



HOLY VESSELS



A LENTEN SEASON OF RECOVERY

www.worshipdesignstudio.com/vessels

Safe Keeping February 28, 2021 2nd Sunday in Lent

GUESTS, Welcome to worship. To learn more about us, please visit our website at www.unionucc.org or like us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/unionneffs. If you would like us to follow up with you contact Pastor Kris at 610-767-6961, pastorkris@unionucc.org

NEW MEMBERS: For more information email Pastor Kris. pastorkris@unionucc.org or call the church office to speak to her.

We believe in extravagant welcome. We believe in God's inclusive love. We start worship with a greeting that reflects that welcome and love.

No matter who you are or where you are on life's journey and
faith's journey
You are welcome here.

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GATHER

People gather around Jesus as his reputation becomes known from town to town. As we gather virtually or physically, we too are yearning for presence, for peace, for help.

PRELUDE

The Prayer

Carole Bayer Sager, David Foster

WELCOME and ANNOUNCEMENTS

Opening Threshold

Leader: We continue our Lenten “season of recovery” as we focus on health as essential to our spiritual lives.

SUNG (SOLO):

**Vessels, holy and whole
Broken, needing the One
Open, body and soul
Healer, come.**

Leader: God gathers us as a Beachcomber gathers and marvels at every precious surviving piece of beach glass she finds. We are never alone, we are never lost to the One who seeks humanity’s wholeness. We affirm our commitment to be the Body of Christ that knows we cannot be personally healed until we see the interconnected community as part of the process of healing. Jesus has the power to re-vision the family of God in which false boundaries are overcome. In a year of devastating loss of livelihood, we consider the economic health that reimagines status quo.

SUNG:

**Vessels, holy and whole
Broken, needing the One
Open, body and soul
Healer, come.**

APPROACH

People opened their lives to Jesus. We are drawn to the Healer—opening our hearts with honesty about our lives and finding assurance that offers peace.

Prayer of Confession

Leader: Let us acknowledge our need to restore, repair, renew our Holy Vessels, which include the communities of which we are a part.

Let us pray:

ALL: God of All,

You created us for each other. You set in us a yearning for companionship and an empathy that binds us together, protecting each other and delighting in one another.

Yet too often we have broken down our relationships instead of building them up.

We have been set against one another with the lie of scarcity.

We have built systems and economies that widen the gap of resources

rather than safeguarding equitable practices.

Too many, and growing numbers, are suffering hardship, food insecurity, joblessness.

We cannot fathom the proportions of loss and so we look away,

sometimes even from the need in our own community.

Help us, Healer.

Show us our empathy.

Forgive our complacency.

Move us to move

one step at a time toward greater care for one another.

In this silence, we sense and acknowledge our yearning for wholeness.

Silence

SUNG:

**Vessels, holy and whole
Broken, needing the One
Open, body and soul
Healer, come.**

Assurance

Leader: Again this week, I invite you to imagine a warmth begin to arise within the core of your body. It may help to keep your eyes closed. This warm orb of light is deep within you, a flame always there and ready when you need it. This warm glow begins to emerge from the recesses of your inner being to fill and flood your whole body until your skin is glowing with it, radiating outward. This warmth that wraps you as a blanket of assurance is one you want to share. You want all to feel this presence, to kindle this hope.

Know this: This love and security is meant for all people.
No. Matter. What.

We are capable of sharing our light and not running out of “enough.”

Christ’s hospitality that broke through false boundaries points the way.

For you, for me, for all.

Take a deep breath in to let this truth fill you...
and breathe out with the relief of assurance.

HYMN #466 What A Friend We Have In Jesus (Hymns for the Family of God (Gold))

What a friend we have in Jesus

All our sins and griefs to bear!

What a privilege to carry

Everything to God in prayer!

O what peace we often forfeit
O what needless pain we bear
All because we do not carry
Everything to God in prayer

Have we trials and temptations?
Is there trouble anywhere?
We should never be discouraged
Take it to the Lord in prayer
Can we find a friend so faithful
Who will all our sorrows share?
Jesus knows our every weakness
Take it to the Lord in prayer

Are we weak and heavy laden
Cumbered with a load of care?
Precious Savior, still our refuge
Take it to the Lord in prayer
Do thy friends despise, forsake thee?
Take it to the Lord in prayer!
In his arms he'll take and shield thee
Thou wilt find a solace there

BELIEVE

People were fortified by Jesus' words and deeds that revealed care for all—especially those marginalized. We strengthen our belief in the possibility for renewed health and vigor for all.

