



*The Seed of Joy: © 2023 Barn Geese Worship. Used by permission*

# First Sunday of Lent: Persistent Joy

February 18, 2024 10:30 AM

## GATHERING

*The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God.*

RINGING THE BELL

WELCOME AND MINISTRY HIGHLIGHTS

PRELUDE

*(\* Indicates that all are invited to stand)*

\*CALL TO WORSHIP (1)

When floods rise and fall, **we practice joy.**

When hope surprises us, **we practice joy.**

When God sets people free, **we practice joy.**

When Jesus heals us, **we practice joy.**

When we are called, **we practice joy.**

When we endure, **we practice joy.**

We practice joy together, **and God is with us.**

\*CONGREGATIONAL HYMN “Enter, Rejoice, and Come In” #73 *New Century Hymnal*  
(For full music, the *New Century Hymnal* is located in each pew rack)

**Enter, rejoice, and come in. Enter, rejoice, and come in.**

**Refrain: Today will be a joyful day; enter, rejoice, and come in.**

**Open yourself to the song. Open yourself to the song. Refrain**

**Open your hearts everyone. Open your hearts everyone. Refrain**

**Don't be afraid of some change. Don't be afraid of some change. Refrain**

**Enter, rejoice, and come in. Enter, rejoice, and come in. Refrain**

\*PRAYER OF CONFESSION (1)

God of abundant goodness, we confess we sometimes hurt those we love,  
**those far from us, ourselves, and your creation by what we do and by what we neglect.**  
We cling to disappointments, judgments, and failures and forget to enjoy what you give.  
**We ignore the gift of your presence in times both tragic and triumphant.**  
Forgive us for what we have done and for what we have failed to do.  
**Pour out on us the joy of your presence now and forevermore.**  
(*silent confession*)

\*WORDS OF ASSURANCE

Friends, receive these joyful words:

We are loved and welcomed as God's beloved children,  
Made new by God's grace so that we might share its joy with God's whole world.  
**Thanks be to God!**

\*RESPONSE OF PRAISE “Bless the Lord, My Soul” (*Taizé Community*) (*repeat once*)

The image shows two staves of musical notation in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. The first staff contains the melody for the first line of the hymn: "Bless the Lord, my soul, and bless God's ho - ly name." The second staff contains the melody for the second line: "Bless the Lord, my soul, who leads me in - to life." Chord symbols are provided below the notes: Dm, G, Dm, Bb, C, Dm.

Bless the Lord, my soul, and bless God's ho - ly name.

Dm G Dm B<sup>b</sup> C Dm

Bless the Lord, my soul, who leads me in - to life.

\*PASSING THE PEACE

CONVERSATION WITH OUR CHILDREN

CHORAL ANTHEM

**LISTENING**

*God speaks to us in the Word proclaimed.*

PRAYER OF ILLUMINATION

SCRIPTURE READING Genesis 9:8-17 Pew Bible pp.6-7

A Word of God that is still speaking,  
**Thanks be to God!**

SERMON

SILENT RELECTION

HYMN OF REFLECTION “God of the Sparrow, God of the Whale” #32  
*(For full music, the New Century Hymnal is located in each pew rack)*

**God of the sparrow, God of the whale, God of the swirling stars**  
**How does the creature say Awe, how does the creature say Praise?**

**God of the earthquake, God of the storm, God of the trumpet blasts,**  
**How does the creature say Woe, how does the creature cry Save?**

**God of the rainbow, God of the cross, God of the empty grave,**  
**How does the creature say Grace, how does the creature say Thanks?**

**God of the hungry, God of the sick, God of the prodigal,**  
**How does the creature say Care, how does the creature say Life?**

**God of the neighbor, God of the foe, God of the pruning hook,**  
**How does the creature say Love, how does the creature say Peace?**

**God of the ages, God near at hand, God of the loving heart,**  
**How do your children say Joy, how do you children say Home?**

**RESPONDING**

*We respond to God’s Word through our prayers and our gifts.*

## LENTEN AFFIRMATION (2)

For each step that we might take, **be our guide, O Lord of life.**  
For each load that we might bear, **be our strength, O Lord of life.**  
For each mountain we might face, **be our power, O Lord of life.**  
For each river that might impede, **be our safety, O Lord of life.**  
For each place where we might rest, **be our peace, O Lord of life.**  
For each sunrise and sunset, **be our joy, O Lord of life.**

## NAMING OUR JOYS AND CONCERNS

CALL TO PRAYER: "Take, O Take Me as I Am" #698 *Glory to God Hymnal*  
(repeat once)

The image shows a musical score for the hymn "Take, O Take Me as I Am" in 4/4 time, key of B-flat major. The score is written for voice and piano. The lyrics are: "Take, O take me as I am; sum-mon out what I shall be; set your seal up-on my heart and live in me." The music features a simple melody in the voice part and a piano accompaniment with chords and moving lines.

## PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE: THE PSALM OF THE DAY Psalm 25:1-10

### 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 debts as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever. Amen.**

### OFFERTORY

*(Offer to God and then use this time for prayer. A QR code at the end of the bulletin is available for online giving).*

\*RESPONSE OF PRAISE “We Give You But Your Own” #785 *New Century Hymnal*  
**We give you but your own, whate’er the gift may be;  
All that we have is yours alone, we give it gratefully.**

\*PRAYER OF DEDICATION

### SENDING

*With God’s blessing, we are sent forth to follow Christ in the world.*

\* COMMISSIONING HYMN “In the Midst of New Dimensions” #391 vv.1-3 *only*  
*(For full music, the New Century Hymnal is located in each pew rack)*

**In the midst of new dimensions, in the face of changing ways,  
Who will lead the pilgrim peoples wandering in their separate way?  
*Refrain:* God of rainbow, fiery pillar, leading where the eagles soar,  
We you people, ours the journey now and ever, now and ever, now and evermore.**

**Through the flood of starving people, warring factions and despair,  
Who will lift the olive branches? Who will light the flame of care? *Refrain***

**As we stand a world divided by our own self-seeking schemes,  
Grant that we, your global village, might envision wider dreams. *Refrain***

\*COMMISSIONING AND BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE

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*Thanks to God, we at Hope United Church of Christ have good news to share.  
And we should feel compelled to share it, because there are people in St. Louis  
who are looking for a progressive and loving faith community.  
When we share Hope, we make it easier for them to find us!*

Worship Endnotes

- (1) *The Seed of Joy*: © 2023 Barn Geese Worship. Used by permission
- (2) Adapted from [www.faithandworship.com](http://www.faithandworship.com)

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***February 18, 2024 Worship Leaders***

Pastor: Sarah Fredriksen McCann

Organist: Jim Threlkeld

Liturgist:

Ushers: Representatives from Finance and Insurance Ministry

YouTube: Andy Karcher

Tech team: Jim Richmann, Jack Jennings, Ron Geisel,

Kristine Wentzien, Kathleen Mees

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*Thanks for your contribution to  
the ministries of Hope UCC!*

***Hope United Church of Christ Statement  
of Welcome and Mission***

No matter where you are on life's journey, you are invited to enter the big red doors of Hope United Church of Christ. We are an open and affirming congregation. We believe that every person is a child of God and all are welcome, regardless of race, economic background, marital status, gender, gender identity(ies) / expression(s), sexual orientation, age, physical or mental ability, nationality or faith history. It is our mission, inspired by God's Holy Spirit, to engage persons in living out the gospel of Jesus Christ. Please come, for all things are ready.

***Adopted by Hope UCC Congregation August 29, 2010***