



St Ives Uniting Church

28 January 2024

Epiphany 4

Call to worship and welcome

Hymn: 454 Worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness

Prayer of adoration

Responsive reading: Psalm 111

¹ Praise the Lord.

**I will extol the Lord with all my heart
in the council of the upright and in the assembly.**

² Great are the works of the Lord;
they are pondered by all who delight in them.

³ Glorious and majestic are his deeds,
and his righteousness endures forever.

⁴ He has caused his wonders to be remembered;
the Lord is gracious and compassionate.

⁵ He provides food for those who fear him;
he remembers his covenant forever.

⁷ The works of his hands are faithful and just;
all his precepts are trustworthy.

⁸ They are established for ever and ever,
enacted in faithfulness and uprightness.

⁹ He provided redemption for his people;
he ordained his covenant forever—
holy and awesome is his name.

¹⁰ The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom;
all who follow his precepts have good understanding.
To him belongs eternal praise.

Prayer of confession

**Almighty and most merciful Father,
we have strayed from your ways like lost sheep.
We have left undone what we ought to have done,
and we have done what we ought not to have done.
We have followed our own ways
and the desires of our own hearts.
We have broken your holy laws.
Yet, good Lord, have mercy on us;
restore those who are penitent,
according to your promises declared to all people
in Jesus Christ our Lord.**

**And grant, merciful Father, for his sake,
that we may live a godly and obedient life,
to the glory of your holy name.
Amen.**

Hymn: 123 Be still, my soul

Notices

Lawrence Peak

Bible readings

Mark 1:21-28

Heather Lakiss

²¹ They went to Capernaum, and when the Sabbath came, Jesus went into the synagogue and began to teach. ²² The people were amazed at his teaching, because he taught them as one who had authority, not as the teachers of the law. ²³ Just then a man in their synagogue who was possessed by an impure spirit cried out, ²⁴ "What do you want with us,

Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are—the Holy One of God!”

²⁵ “Be quiet!” said Jesus sternly. “Come out of him!” ²⁶ The impure spirit shook the man violently and came out of him with a shriek.

²⁷ The people were all so amazed that they asked each other, “What is this? A new teaching—and with authority! He even gives orders to impure spirits and they obey him.” ²⁸ News about him spread quickly over the whole region of Galilee

This is the word of the Lord

Thanks be to God

1 Corinthians 8:1-13

Shirley Ashton

Now about food sacrificed to idols: We know that “We all possess knowledge.” But knowledge puffs up while love builds up. ² Those who think they know something do not yet know as they ought to know. ³ But whoever loves God is known by God.

⁴ So then, about eating food sacrificed to idols: We know that “An idol is nothing at all in the world” and that “There is no God but one.” ⁵ For even if there are so-called gods, whether in heaven or on earth (as indeed there are many “gods” and many “lords”), ⁶ yet for us there is but one God, the Father, from whom all things came and for whom we live; and there is but one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom all things came and through whom we live.

⁷ But not everyone possesses this knowledge. Some people are still so accustomed to idols that when they eat sacrificial food they think of it as having been sacrificed to a god, and since their conscience is weak, it is defiled. ⁸ But food does not bring us near to God; we are no worse if we do not eat, and no better if we do.

⁹ Be careful, however, that the exercise of your rights does not become a stumbling block to the weak. ¹⁰ For if someone with a weak conscience sees you, with all your knowledge, eating in an idol’s temple, won’t that person be emboldened to eat what is sacrificed to idols? ¹¹ So this weak brother or sister, for whom Christ died, is destroyed by your knowledge.

¹² When you sin against them in this way and wound their weak conscience, you sin against Christ. ¹³ Therefore, if what I eat causes my brother or sister to fall into sin, I will never eat meat again, so that I will not cause them to fall.

This is the word of the Lord

Thanks be to God

Sermon: A little knowledge...

Hymn: 609 May the mind of Christ my saviour

Offering

Offering response: 768 Praise God from whom all blessings flow

Prayers of the people and the Lord's prayer

Hymn: 569 Guide me, O thy great redeemer

Benediction

Threefold Amen

Postlude

Organist

Jim Abraham