

**Welcome to Niskayuna Reformed Church  
January 28, 2024  
Fourth Sunday after Epiphany  
Rev. Dr. Sherri & Rev. Michael Meyer-Veen**

**The Approach to God**

The Lord be with you. **And also, with you.**

Welcome and announcements

Prelude Now To Us Descending

Scott

Introit

Votum

Scott Haefner

Our help is in the name of the Lord, who made heaven and earth. Amen

The Call to Worship (Responsive) Isaiah 55:6,10-12

Seek the LORD while God may be found;

**call on the LORD while God is near.**

As the rain and the snow  
come down from heaven,  
and do not return to it  
without watering the earth  
and making it bud and flourish,  
so that it yields seed for the sower and bread for the eater,  
**so is my word that goes out from my mouth:**

It will not return to me empty,  
but will accomplish what I desire  
and achieve the purpose for which I sent it.

**You will go out in joy  
and be led forth in peace;  
the mountains and hills  
will burst into song before you,  
and all the trees of the field  
will clap their hands.**

\*Hymn of Worship "How Firm a Foundation"

**Lift Up Your Hearts, 427  
Verses 1,2,4,5**

\*The Salutation and People's Amen: Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. Amen

Call to Confession:

The proof of God's amazing love is this:  
While we were sinners, Christ died for us.  
Let us therefore approach the throne of grace with boldness,  
so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.  
Trusting in God's faithfulness and compassion,  
let us confess our sin before God and one another.

Prayer of Confession (Unison):

**Most gracious and most merciful God,  
we confess to you and to one another that time after time  
we have entered your presence with countless prayers  
but with hearts that have been closed to your grace.  
We have lifted our hands to you in praise,  
but our feet have still walked in the ways of evil.  
We have rehearsed your commandments  
but have refused to see your face in the needs of our neighbor.  
We pray, Lord, that you forgive our lack of faith  
and pardon our acts of injustice.  
Grant us the healing that comes from your presence  
and the cleansing of your all-powerful Word,  
through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.**

Kyrie Eleison:

**Lord, have mercy upon us; Christ, have mercy upon us; Lord, have  
mercy upon us.**

Words of Assurance: 2 Corinthians 12:9-10

The LORD said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness." Therefore, I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ's power may rest on me. That is why, for

Christ's sake, I delight in weaknesses, in insults, in hardships, in persecutions, in difficulties. For when I am weak, then I am strong.

\*Gloria Patri:

***Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost; as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.***

Anthem                      Be Still, My Soul                      Sibelius/Schram

### **The Word of God**

Junior Sermon

Prayer for Illumination

Old Testament Reading:                      Deuteronomy 18:15-20

This is the Word of the Lord. ***Thanks be to God.***

Gospel Reading                      Mark 1:21-28

This is the Gospel of the Lord. ***Praise to you, O Christ.***

Sermon      "Rediscovering Amazement"                      Pastor Mike

A Prayer for Blessing Upon the Word

\*Hymn of Worship      "Speak, O Lord"

**Lift Up Your Hearts, 755**

### **The Response of God's People**

The Offering

Offertory

The Lord Will Be My Shepherd

Besig

\*The Doxology 544 and Prayer of Consecration

The Prayers of Thanksgiving and Intercession

Prayers of the people and 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.**

\*Hymn of Worship “Amazing Grace – How Sweet the Sound”  
The Hymnbook, 275 (Second tune)

\*The Benediction

Benediction Response

\*The Postlude Vom Himmel Hoch (From Heaven Above) Luther

\*Please stand if you are able.

Bulletin art: “The Possessed Man in The Synagogue” by James Tissot.



## Announcements

The flowers on the Communion Table are given in honor of Betty Zehr by her daughter and son-in-law, Joyce and David Anderson.

