



HOLY VESSELS



A LENTEN SEASON OF RECOVERY

www.worshipdesignstudio.com/vessels

Different Pictures March 14, 2021 4th 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

He Hideth My Soul

Fanny Crosby & William Kirkpatrick

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: Prolonged times of difficulty can impede our ability to stay creative. The picture of our lives is dulled and hope for a brighter future can fade. We need a touch of inspiration to awaken us from our sleep, as we hear in one of this week’s healing stories. We also awaken to our agency to seek out the Divine Healer, reaching out to touch the power we know can restore our intellect and imagination. We emerge ready to re-engage with the world, seeking and seeing solutions, creating different pictures of life renewed just as a mosaic artist creates beauty from broken pieces of glass.

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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 so that we might be able to create and imagine new possibilities, new solutions. Let us pray:

**ALL: God of All Possibilities,
Made in your image, you have tasked us as co-creators
of a better world. You bestowed imagination and the
ability to learn and progress.**

**But we are tired. Our energy wanes and enthusiasm
waned.**

**The call for ideas, solutions, work-arounds and
adaptations has been non-stop for us all—whether we
are needing to find ways to keep children engaged and
well, or figuring out how to maintain a passion for our
work in the midst of trying times,
or needing desperately to undo systems of oppression
too long affecting
our lives and the lives of our neighbors.**

Not only our livelihoods, but our liveliness is at stake.

**Too often we want to give up, declare it all too hard
and simply isolate,**

waiting out the time for better days.

**It all feels overwhelming and so we look away,
sometimes even from the need in our own community.**

Help us, Healer.

Show us our energy reserves.

Forgive our cynicism.

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: 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 ignite and spark inspiration. It floods your whole body until your skin is glowing with it, radiating outward. This light from you offers a beacon for those around you, whose own light reflects and multiplies your own. There is now exponentially more radiance.

Know this: We are gifted with agency to affect healing in the world.

No. Matter. What.

We are are not alone and we can join with others to magnify hope.

Christ will answer when we call, when we reach out for what we know can help.

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 #451 Be Now My Vision
(New Century Hymnal, Black Hymnal)

**Be now my vision, O God of my heart;
Nothing surpasses the love you impart-**

You my best thought, by day or by night,
Waking or sleeping your presence my light.

Be now my wisdom and be my true word,
Ever within me, my soul is assured;
Mother and Father, you are both to me,
Now and forever your child I will be.

Riches I need not nor life's empty praise,
You, my inheritance, now and always;
You and you only are first in my heart,
Great God, my treasure, may we never part.

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

“A single event can awaken within us a stranger totally unknown
to us.

To live is to be slowly born.”
— **Antoine de Saint-Exuper**

“When one realizes one is asleep, at that moment one is
already half-awake.”

— **P.D. Ouspensky**

The authentic self is the soul made visible.”

— **Anonymous**

“Get out of your comfort zone. Wake up the sleeping giant in
you.”

— **Dr T.P.Chia**

“Curiosity is the first step down the path of awakening.”

— **Anonymous**

“The path of awakening is not about becoming who you are.
Rather it is about unbecoming who you are not.”

— **Albert Schweitzer**

An Ancient Word

Matthew 9: 18-26

While he was saying these things to them, suddenly a leader of the synagogue came in and knelt before him, saying, “My daughter has just died; but come and lay your hand on her, and she will live.” And Jesus got up and followed him, with his disciples. Then suddenly a woman who had been suffering from hemorrhages for twelve years came up behind him and touched the fringe of his cloak, for she said to herself, “If I only touch his cloak, I will be made well.” Jesus turned, and seeing her he said, “Take heart, daughter; your faith has made you well.” And instantly the woman was made well. When Jesus came to the leader’s house and saw the flute players and the crowd making a commotion, he said, “Go away; for the girl is not dead but sleeping.” And they laughed at him. But when the crowd had been put outside, he went in and took her by the hand, and the girl got up. And the report of this spread throughout that district.

MUSIC OFFERING

Make Us Holy, Make Us Whole

Mark Friedman Arr. Janet Vogt

Adult Choir: **Fawn Albert, Todd Bachl, Lucy Boyer, Ronda Gerry, Susan Glosan, Stephen Kareha, Jason Klinger, Karl Klinger, Carol Pope, Julie Wehr**

MESSAGE

Pastor Kris Snyder-Samuelson

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.

Song of Preparation

Make us Holy, Make Us Whole

Song Select #3315976

Jason Klinger

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 exhausted spirits,
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.

You remind us that we do not have to shoulder everything
alone.

We give you thanks that all we must do is orient
ourselves toward your divine spirit to accompany us,
touch us, inspire us, heal us.

We pray especially for all who feel opportunity and
possibility is cut off to them.

Whose spirit is continually dampened and damaged by
those who fail to see value in their contributions, who
steal away rights to the fullness of expression.

We give thanks for communities, churches, non-profits,
and businesses

that are supporting the flourishing of all voices, especially
voices that have been silenced.

We give thanks for the courage of innovators who use their resources and creativity to make more good in the world, making this a priority over profit.

We ask for courage and encouragement to re-evaluate how we as a church can join this effort 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.

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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 highlight this week from the healing story are “the girl is not dead, but sleeping.” We have touched today on our need to be rejuvenated in spirit, to awaken with new vigor for creativity and curiosity. This is the intellectual healing that is a spiritual healing. We may feel like we have been slowly dying away these last few months, but Jesus affirms that we are not dying... we perhaps are sleeping. It is the healing we yearn for... to be awakened, brought back to life with vitality and vigor for the days ahead.

And so this week, I invite you being to play with creating a “different picture” from the brokenness. Even when the raw materials of our lives that we have to work with feel broken, we can get a new perspective that can awaken a new vision for life within us.

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: Each week we look at the reaction of the crowd in the healing story. This week there is an interesting reaction at Jesus’ notion that the girl was not dead. They laughed. Full-blown funeral rites had begun, flutes and all. And yet Jesus said, this is not the end of this story. The idea that we could come back to life better than before, that we could find some way to bring life back to what feels dead, may seem preposterous to some at this point. Laughable. But, like Jesus, we need not be

deterred. Can we forge ahead, enter the “house” of sorrow and dare to proclaim that can still exist?

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 we will awaken, we will seek out and reach for
the healing solutions that our neighbors, our communities,
our world needs,
recovering our depth of love for all
and our joy of living in this world.

May the words of Jesus ring in your ears:
“You are not dead, you are sleeping.”

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

When I Survey the wondrous cross

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Donate to God's Mission and Ministry at UNION UCC

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	\$8,923
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:	72lbs, \$
Total YTD:	1051 lbs, \$107

Blanket Sunday
\$2,080.50

SPREAD THE GOOD NEWS SPONSORS:

Is it spring yet? Love and prayers, 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.