wednesday, January 21

9:00 AM - Noon Library Hours

10:00 AM Bible Study—CR

11:00 AM RCSSC - NH

1:00 PM Cut-Ups — CR

3:30 PM Shamrock Ringers NH

5:30 PM Chestnut Creek HOA

6:30 PM Choir Rehearsal

Thursday, January 22

2:00 PM Human Resources —P

4:00 PM Baby Basics —NH

4:00 PM Bell Choir Rehearsal

6:00 PM Daisies

Friday, January 23

8:30 AM Men's Weekly Coffee—

Panera

9:00 AM KnitWits — P

Sunday, January 25

9:00 AM Choir Rehearsal —S

9:00-9:45 AM Library Hour

10:00 AM Worship

11:00-11:15 AM Library Time

11:15 AM Fellowship Time

11:15 Labyrinth Presentation NH

Coming Events

The church office is open

M-Th, 9-1.

Would you like to donate to VUCC online?

Use this link:

<https://veniceucc.org/give>

Or...Use your Smart Phone to scan the QR code:

and it will take you directly to our donations page.

It is really easy!

