

Watch this week's service on YouTube by clicking: [February 7 Worship Service Video](#)

This is a communion service. You are welcome to have elements with you and partake as you wish

- Join the **HeBrews eCafé on Zoom** Sunday at 10am for an hour of informal fellowship.
Link: <https://zoom.us/j/98193600858?pwd=K0IIOWM0ZWdsRmhUTkNWcmFvbkm5Zz09> Phone in: 1 204 272 7920 Meeting ID: 981 9360 0858 Passcode: 438120
- **CUC Open Forum with Michael Wilson**, Wednesday, February 10 at 7:00. Just click: <https://zoom.us/j/92682661308?pwd=UzZ3UjB4ajhEWXNoN1BCZmN6QlIPUT09> and enter Meeting ID: 926 8266 1308 - Passcode: 798331
Or for phone only dial +1 204 272 7920 - Meeting ID: 926 8266 1308 - Passcode: 798331
- "Faith On The Move" **Lenten Study** begins February 18. More information: <https://charleswoodunited.org/media/life-work/>
- Read the scripture lesson for today by clicking here: [Mark 1:29-39](#)
- Please enjoy our online worship and feel free to share with others. The link for sharing is: <https://youtu.be/cdEh5gH6VEA>

Dear Friends

Welcome to worship for Sunday, February 7, 2021.

It is difficult to pack more action into a single chapter of the Bible than Mark 1. Though it is only 45 verses long, in it we will read about the baptism of Jesus by John in the Jordan; the temptation of Jesus in the wilderness; the call of Peter, Andrew, James, and John the first four disciples; a visit to the synagogue in Capernaum; the healing of a demon possessed man; the curing of Peter's mother-in-law; the healing of a multitude; a solitary time of prayer; visits to nearby villages; and the restoration of a man from leprosy. I'm tired just writing that list out!

Part of the reason for this remarkable outburst of ministry seems to be an introduction for the disciples to what being part of the Jesus movement is all about. If you follow Jesus you will be teaching and learning and worshipping and healing and resting and welcoming and restoring. Get used to it.

But another reason for the way Mark writes is that Mark always displays an urgency about the Gospel message. Scholars point out that one of Mark's favorite words is 'immediately'. Mark uses the word immediately seventeen times. By contrast, Matthew, whose gospel is nearly twice as long (28 chapters in Matthew vs. 16 in Mark), only uses the word immediately six times. In Mark, the ministry of Jesus moves from one event to another quickly and without ceremony. Sabbath rest and fellowship are important but events unfold at a blistering pace in order to arrive at the only event that really matters, the cross.

We are familiar with urgency. We would like things to move right now, at a time when they are moving slow. It is urgent to get vaccines into arms as they say. It is urgent to secure the welfare of residents of personal care homes. It is urgent to let health care workers move to the front of the line. Now comes the question of who needs to be vaccinated next. Who is most vulnerable? What is most urgent? Ironically patience is a valuable asset when things are so urgent.

But beware that our sense of urgency for what needs to happen as quickly as possible be mistaken for the nature of urgency in the ministry of Jesus. Urgency in the gospel is for the sake of including, reaching others, expanding access to those who need to hear the good news of God's redeeming love. What I love most about urgency in Mark is the way it is used as a vehicle for grace. Healing and acceptance are offered so indiscriminately, so freely, so unconditionally. As if the love which is made manifest in healing stories is an endless resource and of an unlimited supply.

Which, of course, it is.

Grace and peace,

Michael

*For news and events please have a look at the **Life & Work** insert: <https://charleswoodunited.org/media/life-work/>*

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