

Christ Congregational United Church of Christ

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Website: www.christcongregationalucc.org

The Rev. Candace Thomas, Designated-Term Pastor

Jay Harragin, Director of Music

Karen Kett, Liturgist

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

April 11, 2021 – 10:30 a.m.

Second Sunday of Easter

Preparation for Worship: "If anyone or anything tries to curse or kill the Goodness at the Center of all things, it will just keep coming back to life. Forever Easter." David Housholder, The Blackberry Bush, 21st century



PRELUDE

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

***CALL TO WORSHIP (*responsive*)**

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:

People: 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:

People: 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:

People: Peace be with you.

Leader: From that day on, the people of God repeated the words to one another when they gathered. From one generation to the next, they

exchanged the words as a greeting to one another to remember that Holy interruption to fear:

People: Peace be with you!

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

1.) Come, you faithful, raise the strain of triumphant gladness;

God has brought all Israel into joy from sadness;

Loosed from Pharaoh’s bitter yoke Jacob’s sons and daughters;

Le them with unmoistened foot through the red Sea waters.

2.) Spring has dawned on earth today; Christ has burst from prison,

And from three days’ sleep in death as the sun has risen;

All the winter of our sins, long and gray, is flying

From the Light to whom we give laud and praise undying

3.) Now the joyous season, bright with the day of splendor,

With the royal feast of feast, come its joys to render;

Comes to glad Jerusalem who with true affection

Welcomes in unwearied strains Jesus’ resurrection.

4.) Neither might the gates of death, nor the tomb's dim portal,
Nor the watchers, nor the seal hold you as a mortal;
But today amid the twelve you still stand, bestowing
Peace and joy which evermore passes human knowing.

***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)

O Risen Christ, whose presence was real to your first disciples, come among us today. Breathe on us that we too might receive the Holy Spirit. Lead us to stronger faith, evoke in us a forgiving spirit, and open our eyes to see the signs and wonders of God in our midst, that our service may be empowered. Amen.

SCRIPTURE LESSON: 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.'

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

SPECIAL MUSIC: "Golden Breaks the Dawn" Chinese folk tune

Arr. By Graham Bryan and Jay Harrigan

SHARING OUR JOYS AND CONCERNS

PRAYER OF CONFESSION: (Unison)

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 world is broken in so many ways.

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, hear our doubts and settle our hearts, souls, and minds...

WORDS OF ASSURANCE-Pastor

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 holy 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. Your shortcomings are forgiven. Grace abounds. God calls to you. Peace be with you. Thank you, gracious and almighty God. Amen.

PRAYER SONG: "Hear our prayer, O God" (No. 769, NCH"

Hear our prayer, O God, hear our prayer, O God;

Incline your ear to us, and grant us your peace.

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 INVITATION

God invites us to bring the fullness of who we are into worship and to share the fullness of who we are with the world.

So it is God's holy invitation that asks us to pause and wonder what we want to offer of ourselves to the world.

Time? Presence? Kindness? Financial support? Prayers? In these moments of quiet and reflection:

what is it that you have to offer this day to bring about God's peace on Earth?

PRAYER OF DEDICATION: (*Unison*)

God bless these gifts that they may be shared in the spirit of an Easter people, ever seeking ways to live out faith in acts of service. Amen.

MUSICAL OFFERING: "Be Still My Soul"

Laura Bergquist

MESSAGE: "Passing the Peace"

Pastor Candy

CLOSING HYMN: "Peace I Leave with You, My Friends" (No. 249, NCH)

***Refrain:* Peace I leave with you my friends, shalom my peace, in all you do. Peace I leave with you, my friends. I give to you so you can give to others, too.**

- 1.) To share God's love is why I came, to show God's kindness without end. Go now, my friends, and do the same, until I come again.**
- 2.) Take my hand and be at peace; the spirit of our love I send.
And with this love you will be free, until I come again.**
- 3.) With this love now all will know that loneliness is at an end.
Rejoice my friends although I go, for I will come again.**

COMMISSION

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."

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.”

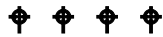
Beloved People of God, this hour is only the beginning.

**Do not be afraid. You have been called
and you are being sent into this world
to be a force of love, light, hope, and joy.**

**Go forth into this day and into the world in the name of God,
the One who creates you;
go in the name of the Jesus who shows us the way;
and go in the name of the Holy Spirit,
who is with us now and always. Peace be with you.**

BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE



Welcome to Everyone!

***Whoever or whatever brought you to our Garden Chapel or our
Facebook on-line worship service this morning, we believe that the Spirit
of God had a hand in you joining us. 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.

JOYS AND CONCERNS – Please let Pastor Candy know of any joys or concerns you would like lifted up in worship by notifying her by Sunday morning at 10 a.m. via phone, text or email.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

PRIME TIME, EVERY Sunday, from 9:00-9:45 a.m.

Our book selection for Prime Time is Caste by Isabel Wilkerson.

Dr. Don Olson is leading the discussion. All are welcome to join

<https://zoom.us/j/99918456708?pwd=RWg0TUpsK0ZaUkJsRnN4bDNSZ1BMUT09Meeting> ID: 999 1845 6708 Passcode: 706854

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

The Board of Christian Education will be taking a spring break through April.

BIBLE STUDY

We will meet on Zoom at 6 p.m. on Monday, April 12th. To Join Zoom Meeting <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82547685992>

Meeting ID: 825 4768 5992

ONLINE GIVING - We invite you to use our online giving option as a quick, simple and secure method to make your pledges and any ancillary contributions. Clicking on the "Give Online Today" button at the bottom of this newsletter or going to our church website at christcongregationalucc.org and clicking "online giving" will bring you to the secured Moon Clerk site which will allow you to enter your credit card information.

PRAYER LIST:

Michelle Simon, Joan Hansen, Margie Diaz, Magnus, Anita Smith, Barbara Parker, Linda Dalrymple, Barrett family, Sheryl Mattos, Maggie McDowell, Sonia Nunez, Amelia Canali, Wendy Olson, Roland Sibrie, Sonya Williams, Ava, Jeffrey Gordon, and Duyen Le.

For Pastoral Care Needs, please call *Pastor Candy* at 925-640-9289 or email her at <cccpastor@att.net>. 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 11, 2021 – April 18, 2021

- Sun. 11 9:00 a.m. Prime Time ZOOM Meeting
- 10:30 a.m Worship in the Garden
 Chapel in person & on Facebook
- Mon. 12 6:00 p.m. Bible Study via ZOOM
- Sun. 18 9:00 a.m. Prime Time ZOOM Meeting
- 10:30 a.m. Sunday Worship
 in the Garden Chapel in person &
 on Facebook