

United Church of Christ
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Web site: www.christcongregationalucc.org
The Rev. Candace Thomas, Interim Minister
Jay Harragin, Director of Music

Our Vision: *A church that listens, praises God, inspires, and serves others.*

March 22, 2020 – 10:30 A.M.

Video Service

Fourth Sunday in Lent
One Great Hour of Sharing

Preparation for Worship

“My darkness has been filled with the light of intelligence, and behold, the outer day-lit world was stumbling and groping in social blindness.” Helen Keller



PRELUDE

LIGHTING THE CANDLE WE REMEMBER GOD IS WITH US

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

***CALL TO WORSHIP:**

One: God, sometimes, the days are long, the nights are even longer, and we're so tired and anxious. And then You soothe us and bring us to gentle places.

Many: You are our shepherd, and we don't need a thing.

One: Sometimes, life is moving too fast, and we can't find a moment to breathe. And then You surround us with stillness and bring an even rhythm to our breath.

Many: You are our shepherd, and we don't need a thing.

One: Sometimes, we're parched, and it seems nothing will quench our thirst. We're famished and we can't find anything to eat. And then You refresh and fill us.

Many: You are our shepherd, and we don't need a thing.

One: Sometimes, the valley is dark and the shadows are heavy and we're afraid. But then we feel Your strength, and we have courage.

Many: You are our shepherd, and we don't need a thing.

One: There are the times when it seems we're up against the world.

Many: You show those who push the hardest that You have called us to serve. You touch us, and we are blessed.

One: We will praise You and dwell with you forever, O God.

Many: We will worship You this day and always!

***THE COMMANDMENT OF JESUS (John 15:5, 12)**

I am the vine, you are the branches. Those who abide in me and I in them bear much fruit, because apart from me you can do nothing. "This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you.

Yo soy la vid, ustedes son las ramas. Los que permanecen en mí y yo en ellos dan mucho fruto, porque aparte de mí no puedes hacer nada. "este es mi mandamiento, que se amen unos a otros como yo los he amado.

PRAYER OF INVOCATION (Unison)

**Magnificent God who sees all that we can see and everything that we cannot,
we gather in awe of your vision that is broad and vast.**

**Be with us now as we worship you. Awaken us to your holiness,
inspire us with your creative power, and peel back our layers of anxiety and fear.**

**Enliven us to trust fully in your love for us
as we struggle and strive to be who you call us to be,
in Christ's holy name. Amen.**

SPECIAL MUSIC

The LORD is my shepherd, I shall not want.

He makes me lie down in green pastures; he leads me beside still waters;

he restores my soul. He leads me in right paths for his name's sake.

Even though I walk through the darkest valley, I fear no evil; for you are with me; your rod and your staff— they comfort me.

You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; you anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows.

Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I shall dwell in the house of the LORD my whole life long.

John 9:1-41

As he walked along, he saw a man blind from birth. His disciples asked him, "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?" Jesus answered, "Neither this man nor his parents sinned; he was born blind so that God's works might be revealed in him. We must work the works of him who sent me while it is day; night is coming when no one can work. As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world." When he had said this, he spat on the ground and made mud with the saliva and spread the mud on the man's eyes, saying to him, "Go, wash in the pool of Siloam" (which means Sent). Then he went and washed and came back able to see. The neighbors and those who had seen him before as a beggar began to ask, "Is this not the man who used to sit and beg?" Some were saying, "It is he." Others were saying, "No, but it is someone like him." He kept saying, "I am the man." But they kept asking him, "Then how were your eyes opened?" He answered, "The man called Jesus made mud, spread it on my eyes, and said to me, 'Go to Siloam and wash.' Then I went and washed and received my sight." They said to him, "Where is he?" He said, "I do not know." They brought to the Pharisees the man who had formerly been blind. Now it was a sabbath day when Jesus made the mud and opened his eyes. Then the Pharisees also began to ask him how he had received his sight. He said to them, "He put mud on my eyes. Then I washed, and now I see." Some of the Pharisees said, "This man is not from God, for he does not observe the sabbath." But others said, "How can a man who is a sinner perform such signs?" And they were divided. So they said again to the blind man, "What do you say about him? It was your eyes he opened."

He said, "He is a prophet." The Jews did not believe that he had been blind and had received his sight until they called the parents of the man who had received his sight and asked them, "Is this your son, who you say was born blind? How then does he now see?" His parents answered, "We know that this is our son, and that he was born blind; but we do not know how it is that now he sees, nor do we know who opened his eyes. Ask him; he is of age. He will speak for himself." His parents said this because they were afraid of the Jews; for the Jews had already agreed that anyone who confessed Jesus to be the Messiah would be put out of the synagogue. Therefore his parents said, "He is of age; ask him." So for the second time they called the man who had been blind, and they said to him, "Give glory to God! We know that this man is a sinner." He answered, "I do not know whether he is a sinner. One thing I do know, that though I was blind, now I see." They said to him, "What did he do to you? How did he open your eyes?" He answered them, "I have told you already, and you would not listen. Why do you want to hear it again? Do you also want to become his disciples?" Then they reviled him, saying, "You are his disciple, but we are disciples of Moses. We know that God has spoken to Moses, but as for this man, we do not know where he comes from." The man answered, "Here is an astonishing thing! You do not know where he comes from, and yet he opened my eyes. We know that God does not listen to sinners, but he does listen to one who worships him and obeys his will. Never since the world began has it been heard that anyone opened the eyes of a person born blind. If this man were not from God, he could do nothing." They answered him, "You were born entirely in sins, and are you trying to teach us?" And they drove him out. Jesus heard that they had driven him out, and when he found him, he said, "Do you believe in the Son of Man?" He answered, "And who is he, sir? Tell me, so that I may believe in him." Jesus said to him, "You have seen him, and the one speaking with you is he." He said, "Lord, I believe." And he worshiped him. Jesus said, "I came into this world for judgment so that those who do not see may see, and those who do see may become blind." Some of the Pharisees near him heard this and said to him, "Surely we are not blind, are we?" Jesus said to them, "If you were blind, you would not have sin. But now that you say, 'We see,' your sin remains.

