

# Quispamsis United Church

February 4, 2024 - 5th Sunday after Epiphany

**Liturgical Colour: Green**

**Presider: Rev Ian Manson**

**Music: Stephen Alexander**

**Reader: Marilyn Robertson**

**Centering Reflection: "The ability to live well is the ability to live without so many certainties."  
- Stanley Hauerwas**

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## GATHERING TOGETHER

### Opening Music & Time of Prayer and Candle Lighting

Sweet Hour of Prayer - Wm. Bradbury arr. Martha Mier

### Welcome and Lighting of the Christ Candle

### Lighting of Affirm Candle & Acknowledgment of Territories

### Celebrations

#### Introit:

**The light of Christ has come into the world,  
The light of Christ has come into the world. (2x)**

#### Call to Worship (Responsive):

God has invited us to come.

**So we gather.**

God has spoken to the world.

**So we listen.**

God has given us glimpses of grace and mercy.

**So we wait, longing for healing, eager for hope.**

God has been faithful to all generations.

**So we offer our praise to God, Creator, Redeemer, and Sustainer.**

**Prayer of Approach (Unison)**

**Holy One, your love is beyond our imagining,  
and we give thanks for the gifts of your constant presence.  
In a hectic world, you are peace and rest.  
In a harsh world, you are tenderness and mercy.  
In the cold and dark of winter, you are light and comfort.  
Strengthen us by your Spirit, and draw near to us this day,  
In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.**

**Opening Hymn:**

**Come Touch Our Hearts**

**MV 12 (vs. 1-4)**

**Come touch our hearts that we may know compassion,  
from failing embers build a blazing fire;  
love strong enough to overturn injustice,  
to seek a world more gracious, come touch and bless our hearts.**

**Come touch our souls that we may know and love you,  
your quiet presence all our fears dispel;  
create a space for spirit to grow in us,  
let life and beauty fill us, come touch and bless our souls.**

**Come touch our minds and teach us how to reason,  
set free our thoughts to wonder and to dream;  
help us to open doors of understanding,  
to welcome truth and wisdom, come touch and bless our minds.**

**Come touch us in the moments we are fragile,  
and in our weakness your great strength reveal;  
that we may rise to follow and to serve,  
steady now our nerve, come touch and bless our wills.**

**Prayer of Confession (Unison)**

**Time and again, O God, we read of how you open your heart to those in need,  
and bring healing and hope to your people.  
But sometimes we struggle to acknowledge and celebrate these signs of light and life.  
Sometimes we assume that things can never change.  
Sometimes we are unwilling or unable to believe that transformation is possible.  
Be patient with us when we falter, and continue to bless us with your strength, healing and  
love.**

*(Silent Contemplation)*

## Words of Assurance

### Time for All Ages

**Sung Introduction to Scripture:** Open Your Ears, O Faithful People

VU 272 (Vs 1)

**Open your ears O faithful people,  
Open your ears and hears God's word.  
Open your hearts O faithful people,  
God now speaks to you.**

**Reading:** Mark 1:29-39

As soon as they left the synagogue, they entered the house of Simon and Andrew, with James and John. Now Simon's mother-in-law was in bed with a fever, and they told him about her at once. He came and took her by the hand and lifted her up. Then the fever left her, and she began to serve them.

That evening, at sunset, they brought to him all who were sick or possessed with demons. And the whole city was gathered around the door. And he cured many who were sick with various diseases, and cast out many demons; and he would not permit the demons to speak, because they knew him.

In the morning, while it was still very dark, he got up and went out to a deserted place, and there he prayed. And Simon and his companions hunted for him. When they found him, they said to him, 'Everyone is searching for you.' He answered, 'Let us go on to the neighbouring towns, so that I may proclaim the message there also; for that is what I came out to do.' And he went throughout Galilee, proclaiming the message in their synagogues and casting out demons.

This is the Word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

**The Gift of Music**

Be Unto Your Name

**Message**

"A Light in the Darkness"

### **RESPONDING TO GOD'S WORD**

**Hymn:**

We Are Pilgrims

VU 595

**We are pilgrims on a journey,  
fellow travellers on the road;  
we are here to help each other  
walk the mile and bear the load.**

**Sister, let me be your servant,  
let me be as Christ to you;  
pray that I may have the grace to  
let you be my servant too.**

**I will hold the Christ-light for you  
in the night-time of your fear;  
I will hold my hand out to you,  
speak the peace you long to hear.**

**I will weep when you are weeping,  
when you laugh I'll laugh with you;  
I will share your joy and sorrow,  
till we've seen this journey through.**

**When we sing to God in heaven,  
we shall find such harmony,  
born of all we've known together  
of Christ's love and agony.**

**Brother, let me be your servant,  
let me be as Christ to you;  
pray that I may have the grace to  
let you be my servant too.**

**Life and Work of the Church**

**Celebrating Black History Month**

**Sharing of Gifts and Talents**

**Offertory Dedication Hymn:      As Those of Old Their First Fruits Brought      VU 518 (Vs 3)**  
**With gratitude and humble trust we bring our best to you,  
Not just to serve your cause, but share your love with neighbours too.  
O God who gave yourself to us in Jesus Christ your son,  
help us to give ourselves each day until life's work is done.**

### **Prayer of Dedication (Unison)**

**Generous God, we bring our offering to you, trusting that you will bless our gifts and use them in ways we cannot even imagine. Jesus touched so many lives in so many different ways. We ask that these gifts will touch many lives, too, with your healing and hope in these challenging times. Amen.**

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

#### **SENDING FORTH**

#### **Closing Hymn:**

**For the Healing of the Nations  
For the healing of the nations,  
God, we pray with one accord;  
for a just and equal sharing  
of the things that earth affords.  
To a life of love in action  
help us rise and pledge our word.**

VU 678

**Lead us forward into freedom,  
from despair your world release;  
that, redeemed from war and hatred,  
all may come and go in peace.  
Show us how through care and goodness  
fear will die and hope increase.**

**All that kills abundant living,  
let it from the earth be banned:  
pride of status, race or schooling,  
dogmas that obscure your plan.  
In our common quest for justice  
may we hallow life's brief span.**

**You, Creator-God, have written  
your great name on humankind;  
for our growing in your likeness  
bring the life of Christ to mind;  
that, by our response and service,  
earth its destiny may find.**

### **Commissioning (Responsive):**

The season of Epiphany celebrates God's light breaking into the world in Jesus, and so:

**May the light of God lead us,  
the light of Christ embrace us,  
and the light of the Holy Spirit enliven us  
So that we and all creation know both hope and peace  
this day and each coming day.**

### **Benediction**

### **Choral Closing**

Lord Jesus, You Shall Be My Song  
**Lord Jesus, you shall be my song as I journey.  
I'll tell everybody about you wherever I go.  
For our life and our peace and our love is yourself.  
Lord Jesus, you shall be my song as I journey.**

VU 641 (Vs 1)

### **Closing Music**

The Solid Rock - Wm. Bradbury arr. Lloyd Larson