A Contemporary Word

There is no power for change greater than a community
discovering what it cares about."

— **Margaret J. Wheatley**

"In every community, there is work to be done. In every nation, there
are wounds to heal.

In every heart, there is the power to do it.

— **Marianne Williamson**

"The greatness of a community is most accurately measured
by the compassionate actions of its members."

– **Coretta Scott King**

"Alone, we can do so little; together, we can do so much."

– **Helen Keller**

"I am of the opinion that my life belongs to the whole community and
as long as I live,
it is my privilege to do for it whatever I can. I want to be thoroughly
used up when I die,
for the harder I work the more I live."

– **George Bernard Shaw**

"I alone cannot change the world,
but I can cast a stone across the waters to create many ripples."

– **Mother Teresa**

ASK

People who were healed by Jesus were not afraid to ask. And so we come before the Holy One, making our petitions and desires known, trusting the work of the Spirit.

An Ancient Word

Matthew 8: 5-13

When he entered Capernaum, a centurion came to him, appealing to him and saying, "Lord, my servant is lying at home paralyzed, in terrible distress." And he said to him, "I will come and cure him." The centurion answered, "Lord, I am not worthy to have you come under my roof; but only speak the word, and my servant will be healed. For I also am a man under authority, with soldiers under me; and I say to one, 'Go,' and he goes, and to another, 'Come,' and he comes, and to my slave, 'Do this,' and the slave does it." When Jesus heard him, he was amazed

and said to those who followed him, “Truly I tell you, in no one in Israel have I found such faith. I tell you, many will come from east and west and will eat with Abraham and Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven, while the heirs of the kingdom will be thrown into the outer darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.” And to the centurion Jesus said, “Go; let it be done for you according to your faith.” And the servant was healed in that hour.

MUSIC OFFERING

Jesus You're My Superhero

Hillsong Kids

Siera Adcock, Lucas Bastidas, Brooklyn Hoppes, Lincoln Hoppes, Connor Maxwell, Lucas Maxwell, Reagan Minnich, Cael Vermuelen, Hunter Vermuelen

MESSAGE

Pastor Kris Snyder-Sanuelson

Song of Preparation

Make us Holy, Make Us Whole

Song Select #3315976

SUNG:

In your love, make us whole.

May we rest in your compassion.

Calm the lost, weary soul

in the warmth of your love.

May your peace fill our hearts.

May we know the love of Jesus.

By your grace, you console.

Make us holy, make us whole.

Prayers of the People

Leader: Healer of our every ill,
especially our malady of separation and fear,
we come before you to make our petitions known.
Hear our cries for healing of body, mind, and spirit.
We know that already you are at work among us,

showing us the way to recovery from the toxicities and grief of our time.

As broken pieces scattered and separated,
we trust that you are seeking us, gathering us into wholeness,
and calling us to join you in the quest.

We pray especially for those who have experienced the loss of livelihoods and economic security and are feeling helpless to care for their families.

We pray for those whose businesses have gone under or are on the precipice between survival or closure.

We pray for those whose disparity of resources has been made even more pronounced during this pandemic.

We pray grateful thanks for the efforts of all who have been searching for solutions and have given generously for months of their time and resources to alleviate the suffering of those they know and do not know.

We ask for encouragement and passion to re-evaluate how we as a church can help now and into the future.

We pray this day for...

Prayer of Jesus

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.

SUNG:

**In your love, make us whole.
May we rest in your compassion.
Calm the lost, weary soul
in the warmth of your love.
May your peace fill our hearts.
May we know the love of Jesus.
By your grace, you console.
Make us holy, make us whole.**

KNOW

The parting words Jesus' gave to those he healed were often as much balm as the healing act itself. We hear words of encouragement from the One who makes beauty from brokenness.

Reflection and Action for the Week

Leader: The words of Jesus we heard in this week's healing story were "I will come..." When faced with a request, Jesus makes a move to seek out, to come to help one who was previously seen to be outside of help's embrace. He moves outward to gather in and heal someone unlikely to have crossed his path otherwise. All are within God's circle of Safe Keeping.

Think about the people you have encountered or heard about in the last few months who are suffering lack of support. What could we do to reach out and to focus on healing of the parts of the human community we don't spend time thinking about enough?

To what part of our community shall we say "I will come..." ?

