



HOLY VESSELS



A LENTEN SEASON OF RECOVERY

www.worshipdesignstudio.com/vessels

**“Holy Wholly”
March 28, 2021
6th Sunday in Lent
Palm 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

What Wondrous Love Is This American Folk Hymn
Jacob & Mitchell Roth

WELCOME and ANNOUNCEMENTS

Opening Threshold

Leader: When they had come near Jerusalem and had reached Bethphage, at the Mount of Olives, Jesus sent two disciples, saying to them, “Go into the village ahead of you, and immediately you will find a donkey tied, and a colt with her; untie them and bring them to me. If anyone says anything to you, just say this, ‘The Lord needs them.’ And he will send them immediately.” This took place to fulfill what had been spoken through the prophet, saying,

“Tell the daughter of Zion,
Look, your king is coming to you,
humble, and mounted on a donkey,
and on a colt, the foal of a donkey.”

The disciples went and did as Jesus had directed them; they brought the donkey and the colt, and put their cloaks on them, and he sat on them. A very large crowd spread their cloaks on the road, and others cut branches from the trees and spread them on the road. The crowds that went ahead of him and that followed were shouting,

Repeat after me and start waving those branches!

Leader: “Hosanna to the Son of David!

People: “Hosanna to the Son of David!

Blessed is the one who comes

Blessed is the one who comes

in the name of the Lord!
in the name of the Lord!
Hosanna in the highest heaven!"
Hosanna in the highest heaven!"

When he entered Jerusalem, the whole city was in turmoil, asking, "Who is this?" The crowds were saying, "This is the prophet Jesus from Nazareth in Galilee."

Leader: We have seen that the stories of Jesus' healing ministry are filled words and deeds. When he rides into Jerusalem, the people had hopes he would heal the oppressive system they were living under. We know that his healing was not confined to that moment in history, but offers a new way of life that has made a case for compassion for all, especially "the least," ever since.

As we head into the events of Holy Week, we begin to see that our ability to forgive ourselves and others is the foundation that can transform infirmities and allow us to move on. We integrate our beliefs and actions for the health of the whole. The parade of compassionate power we celebrate today is underscored by a another healing story of transformation, symbolizing our ability to fuel our movement of recovery. We glorify God for beautiful words and works of wholeness and share that treasured beauty with others. We know there will still be pain, but we also know love will win.

SUNG (SOLO):
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: We have approached confession each week in Lent in such a way that we lay bare the brokenness in order to begin the process of healing. Along the way we have acknowledged our need to restore our own Holy Vessels while attending to our role in the healing of the community and the world. The work of healing will continue as we integrate all we have learned with all that we will do moving forward. For now, we remember how hard it is to move from thinking to doing. Let us pray:

All: Forgiving God,
We have opened ourselves to healing and sometimes it is easier to pray nice prayers
than to do the hard work of putting into action what needs to happen.
Help us remember the sacred nature of the holy vessels that we are,
fragile and susceptible to shattering and yet capable of transformation.
Help us to see ourselves as you see us.
Help us to believe in our ability to change and heal as you believe in us.

Help us, Healer.
Show us our strength.
Forgive our inertia.
Move us to move
one step at a time toward greater care.

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: In invite you to return to that warm orb of light that lives deep within you once again. It may already be aglow with the excitement of the parade—the presence of Jesus leading us on. But if you are struggling, or have struggled in this season of recovery, to feel this warmth of assurance within you, do not despair. You are not the one who has to create the light. It just is. And it is a pilot light that never goes out. You will at some time begin to notice it returning to your awareness.

Know this: You are never alone in the struggle.

No. Matter. What.

Jesus is on the journey with us.

Life's parade is not passing you by.

You are part of this Body of Christ, a community seeking healing.

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 #248 Hosanna, Loud, Hosanna

**1 Hosanna, loud hosanna
the little children sang;
through pillared court and temple
the lovely anthem rang.
To Jesus, who had blessed them,
close folded to his breast,
the children sang their praises,
the simplest and the best.**

**2 From Olivet they followed
a happy joyous crowd,
the large palm branches waving,
and singing clear and loud.
The Lord of earth and heaven
rode on in simple joy,
and welcomed all the children
Each little girl and boy.**

**3 "Hosanna in the highest!"
That ancient song we sing,
for Christ is our Redeemer,
the Lord of heaven, our King.
O may we ever praise him
with heart and life and voice,
and in his blissful presence
eternally rejoice.**

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

"We know only too well that what we are doing is nothing more than a drop in the ocean. But if the drop were not there, the ocean would be missing something."

