

Preview for Service of Word and Sacrament
March 15, 2026
Liturgical Color: Purple
Westminster Presbyterian Church, Tiburon, California

Visit the church website: www.wpctiburon.org, 415-383-5272
240 Tiburon Boulevard, Tiburon, California 94920



Call to Worship

One: As we gather this morning, may the Spirit break down the barriers that divide us,

Many: tearing down the walls of hostility and fear.

One: May God breathe new life into us,

Many: that we may lift our voices in praise.

One: Let us worship in joy and thanksgiving.

Community Prayer

Gracious God, we come to you for a moment of quiet in our self-made busyness. We come to you for energy in our weariness. We come to you for challenge when we are willing to settle for our own small plans. May your Spirit move in and among us, reminding us of your healing, your strength, and your comfort. May your Spirit enliven us, calling us out into the world to love and serve you. Amen.

Sermon Focus & Title

Amazed: Miracles 4

Bethany Nelson

We continue our worship series on miracles, focusing this week on one of Jesus' exorcisms. Jesus casts an unclean spirit out of man, showing that it is no match for Jesus' divine power. Perhaps just as important as the exorcism is what comes next – the man who had been howling and bruising himself with stones is able to return to his community and share about Jesus. It is the miracle that keeps on giving.

Scripture Passages

Mark 5:1-20

They came to the other side of the sea, to the region of the Gerasenes. And when he had stepped out of the boat, immediately a man from the tombs with an unclean spirit met him. He lived among the tombs, and no one could restrain him anymore, even with a chain, for he had often been restrained with shackles and chains, but the chains he wrenched apart, and the shackles he broke in pieces, and no one had the strength to subdue him. Night and day among the tombs and on the mountains he was always howling and bruising himself with stones. When he saw Jesus from a distance, he ran and bowed down before him, and he shouted at the top of his voice, "What have you to do with me, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? I adjure you by God, do not torment me." For he had said to him, "Come out of the man, you unclean spirit!" Then Jesus asked him, "What is your name?" He replied, "My name is Legion, for we are many." He begged him earnestly not to send them out of the region. Now there on the hillside a great herd of swine was feeding, and the unclean spirits begged him, "Send us into the swine; let us enter them." So he gave them permission. And the unclean spirits came out and entered the swine, and the herd, numbering about two thousand, stampeded down the steep bank into the sea and were drowned in the sea. The swineherds ran off and told it in the city and in the country. Then people came to see what it was that had happened. They came to Jesus and saw the man possessed by demons sitting there, clothed and in his right mind, the very man who had had the legion, and they became frightened. Those who had seen what had happened to the man possessed by demons and to the swine reported it. Then they began to beg Jesus to leave their neighborhood. As he was getting into the boat, the man who had been possessed by demons begged him that he might be with him. But Jesus refused and said to him, "Go home to your own people, and tell them how much the Lord has done for you and what mercy he has shown you." And he went away and began to proclaim in the Decapolis how much Jesus had done for him, and everyone was amazed.

Hymns

All with Joyful Exultation, No. 798

Healer of Our Every Ill, No. 795

Quote for Reflection, Discussion, and Prayer

"Miracles are not contrary to nature but only contrary to what we know about nature."

~ St. Augustine