

Christ Congregational 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.

April 19, 2020 – 10:30 a.m.

Video Service

Second Sunday of Easter

***Preparation for Worship: "One of the earliest resurrection scenes in the Bible is that of Thomas demanding evidence--he wanted to see, to touch, to prove. Those who question and probe and debate are heirs of the apostles just as much as the most fervent of believers."
Jon Meacham, 21st century***



PRELUDE

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

LIGHTING THE CHRIST CANDLE, WE REMEMBER GOD IS WITH US

*CALL TO WORSHIP

Leader: Unlock your hearts—God wants to come in.

People: Open your lives—God needs a home.

L: Swing wide the doors—God's children need shelter.

P: Easter rolls the stone—and nothing can be shut anymore!

OPENING HYMN: “Come, You Faithful, Raise the Strain” (NCH, No. 230)

1 Come, you faithful, raise the strain
Of triumphant gladness!
God has brought His Israel
Into joy from sadness.
Loosed from Pharoah's bitter yoke
Jacob's sons and daughters,
Led them with unmoistened foot
Through the Red Sea waters.

2 'Tis the spring of souls today:
Christ hath burst His prison,
And from three days' sleep in death
As a sun has risen;
All the winter of our sins,
Long and dark, is flying
From His light, to whom is giv'n
Laud and praise undying.

3 Now the queen of seasons, bright
With the day of splendor,
With the royal feast of feasts,
Comes its joy to render;
Comes to gladden faithful hearts
Which with true affection
Welcomes in unwearied strains
Jesus' resurrection!

4 For today among His own
Christ appeared, bestowing
His deep peace, which evermore
Passes human knowing.
Neither could the gates of death
Nor the tomb's dark portal
Nor the watchers nor the seal
Hold Him as a mortal.

5 Alleluia! Now we cry
To our King immortal,
Who, triumphant, burst the bars
Of the tomb's dark portal.
Come, you faithful, raise the strain
Of triumphant gladness!
God has brought His Israel
Into joy from sadness!

*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.

PRAYER OF INVOCATION (Unison)

**Holy God,
Nothing is beyond your power to transform!
In a gray dawn, you coax songs of Alleluia!
From the tombs of despair we take refuge in
You call us to wake up and work.
We praise you for this amazing day!
Come, Risen Christ,
in newness and hope on this Eastertide morning. Amen.**

SPECIAL MUSIC: "Now the Green Blade Rises" Graham Bryan

SCRIPTURE LESSONS: *John 20:19-31* NRSV

When it was evening on that day, the first day of the week, and the doors of the house where the disciples had met were locked for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you." After he said this, he showed them his hands and his side. Then the disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord. Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you." When he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained." But Thomas (who was called the Twin), one of the twelve, was not with them when Jesus came. So the other disciples told him, "We have seen the Lord." But he said to them, "Unless I see the mark of the nails in his hands, and put my finger in the mark of the nails and my hand in his side, I will not believe." A week later his disciples were again in the house, and Thomas was with them. Although the doors were shut, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you." Then he said to Thomas, "Put your finger here and see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it in my side. Do not doubt but believe." Thomas answered him, "My Lord and my God!" Jesus said to him, "Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have come to believe." Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book. But these are written so that you may come to believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that through believing you may have life in his name.

Acts 2:14a, 22-32

But Peter, standing with the eleven, raised his voice and addressed them, "Men of Judea and all who live in Jerusalem, let this be known to you, and listen to what I say. "You that are Israelites, listen to what I have to say: Jesus of Nazareth, a man attested to you by God with deeds of power, wonders, and signs that God did through him among you, as you yourselves know— this man, handed over to you according to the definite plan and foreknowledge of God, you crucified and killed by the hands of those outside the law.

But God raised him up, having freed him from death, because it was impossible for him to be held in its power. For David says concerning him, 'I saw the Lord always before me, for he is at my right hand so that I will not be shaken; therefore my heart was glad, and my tongue rejoiced; moreover my flesh will live in hope. For you will not abandon my soul to Hades, or let your Holy One experience corruption. You have made known to me the ways of life; you will make me full of gladness with your presence.' "Fellow Israelites, I may say to you confidently of our ancestor David that he both died and was buried, and his tomb is with us to this day. Since he was a prophet, he knew that God had sworn with an oath to him that he would put one of his descendants on his throne. Foreseeing this, David spoke of the resurrection of the Messiah, saying, 'He was not abandoned to Hades, nor did his flesh experience corruption.' This Jesus God raised up, and of that all of us are witnesses.