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

SHARING OUR JOYS AND CONCERNS

PRAYER SONG: "Nothing Can Trouble" (NCH, No. 772)

Nothing can trouble, nothing can frighten, Those who seek God shall never go wanting.
Nothing can trouble, nothing can frighten, God alone fills us.

PASTORAL PRAYER

THE PRAYER OF JESUS *(all together) We join our hearts together as we pray:*
**Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come,
your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours now and forever. Amen**

DEDICATION OF OUR LIVES AS GRATEFUL STEWARDS

God sees all things! God sees our comings and our goings,
our strengths and our weaknesses, our needs and our desires.
God sees in us the potential we do not yet see in ourselves.
I invite you to share your offerings and gifts
out of the abundance that is God's vision for us!

MUSICAL OFFERING:

*Presentation of our Gifts with Praise (NCH, No. 780)
**Praise God, who gives us all we have.
Praise Christ, whose life calls us to give.
Praise Holy Spirit, power for good.
These gifts we bring to thank our God. Amen**

***PRAYER OF DEDICATION (UNISON)**

**All that we have, all that we give this day, Holy One,
already belongs to you. Bless these, our gifts, and give us vision
to use them to glorify you. Amen.**

MESSAGE: "Surely We Are Not Blind, Are We?"

***CLOSING HYMN: "Amazing Grace"**

Amazing Grace

**Amazing grace! How sweet the sound
That saved a wretch like me!
I once was lost, but now am found;
Was blind, but now I see.**

**'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear,
And grace my fears relieved;
How precious did that grace appear
The hour I first believed.**

Through many dangers, toils and snares,
I have already come;
'Tis grace hath brought me safe thus far,
And grace will lead me home.

The Lord has promised good to me,
His word my hope secures;
He will my shield and portion be,
As long as life endures.

When we've been there ten thousand years,
Bright shining as the sun,
We've no less days to sing God's praise
Than when we'd first begun.

*COMMISSION AND BENEDICTION

*THE POSTLUDE



Many thanks to Graham Bryan, Daniel Best, and Jay Harrigan
for their help with creating this video service!

Welcome to Everyone!

*Whoever or whatever brought you to our on-line worship service this morning, we believe that the Spirit of God had a hand in your coming. We hope that you feel the Holy Spirit in our service of prayer and praise. At Christ Congregational Church we strive to love one another as God has loved us and welcome one another as Christ has welcomed us. Therefore, we are an **Open and Affirming** church, loving and welcoming all people in all of God's variety; including racial, ethnic, and economic diversity, gender diversity and expression, sexual orientation, and physical and mental abilities.*

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The CCC Women are celebrating our CCC sisters in Christ by sending cards, texts, and calls to those who are celebrating, recuperating, mourning, or struggling. If you would like us to send a card or message to a lady in your life who is celebrating an occasion, mourning a loved one, or needs an uplift, send an email to: **Joan Chandler at bingo123@bellsouth.net and let us know the occasion.**

Prayer List: Suzanne Wood, The family of Lucas Alvarez, Westminster Christian School staff and students, Jim Ketzle. Mark Harrison, Philip Thompson, Natalie Thompson, Javier Pantoja, Kathy Radkiewicz, Shai & Cedric Murphy, Jennifer Best Vickers, Bennie Wiley, The family of Mark Krumich, The family of Dr. Carey Green, Caleb Elkins, Anita Smith, Travis Smith, Bill & Maggie McDowell, Gloria Fuller, Amelia Canali, Wendy Olson, Georgina Mori, Deena and Herbert Chamberlin, Sarah Miller, Connor Thomas, Bradley Everhardt.

Please let Michelle, our Administrative Assistant, know if there are names, you'd like to have added to the Prayer List. She may be e-mailed at or call her at 305-235-9381. Thanks be to God for prayers answered and for comfort given!

For Pastoral Care Needs, such as entering the hospital, suffering a crisis, or just want to speak to someone about a personal, spiritual or emotional matter: Call *Pastor Candy* at 925-640-9289 or you may call or leave a message at the Church Office, 305-235-9381, Monday-Friday, from 9:30 a.m –2:30 p.m. and our Office Administrative Assistant, *Michelle Simone*, will assist you in reaching *Pastor Candy*. When the office is closed you may call the Board of Deacons Chairperson, *Jim Ketzle*, at 305-495-4452 and he will be able to help you. For Use of Property Needs or if you identify a Maintenance Concern call the Board of Trustees Chairperson, *Julio Balcells*, 305-282-7882. For Other General Questions or Needs call the Church President/Moderator, *Lorrie LeGrand*, 305-978-3801.

CALENDAR March 22, 2020 to March 29, 2020

Sun. 22	10:30 a.m.	Video Worship Service
Sun. 29	10:30 a.m.	Video Worship Service

