



HOLY VESSELS



A LENTEN SEASON OF RECOVERY

www.worshipdesignstudio.com/vessels

“Restoration”
March 21, 2021
5th Sunday in Lent
Youth Sunday

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 Redeemer
Garet Hill, piano

Melody Green

WELCOME and ANNOUNCEMENTS Bryce & Luke Thrash

Opening Threshold Payge Haydt

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: The demands of following Jesus are great. He shows us that sometimes we must make extraordinary efforts to move in a new direction. As we consider the health of humanity, we cannot ignore the need to heal the very planet that sustains us. We live in increasing chaos of a beleaguered environment and the hoarding of resources. We want to be “saved” by something or someone else, but we discover this week that we are in the boat with the One who shows us our power to turn it around, to calm the storm. We protect the jewel that is our home, restoring something beautiful from scars of the past..

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 Katie Solt

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: Life-giving God,

In the beginning, you created this universe with a phrase, “Let it be...”

and the waters and dry land, the sky and the creatures were formed.

You set humanity among these wonders and invited us to care and honor all things.

We have not successfully answered that call.

Seeing the abundance as a feast that would never end, we gorged ourselves,

taking more than we could replenish at a rate that could not be sustained.

We are beginning to comprehend the magnitude, beginning to see that things

cannot just keep going “as usual” and not have dire consequences.

We are frightened, which is partly why we are slow to accept it.

But we now are witnesses to the forces of a world more broken than when we inherited it:

water, wind, and wave, fire, drought, and earthquake that signal it is time to pay attention and to make real change.

**Too often we think there is nothing we can do—that the change required is too great.
It all feels overwhelming and so we look away,
sometimes even from the small things that could make a difference
for our own community.**

**Help us, Healer.
Show us our ability to chart a different course.
Forgive our inaction.
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 Max Bilger

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 and it fills you with determination and courage. It floods your whole body until your skin is glowing with it, radiating outward. You feel strong.

Know this: Jesus asks us to do hard things, to make changes, knowing we are capable.

No. Matter. What.

We can change in order to heal this jewel planet called home. The calm of Christ in the storm is available.

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 #459 Come, O Fount of Every Blessing
(New Century Hymnal, Black Hymnal)

1. Come, o Fount of every blessing, tune my heart to sing
your grace;
Streams of mercy, never ceasing, call for songs of endless
praise.
Teach me some melodious sonnet, sung by flaming tongues
above.
Praise the mount; I'm fixed upon it, mount of God's unfailing
love.

2. Here I pause in my sojourning, giving thanks for having
come,
Come to trust, at every turning, God will guide me safely
home.
Jesus sought me when a stranger, wandering from the fold
of God,
Came to rescue me from danger, blessed body, precious
blood

3. O to grace how great a debtor daily I am drawn a new!
Let that grace now, life a fetter, bind my wandering heart to
you
Prone to wander, I can feel it, wander from the love I've
known:
Here's my heart, o take and seal it, seal it for your very own

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 Regan Haley, Leah Horvath

“A good person is the friend of all living things.
– **Mohandas Gandhi**

“The more clearly we can focus our attention on the wonders
and realities of the universe,
the less taste we shall have for destruction.”
— **Rachel Carson**

Twenty five years ago people could be excused for not knowing
much about, or doing much, about climate change. Today we
have no excuse.
- **Desmond Tutu**

Everybody needs beauty as well as bread, places to play in and
pray in, where nature may heal and give strength to body and
soul.
– **John Muir**

We don't inherit the earth from our ancestors, we borrow it from
our children.
– **David Brower**

An Ancient Word Naomi Heninger *Matthew 9: 18-26*

Now when Jesus saw great crowds around him, he gave orders
to go over to the other side. A scribe then approached and said,
“Teacher, I will follow you wherever you go.” And Jesus said to
him, “Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests; but the
Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head.” Another of his
disciples said to him, “Lord, first let me go and bury my father.”
But Jesus said to him, “Follow me, and let the dead bury their
own dead.”

And when he got into the boat, his disciples followed him. A
windstorm arose on the sea, so great that the boat was being
swamped by the waves; but he was asleep. And they went and

woke him up, saying, "Lord, save us! We are perishing!" And he said to them, "Why are you afraid, you of little faith?" Then he got up and rebuked the winds and the sea; and there was a dead calm. They were amazed, saying, "What sort of man is this, that even the winds and the sea obey him?"

MUSIC OFFERING

Agnus Dei Words and Music by Michael W. Smith
How Great Thou Art Stuart K. Hine Arranged by Joel Raney

High School Choir:
Emily Bachl, George DeNardo, Naomi Henninger, Amanda Lane, Olivia Rice

MESSAGE

George DeNardo	Parkland High School Senior
Hannah Horvath	Parkland High School Senior
Amanda Lane	Parkland High School Senior

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 Abby Kern

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 Andy Hill

Leader: Healer of our every ill, especially our fractured creation, 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 that you are in the boat with us in the midst of difficult times. We give you thanks for this path of following you, even when you call us to crossover from one way of life to another.

We pray especially for all who are impacted most by dwindling resources. We pray that we will continue to learn and see and know how our actions affect others, not just ourselves. We give thanks for the wake up calls that our young people are sounding and we pray for the fortitude to move this journey forward alongside them.

We give thanks for the courage of activists and educators who help us wake up to this storm and to see that we have it within our power to calm that storm, to restore the earth's wholeness. 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 Parker Haydt

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 Cameron Kuntz

Leader: The words of Jesus we highlight this week from the healing story are "follow me and let the dead bury their own dead." This may seem like harsh words. And yet we hear Jesus' urgency. Now is the time to move, no matter how difficult, we cannot wait. What is past is past. There is brokenness and there are casualties in its wake. But we can move forward. We can make changes. We can face storms because we are a people led by the Healer, the Calm-in-the-Storm who can offer us faith in the midst of fear.

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 Garet Hill

Leader: This week the reaction of the crowd in the story is amazement at Jesus' connection to the cosmic forces of wind and wave. As scientists now try to teach us, all things are connected. We are part and parcel of all creation. Rather than dominion, we are to be a-tuned to all around us. We see the cry of creation in awakened natural disasters and we must heed the call not to hide in fear, but to work for healing.

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 Ellyana Belletieri-Bieber

Leader: Now go with confidence that we can face the storm with Jesus in the boat, recovering our depth of love for all and our joy of living in this world.

May the words of Jesus ring in your ears:
"follow me."

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

The River Garth Brooks and Victoria Shaw
Payge Haydt, viola

Hosanna, Loud Hosanna Jeannette Threfall
Mitchell Roth, trumpet

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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	\$6,221
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	
Last Week:	1,000lbs, \$
Total YTD:	2,051 lbs, \$107

Easter Mission
\$923.00

SPREAD THE GOOD NEWS SPONSORS:

In honor of our wonderful Youth here at Neffs Church
-Richard & Deanna Correll

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.