Then shift your thinking to your need to be cared for. What do you need to feel safe? What connections do you need to strengthen to heal any isolation you may

feel? If you are in need of something, consider this an invitation to let someone know what *you* need without feeling embarrassment or shame about it. Jesus invites us, always, to ask.

Take a moment to think on this and invite that Spirit to live and move in you in a special way to strengthen your connection to others and your role in making someone's life more safe.

RESPOND

Scriptural accounts of healing often end with responses from the “crowd” of witnesses. How will we proceed into the brokenness of this world and respond as the Body of Christ?

COMMISSION

Leader: Jesus' healing actions often get “buzz” from onlookers. In this week's story we do not know how his followers reacted to his words, but we can assume that it was hard to hear for some. Jesus makes sure to point out that the belief of this “outsider” and his care for his servant was something he didn't always see from the “insiders”—from the ones who profess to be “faithful.” His words no doubt affirmed some and offended others. That's what happens when we get “called out,” as we say. Perhaps we are in need of being “called out.” Not in a way that shames but in a way that energizes. How could our faith call us out more and more until we cannot stand by as some are suffering?

We are working on healing for ourselves in this season, but we are also working toward something communal. How can we as a church community become a “health hub” through our ministry and mission? The needs are so great, especially now. Throughout this time, I invite you to explore with us the possibilities for a new or renewed commitment

to a contribution we can make at Union UCC to our larger community's effort to recover from this past year.

Blessing

Leader: Now go with confidence
that the Holy Beachcomber is gathering us all for "Safe
Keeping,"
recovering our depth of love for all
and our joy of living in this world.

May the words of Jesus ring in your ears:
"I will come."

And may the Spirit hover, move, and deliver
salve to your soul
and a spring in your step.
Amen.

Threshold Into the World

SUNG: ALL
Vessels, holy and whole
Broken, needing the One
Open, body and soul
Healer, come.

Postlude

There is a Balm in Gilead

Spiritual

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Donate to God's Mission and Ministry at UNION UCC

February Mission-

Blanket Sunday and Souper Bowl Sunday: Check donations may be made through the special envelope in the February newsletter or in any envelope. Checks made to "Union UCC" and please mark them "Blanket Sunday" (to help those facing emergencies) or "Souper Bowl Sunday" (to support the Lehigh Conference of Churches with housing and food needs) and mail to the church. Cans of soup can be dropped at the church on Saturdays or Sundays and will go to the Northern Lehigh Food Bank.

Easter Mission-

Lehigh Conference of Church and the Parkland Cares Food Pantry: Check donations may be made through the "Easter Mission" envelope in your envelop pack or in any envelope marked Easter Mission. Checks to "Union UCC" and mail them to church.

Give online at <http://www.unionucc.org/resources/giving-and-sponsorship/ways-to-give/> for Easter Mission.

OFFERING ENVELOPES you can mail your envelopes to the church. The church address is on one side, just add a stamp.

ELECTRONIC GIVING This is a great time to try **e-giving!** Choose a weekly, semi-monthly or monthly donation to be transferred electronically. Fill out the form at <http://www.unionucc.org/egive.pdf> and return it to the church office. financialmanager@unionucc.org

DONATE ONLINE with your Credit or Debit Card

Go to <http://www.unionucc.org/resources/giving-and-sponsorship/ways-to-give/> and click **GIVE ONLINE**.

AMAZON SMILE Donate to Union UCC, Neffs (Search by zip code 18065) while you shop at Amazon. <https://smile.amazon.com>.

EVIDENCE OF STEWARDSHIP LAST SUNDAY

Offering (e-giving, envelopes, and plate)	
Last Week	\$6,683
Calendar 2021 (January)	\$30,541
Calendar 2020 (January)	\$35,077
Change from Last Year	-12.9%
Budget (July-Jan.)	\$270,560
Actual (July-Jan.)	\$244,882
Giving vs. Budget	-9.5%
<i>Additional financial information available in Consistory Minutes</i>	

2021 Donations to the Northern Lehigh Food Bank:	
Last Week:	230lbs, \$
Total YTD:	879 lbs, \$107

Blanket Sunday
\$1,861.50

SPREAD THE GOOD NEWS SPONSORS:

Thank you to everyone for their love and generosity toward Union UCC's mission and ministry, especially during COVID, Pastor Kris

Your support is especially important now as we work to provide spiritual care and connection for members and the community through Facebook posts, ads, and online worship.

Be a sponsor for \$20, send to Union UCC through your offering envelope or online marked Spread the Good News.

Contact Marissa to sign up for a certain date or to sponsor in honor or memory of someone.