



Emmanuel United Church of Christ

A Congregation of the United Church of Christ

We Welcome You on this 2nd Sunday of Easter.

Service of the Word – April 11, 2021

9:30 AM

The Gathering

“If God be our God, He will give us peace in trouble. When there is a storm without, He will make peace within. The world can create trouble in peace, but God can create peace in trouble.” Thomas Watson

Ringling of the Bell
Our Life Together
The Solemn Declaration
Prelude

*Call to Worship

Leader: At the beginning of the day, at the beginning of the week, the faithful yet fearful people gathered together. It was then that the Spirit of God came among them and whispered:

All: Peace be with you.

Leader: Their hearts skipped a beat as they double checked that the lock on the front door was still latched. So, the Presence of God spoke a little louder:

All: Peace be with you.

Leader: They looked around at each other, puzzled, amazed, befuddled, and bewildered. Some smiled. Some doubted. Some wondered if it were just too magical sounding or too good to be true. So, the Christ showed them that his own scars were not the end of the story and that is when the words of God began to feel joyous:

All: Peace be with you.

*Opening Prayer (Unison)

Dear Lord and Savior, thank you that you promise us that where two or three are gathered you are there in the midst. Lord we welcome You amongst us today and celebrate the gift of life that you have lavished upon each of us. We ask that You would open our ears so that we may hear your voice. Open our minds so that we may receive Your eternal wisdom. Open our spirits so that we may know You leading and guidance. And open our hearts so that we many receive your wonderful love and peace. Amen

The Refreshment of Forgiveness

Call to Confession

Confession of Sin

Holy One, our confession won't be news to you, but maybe if we allow it to be spoken aloud, You can help us find a way forward. Holy One, we have doubts. We're not talking about doubts like Thomas – his were perfectly reasonable – after all we too long to see You, touch You, and truly know You. Our doubts feel different. We doubt that the peace you offer is really possible because our own minds are a mess of thoughts. We doubt that new life is possible because the wounds we bear are still overwhelming. We doubt that You really intended to call us when You called the disciples to be of service in creating a new way of being in the world. We hear the age-old stories, but we are filled with doubts about ourselves, and if we are honest, doubts about your Holy possibilities. Holy One, in these moments of stillness and silence hear our doubts and the things that separate us from you and one and other. We ask you to please settle our hearts, minds, and souls...

(Silence is kept for personal reflection and prayer)

Assurance of Pardon

Leader: In the midst of the disciples' doubts and worries, in the midst of their fear, the Spirit of God came among them and whispered, "Peace be with you." Beloved People of God, hear the hold invitation of grace offered to every generation: Peace be with you. You are God's beloveds not because of what you have done or not done. You are God's beloveds because of who you are, and who you are is a people called and gifted to be a presence of peace and love in this world.

All: Our shortcomings are forgiven. Grace abounds. God calls to us" Peace be with you".

*Affirmation of Faith

You, O God, are supreme and holy. You create our world and give us life. Your purpose overarches everything we do. You have always been with us. You are God. You, O God, are infinitely generous, good beyond all measure. You came to us before we came to you. You have revealed and proved your love for us in Jesus Christ, who lived and died and rose again. You are with us now. You are God. You, O God, are Holy Spirit. You empower us to be your gospel in the world. We reconcile and heal; you overcome death. You are our God We worship you.

The Gift of the Word

Prayer for Illumination

The Scripture Readings

Old Testament Lesson	Psalm 133
New Testament Lesson	Acts 4:32-35
Gospel Lesson	John 20:19-31

Sermon An Instrument of Peace Pastor Jan

Offering Ourselves and Our Gifts

Call to Offering

Offertory

***Prayer of Dedication**

Bless these gifts, gracious God, and bless all those who will be served because of them. We bring these offerings because we hope for more in the days ahead. We hope for a stronger church, a more compassionate world, and a time of peace. Shape us, through our giving, into people more faithful to your Word and a people full of joy and good news. We dedicate them along with our lives and all that we are. Amen.

The Ministry of Prayer

Pastoral Prayer

The Lord's Prayer (using debts and debtors)

***Benediction**

Leader: At the beginning of the day, at the beginning of the week, when the faithful yet fearful people gathered together, Jesus came among them and whispered an invitation, "Peace be with you."

All: But that was only the beginning. He showed them the scars and marks of His own humanity and soon He was pointing at theirs as well, telling them "Just as God once sent me, so I send you."

Leader: Beloved People of God this hour is only the beginning. Do not be afraid. You have been called and you are being sent into this world to be a force of love, light, hope, joy and peace. Go forth into this day and into the world in the name of God, the one who created you.

All: We will go in the name of Jesus who shows us the way; and go in the name of the Holy Spirit, who is with us now and always.

*Indicates that all who are able, please stand. **Bold** print indicates unison reading.
Notice Someone Missing? If so give them a call and let them know they are missed.