

Christ Congregational United Church of Christ

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Web site: www.christcongregationalucc.org

The Rev. Candace Thomas, Designated-Term Pastor

Jay Harragin, Director of Music

Judy Carlson, Liturgist

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

April 16, 2021 – 10:30 a.m.

Third Sunday of Easter

Preparation for Worship

“The empty tomb does not explain Jesus’ resurrection; Jesus’ resurrection explains it.”

Robert L. Brawley



PRELUDE:

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

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

One: Christ is Risen and greets us with peace.

All: The peace of Christ is among us, indeed.

One: We are witnesses of God’s glory and steadfast love.

All: The transforming love of Christ is among us, indeed!

One: Come, let us worship.

***HYMN: “Joy Dawned Again on Easter Day” (No.421, NCH)**

- 1.) Joy dawned again on Easter Day, the sun shone out with bright array; For when the Apostles hid in fear the Risen Christ to them appeared.**
- 2.) O Jesus, Savior, Gentle One, come take our hearts to be your own, That we may give you all our days the willing tribute of our praise.**
- 3.) O Sovereign One, with us abide in this our joyful Eastertide; From every weapon death can wield, your own redeemed forever shield.**

***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 God of love and light, we come as witnesses of your glory and faithfulness, amazed to discover your transformative love. God, we desire for you to abide within us, and for your grace to be revealed anew daily. Be with us and awaken within us the call to love one another, in the way it was made real through Jesus the Christ. Amen.

SCRIPTURE LESSONS: *Luke 24:36-48* NRSV

Jesus Appears to His Disciples

While they were talking about this, Jesus himself stood among them and said to them, ‘Peace be with you.’ They were startled and terrified, and thought

that they were seeing a ghost. He said to them, 'Why are you frightened, and why do doubts arise in your hearts? Look at my hands and my feet; see that it is I myself. Touch me and see; for a ghost does not have flesh and bones as you see that I have.' And when he had said this, he showed them his hands and his feet. While in their joy they were disbelieving and still wondering, he said to them, 'Have you anything here to eat?' They gave him a piece of broiled fish, and he took it and ate in their presence.

Then he said to them, 'These are my words that I spoke to you while I was still with you—that everything written about me in the law of Moses, the prophets, and the psalms must be fulfilled.' Then he opened their minds to understand the scriptures, and he said to them, 'Thus it is written, that the Messiah is to suffer and to rise from the dead on the third day, and that repentance and forgiveness of sins is to be proclaimed in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem. You are witnesses of these things.

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

SPECIAL MUSIC “All Things Bright and Beautiful” arr. Bryan & Harragin

SHARING OUR JOYS AND CONCERNS

CALL TO CONFESSION-Pastor

Ever-present God, forgive us when we stand in disbelief, and comfort us when our fears outweigh your peace. God, forgive us when we become too busy to pray. Help us when we fail to see our neighbors in need. Abiding God, forgive us when we are overwhelmed with bad news, and shut down completely.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION (Unison)

In these times, remind us that we are called to be your love lived, your faithful witnesses, and your humble servants. Help us to wake up to the work of love, and to your renewing strength each day, we pray. Amen.

ASSURANCE OF BLESSING-Pastor

O God, hear our prayers of repentance and forgiveness, and awaken us from doubt, disbelief, and distress by transforming us into your resurrection joy! God, we desire for your loving spirit to be among us, to comfort us in our fears, and to renew our faith. 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

Let us give thanks for God’s steadfast love by being witnesses to those who are hungry for food, encouragement, and relationship. Let us also witness to those who are poor in spirit, by allowing God’s Spirit to loosen our grip on belongings and possessions, in order to awaken every troubled heart. And finally, let us offer ourselves in gratitude and with generosity, as witnesses to God’s goodness by our joyful giving.

MUSICAL OFFERING:

PRAYER OF DEDICATION: (*Unison*)

God of abundant love, we offer a portion of our time, spiritual gifts, and resources as a sign of our love for you and the world. O God, we give you our thanks for all that we have and ask a special blessing on these offerings. And God, we ask that our collective offering be an expression of healing, that brings hope to a hurting world. In the name of Jesus Christ, we pray. Amen.

MESSAGE: “Bearing Witness in the World” Pastor Candy

***CLOSING HYMN: “The Strife is O’er” (No. 242, NCH)**

Refrain: Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!

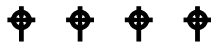
- 1.) The strife is o’er, the battle done, the victory of life is won;
The song of triumph has begun. Alleluia!**
- 2.) The powers of death have done their worst, but Christ their
legions has dispersed: Let shouts of holy joy outburst. Alleluia!**
- 3.) The three sad days are quickly sped, Christ rises glorious from the
dead: All glory to our risen Head! Alleluia!**
- 4. Christ, by your wounds on Calvary from death’s dread sting your
servants free, that we may live eternally. Alleluia!**

COMMISSION: (*Unison*)

**Let us go forth having had laid down our burdens.
Let us go forth rich in spirit,
knowing God has a plan for our lives.
And let us go forth as witnesses to God's hope
of justice, peace, grace, and love.
Believing fully that Christ is among all humanity,
now and always. Amen.**

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

IN PERSON WORSHIP IN THE SANCTUARY will resume on Sunday, May 2nd following pandemic protocols. Worship will also continue to be live streamed on Facebook.

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

Topic: Donald Olson's Zoom Meeting Time: March 21, 2021 9:00 a.m.)

<https://zoom.us/j/99918456708?pwd=RWg0TUpsK0ZaUkJsRnN4bDNS>

Z1BMUT09 Meeting 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, March 22nd. To Join

Zoom Meeting <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82547685992>

Meeting ID: 825 4768 5992 One tap mobile

MENS' DINNER INVITATION

Since Miami-Dade County has relaxed the covid restrictions, another men's dinner is being planned for Wednesday April 21st. We are going to meet at the Golden Rule Seafood Restaurant located at 17505 S Dixie Highway. As usual, we'll meet at 6:30 p.m. for fellowship and conversation. If you plan to join us please contact Jim Ketzle or Wally Carlson so we can make reservations.

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 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 18, 2021 – April 25, 2021

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| Sun. 18 | 9:00 a.m. | Prime Time ZOOM Meeting |
| | 10:30 a.m. | Worship in the Garden Chapel
in person & on Facebook |
| Mon. 19 | 6:00 p.m. | Bible Study via ZOOM |
| Thurs. 22 | 7:00 p.m. | Council/Trustees ZOOM meeting |
| Sun. 25 | 9:00 a.m. | Prime Time ZOOM Meeting |
| | 10:30 a.m. | Worship in the Garden Chapel
in person & on Facebook |
| | 12:30 p.m. | Fellowship Hour via ZOOM |