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

SHARING OUR JOYS AND CONCERNS

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

L: Redeeming God,
with you there is always more life, more hope, more joy,
When doubt assails us, and we fail to recognize you at work in our lives,

P: Lord, have mercy!

L: When fear impairs our faith, and our eyes and ears and hearts
do not know you,

P: Christ, have mercy!

L: When anger and sorrow stop us from doing the risky work of love,

L: Lord, have mercy!

WORDS OF ASSURANCE

L: Within every kernel of doubt, there is a spark of life and hope.

In those times when our faith falters, when we cannot recognize the presence of the Holy among us, God takes our faith and transforms it, patiently showing us the many ways Christ walks among us.

Look around you: as close as your own beating heart,
and in the eyes of your nearest neighbor,
grace abounds at the heart of all life.

You are all God's children, loved without condition,
go in that peace. Amen.

PRAYER SONG: "I Need You Every Hour" (NCH, No. 517)

I need you every hour, O God of grace;

The peace your voice affords, I now embrace.

I need you, how I need you! Every hour I need you;

O bless me now, my Savior; I come to you.

PASTORAL PRAYER

THE PRAYER OF JESUS (*Unison*)

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

OFFERING THOUGHTS -Pastor

Easter teaches us that generous love is at the heart of God's work. Joyfully we are able to give knowing that our gifts will help others to see the blessed miracle of God's creative joy.

SPECIAL MUSIC

MESSAGE: **"Witnessing"** **Pastor Candy Thomas**

CLOSING HYMN: **"He Lives"** **(HFG, No. 299)**

**I serve a risen Savior
He's in the world today.
I know that He is living,
Whatever they may say.
I see His hand of mercy;
I hear his voice of cheer;
And just the time I need Him
He's always near.**

Chorus:

**He lives, He lives, Christ Jesus lives today!
He walks with me and talks with
Me along life's narrow way.
He lives, He lives, salvation to impart!
You ask me how I know He lives?
He lives within my heart.**

**In all the world around me
I see His loving care,
And though my heart grows weary,
I never will despair;
I know that He is leading,
Through all the stormy blast;
The day of His appearing
Will come at last.**

**Rejoice, rejoice, O Christian,
Lift up your voice and sing Eternal hallelujahs
To Jesus Christ the King!
The Hope of all who seek Him,
The Help of all who find,**

**None other is so loving,
So good and kind.**

COMMISSION:

BENEDICTION



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 you joining us. I 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*

Dear Church,

During this time of pandemic while the governor's "Stay at Home" order is in effect; I am live-streaming worship from my living room on our Facebook page Christ Congregational United Church of Christ @christcongregationalchurch. Our web page offers a link to our Facebook page. I hope you'll join me! We want to stay connected with each other. You will continue to receive the weekly e-newsletter and our web page is also a source of information. Please let me know if you need help with anything. I am only a phone call, text, or email away.

God Bless You!

Pastor Candy

JOYS AND CONCERNS – Please let me know of any joys or concerns you'd like lifted up in worship by notifying me by Sunday morning at 10:00 a.m. via phone, text or email.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Just a reminder that there is a green link at the bottom of our newsletter called "Give Online Today". Please be sure to use it if you are able or send your check to the office. In this pandemic time, it is preferable that you use the online method.

Supporting Southridge HS's 90 Homeless Students

David Williams' Rotary club is trying to provide a hot dinner Mon-Wed-Fri for the 90 students while school is out. Even though the schools are offering breakfast/lunch, the school buses aren't running to bring the students to campus, so many are going without hot meals. The Rotary group is organizing, cooking and delivering meals to coordinated sites. During this time of Shelter at Home, we can support their efforts through donations to their Go Fund Me page. The link is: gf.me/u/wpxyct. The account deposits directly into Rotary's Foundation bank account.

In the future, we can potentially help in cooking the identified meals, but for now consider supporting their efforts including Wednesday's Pizza Night. They will need 30 pizzas to cover

everyone, approximately \$8-9 per pizza, thus \$250-\$275 total.
Thank you for your ongoing community support. Outreach

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: The Avina family, For Margarita Morell, her Mother and Sister, All medical professionals and first responders, Jessica Shuflitowski,, Suzanne Wood, The family of Lucas Alvarez, Westminster Christian School staff and students, Jim Ketzle, Philip and 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, Deena and Herbert Chamberlin, Sarah Miller, Connor Thomas, Caprice Di Liello, Margarita Padilla, Kathy Radkiewicz, Dr. Larry Loy.

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**, please 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 April 19, 2020 to April 26, 2020

Sun. 19	10:30 a.m.	Video Worship Service
Sun. 26	10:30 a.m.	Video Worship Service