



Looking for the Light, Listening for the Call
January 31, 2021

Prelude

Simple Gifts, Martha Main

We are Called to Worship - Friends in Christ, what hopes do you bring to worship? We bring hope for health and wholeness. What afflictions do you bring to worship? Physical pain? From illness and injury. Emotional pain? From sad and scary life situations. Mental pain? From dis-ease of many kinds. With all of these afflictions, it's a miracle that any of us have made it to worship this morning! But where else would we be? We yearn to know God's powerful love and to know that wholeness is possible. In today's gospel, a person with an "*afflicting spirit*" *¹ interrupts Jesus and Jesus sets the person free. And where does the miracle of this story and our stories begin? When we bring all of who we are—hopeful, afflicted, bold—into relationship with the Divine. So come, let us enter this sanctuary with our whole selves—hopeful, afflicted and bold—Come, let us worship!+

Gathering Prayer - Almighty God, Light from Light, who commands the universe and all that is made, your Word is the power that makes whole what is broken, the force of good, and the food of peace. Teach us now as you taught in the synagogue. Heal us now so that in all that we say and do, the freedom we have in you may be for others, too; in Jesus' name we pray. Amen.=

Song 1

Gather Us In, YouTube

¹ *"*Afflicting spirit*" is a term taken from *The Message*, translation of Mark 1:21-28 by Eugene Petersen
Zion United Church of Christ, Worship @ Home, January 24, 2021, p. 1

Sharing Our Joys and Concerns

A Time of Prayer: *You are welcome to send prayer requests to Pastor Sarah. Spend a few moments connecting with God and lifting up your prayers.*

The Lord's Prayer (unison)

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.

We Hear God's Word

Mark 1:21-28 (NRSV)

21 They went to Capernaum; and when the sabbath came, he entered the synagogue and taught. ²²They were astounded at his teaching, for he taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes. ²³Just then there was in their synagogue a man with an unclean spirit, ²⁴and he cried out, 'What have you to do with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are, the Holy One of God.' ²⁵But Jesus rebuked him, saying, 'Be silent, and come out of him!' ²⁶And the unclean spirit, throwing him into convulsions and crying with a loud voice, came out of him. ²⁷They were all amazed, and they kept on asking one another, 'What is this? A new teaching—with authority! He commands even the unclean spirits, and they obey him.' ²⁸At once his fame began to spread throughout the surrounding region of Galilee.

Mark 1:21-28 (*The Message*)

²¹⁻²² Then they entered Capernaum. When the Sabbath arrived, Jesus lost no time in getting to the meeting place. He spent the day there teaching. They were surprised at his teaching—so forthright, so confident—not quibbling and quoting like the religion scholars.

²³⁻²⁴ Suddenly, while still in the meeting place, he was interrupted by a man who was deeply disturbed and yelling out, "What business do you have here with us, Jesus? Nazarene! I know what you're up to! You're the Holy One of God, and you've come to destroy us!"

²⁵⁻²⁶ Jesus shut him up: "Quiet! Get out of him!" The afflicting spirit threw the man into spasms, protesting loudly—and got out.

²⁷⁻²⁸ Everyone there was spellbound, buzzing with curiosity. "What's going on here? A new teaching that does what it says? He shuts up defiling, demonic spirits and tells them to get lost!" News of this traveled fast and was soon all over Galilee.

Song 2

We All Are One in Mission, YouTube

Meditation

Listening for Grace

We Respond to God's Word with Our Giving

Invitation – As actions of grace and love, let us offer our gifts and lives to God.~

January Benevolence – Our Benevolence Offering for this month is for God's Bounty Food Pantry. Please, prayerfully consider if you are called to contribute toward this ministry. If you would like to make a donation to God's Bounty, please clearly indicate that on your check or offering envelope, or be sure to include a note/message for any PayPal donations so that our financial secretary can make sure your benevolence offering is counted for.

You can mail your offerings to our office. We check the mail regularly.

Zion United Church of Christ

8916 E. Troy Ave.

Indianapolis, IN 46239

Or, you can donate through our website through our secure PayPal button at www.zionuccindy.net/donate. Please know that PayPal receives a 2.2% processing fee and a \$0.30 transaction charge. You are able to set up reoccurring, monthly payments.

We Give Thanks – Holy, awesome God, we bring gifts of paper and coin, symbols of our gratitude and our love. Bless these symbols, that they may become acts of love and grace. Bless us and our gifts, that we may transform the world with love and grace. In gratitude and hope, we pray. Amen.~

Song 3

What a Friend We Have in Jesus, YouTube

We Are Sent Forth with a Blessing - And now in the wholeness and the goodness of God, go forth. Go and laugh with your friends, reconcile with those who have hurt you, be kind to strangers, and feel the Divine smile upon us. Now and forevermore. Amen.+

Postlude

I've Got Peace Like a River, Martha Main

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