In this New Year we are offering to you a new resource entitled, “Seeking God’s Face – Praying with the Bible through the year.” It is a devotional book that we want to encourage you to use along with the whole congregation. Each day’s reading includes a portion of a Psalm, a Bible Reading, some thoughts for dwelling in God’s presence, prayers, and a parting blessing. These readings are for each day of the year, and we will use them to help shape our words for worship each Sunday. We hope this resource will help you connect more deeply with God on a regular basis and help connect us as a congregation. We have books available in the Narthex for you to please take one per family. The books are free with a suggested donation of \$20.00 for medium print, and \$37.00 for large print (limited number available) to help cover the cost if you are able. You can also obtain your own electronic copy on Kindle if you prefer at Amazon.com. If all the books we currently have are claimed, we will have a sign-up sheet to get more as needed.

A winter Discipleship small group is beginning the week of January 29 (this is a date change from previous announcements)! One group will meet online through Zoom at 7:00pm on Monday evenings, the other group will meet in-person on Tuesday mornings at 10:00am in the lounge. We are calling these groups “Deepening Our Discipleship, Spiritually and Emotionally.” These groups are open to all and there is a sign-up sheet in the Narthex so we can know who will join us either in person or by Zoom.

The January Mission is dedicated to the RCA Global Missionary Refugee Services directed to JJ TenClay who is the Missionary for Global Refugee Services. JJ connects churches and individuals in North America to the growing number of refugees worldwide and invites them into the sacred space of caring for people seeking refuge—locally, nationally, and globally—through refugee sponsorship, advocacy, prayer, partnering with local refugee care agencies, and fundraising for carefully vetted refugee care projects worldwide. JJ also continues to build a network of international mission partners responding to humanitarian crises who care for the people displaced by these crises, and consults on individual cases of displaced

people seeking humanitarian protection. Visit JJ's missionary page at: [www.rca.org/tenclay](http://www.rca.org/tenclay) to learn more about her ministry.

2025 will be the 275th anniversary of Niskayuna Reformed Church and we want to CELEBRATE! Consistory is seeking your ideas and input to make our anniversary meaningful and memorable for the entire community. All are invited to join the first planning meeting **today** at 11:00 AM. No sign-up is necessary. For questions, please contact any member of Consistory.

Join the Schenectady City Mission on March 16 from 6-10 PM at the 408 in Saratoga for an exciting musical event. The group Dueling Pianos will be performing their magic, music and helping our community at the same time. RSVP by February 28. More information can be found at [CityMission.com/Dueling Pianos](http://CityMission.com/DuelingPianos).

Nancy Tellier would like to thank the congregation for the outpouring of support after the passing of her mom. She is so appreciative of all the beautiful cards, phone calls, thoughts, and prayers. She is extremely touched by everyone's support for her and her family.

Hannaford & SiCM Fundraiser!

- SiCM will receive \$1 for each \$2.50 reusable Fight Hunger Bag sold throughout February 2024.
- Hannaford Fight Hunger Bag Program Nonprofit Partner: **262 Saratoga Road, Route 50, Glenville NY**
- By going to the Hannaford location mentioned above, you can help benefit SiCM and the food pantry. If you do not need any more reusable bags, you can always donate them to the food pantry!

## Scripture

### Deuteronomy 18:15-20

The LORD your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among you, from your fellow Israelites. You must listen to him. <sup>16</sup> For this is what you asked of the LORD your God at Horeb on the day of the assembly when you

said, “Let us not hear the voice of the LORD our God nor see this great fire anymore, or we will die.”

<sup>17</sup> The LORD said to me: “What they say is good. <sup>18</sup> I will raise up for them a prophet like you from among their fellow Israelites, and I will put my words in his mouth. He will tell them everything I command him. <sup>19</sup> I myself will call to account anyone who does not listen to my words that the prophet speaks in my name. <sup>20</sup> But a prophet who presumes to speak in my name anything I have not commanded, or a prophet who speaks in the name of other gods, is to be put to death.”

### **Mark 1:21-28**

They went to Capernaum, and when the Sabbath came, Jesus went into the synagogue and began to teach. <sup>22</sup> The people were amazed at his teaching, because he taught them as one who had authority, not as the teachers of the law. <sup>23</sup> Just then a man in their synagogue who was possessed by an impure spirit cried out, <sup>24</sup> “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!”

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

<sup>27</sup> 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.” <sup>28</sup> News about him spread quickly over the whole region of Galilee.