— **Mother Teresa**

"People pay for what they do, and still more for what they have allowed themselves to become. And they pay for it very simply; by the lives they lead."

— **James Baldwin**

"Act as if what you do makes a difference. It does."

— **William James**

"What we do comes out of who we believe we are."

— **Rob Bell**

"You can't make yourself feel positive, but you can choose how to act, and if you choose right, it builds your confidence."

— **Julien Smith**

An Ancient Word

Matthew 9: 1-8

And after getting into a boat he crossed the sea and came to his own town. And just then some people were carrying a paralyzed man lying on a bed. When Jesus saw their faith, he said to the paralytic, "Take heart, son; your sins are forgiven." Then some of the scribes said to themselves, "This man is blaspheming." But Jesus, perceiving their thoughts, said, "Why do you think evil in your hearts? For which is easier, to say, 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say, 'Stand up and walk' ?But so that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins"—he then said to the paralytic—"Stand up, take your bed and go to your home." And he stood up and went to his home. When the crowds saw it, they were filled with awe, and they glorified God, who had given such authority to human beings.

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

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 when we find it difficult to believe or trust that
sorrow will end,
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.

Even when we cannot seem to believe it,
we know that you see beauty in our brokenness.
We pray especially for those who feel there is no end to
sorrow,
that no matter what we do or how hard we work to bring
peace and justice to our world, it feels like we cannot gain
traction.
We give thanks that when we cannot bring ourselves to the
healing source of your love,
there are others around us that, through words and actions,
bring us hope once again.
Help to also be those who offer hope when we have the
opportunity
on this parade of compassion called life.

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 many, but let us hone in on two words, "Take heart." The French word for "heart" is "couer" and, besides its reference to the physical heart organ, it also means "courage." Certainly Jesus' entrance into Jerusalem was a sign to people that they were worthy to be "saved"—the meaning of the cries of "hosanna!" Courage in the face of difficulty, and care in the face of being disheartened, go hand-in-hand.

Healing is not always an absence of illness, but rather a trust that God is holding our brokenness and we can move on in life with assurance, making beauty in the midst of hard times. Last week we wrapped our pieces of beach glass in wire. We have been reminded all week that God restores us to life, wrapping and holding us. This week I invite you to give away what you have created to someone else who needs this reminder.

As you look back on this season of focusing on healing, what is it you learned that you want to now “give away” to others... through your words and your actions?

Take a moment to think on this and then when you are ready, enclose the piece of glass in your hand and hold it to your heart, breathing (“*spirare*”) deeply and inviting that Spirit to show you your next steps in furthering the healing of your corner of the world, even if it is just your household or neighborhood. And keep your eyes open this week for the right moment, the right person, to receive this gift of beauty from brokenness that you have made. When you give it to them, you might say, “Take heart. You are not alone.”

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: In this series, we have seen that Jesus’ healing actions often get “buzz” from onlookers. This day we have seen two different reactions from the crowd: shouts of adoration and the scoff of judgment from religious officials. His words and actions seemed to get one or the other—praise or accusations of heresy. But he continued his work anyway. He loved those that were deemed unlovable. He proclaimed healing in the midst of despair. He urged people to give their best in the midst of the worst circumstances. To be followers of Jesus is not an easy task. But it is the way that we become whole once again... to participate in the holy endeavor of bringing the kin-dom on earth as it is in heaven. And as we enter Holy Week, these themes will come into sharp focus. May we follow him, even to the broken places.

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 God is making us whole and holy,
recovering our depth of love for all
and our joy of living in this world.

May the words of Jesus ring in your ears:
“Take heart.”

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

We Shall Behold Him Dottie Rambo

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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)		2021 Donations to the Northern Lehigh Food Bank:
Last Week	\$7,900	Last Week: 25lbs, \$20
Calendar 2021 (Feb)	\$30,541	Total 2,076 lbs, \$127
Calendar 2020 (Feb)	\$35,077	YTD:
Change from Last Year	-12.9%	
Budget (July-Feb.)	\$270,560	
Actual (July-Feb.)	\$244,882	
Giving vs. Budget	-9.5%	
<i>Additional financial information available in Consistory Minutes</i>		Easter Mission \$1,123.00

SPREAD THE GOOD NEWS SPONSORS:

In memory of Ruth Rothrock from daughters Lucille, Leoma, Lana and family.

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.