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Sunday, March 27, 2016, 10:00am
Theme: EASTER

✠ indicates stand as you are able
Bold indicates participation by the people

MV = More Voices
VU = Voices United

We Gather With

PRELUDE: *Kari Orosz – Christ the Lord Is Risen Today and Mozart's Alleluia – arr. Marilyn Ham*

WELCOME & GREETING VISITORS (*Leader*)

✠GREETING ONE ANOTHER (Please feel free to move around)

SPIRIT LINES (Announcements)

CHRIST CANDLE, SILENCE, & TONE BOWL

INTROIT: *Come All You People (Projected)*

MV#2

CALL TO WORSHIP: (*Projected – Responsive*)

One: Christ is risen! Alleluia!

All: We are Easter people, filled with hope and joy!

One: Hear the good news! Mary came to the empty tomb, and found the risen Christ.

All: Jesus died and rose again – God has had the final victory over death!

One: We are in God's presence and bear witness to God's love and the holy mystery of Christ's resurrection.

All: We experience God's love and power. We are part of the new thing that God is doing in the world around us.

One: Christ is risen! Alleluia!

All: Alleluia!

OPENING PRAYER: (*Unison, Projected*)

God of the empty tomb, we come into your presence looking for Jesus after his death on the cross. We find the risen Christ and are delighted and transformed. As the stone was rolled away from the tomb on the first Easter morning, may we move any obstacle in our hearts and minds to encountering you in the holy mystery we remember today. Amen.

✠HYMN: *This Is the Day that God Has Made (Projected)*

VU#175

ACT OF CONFIRMATION (Insert)

(Children and Youth are invited to join with their leaders at one of the entrances to the Sanctuary)

Open Minds

SCRIPTURE: John 20:1-18(*NRSV*)

Scripture Reader: John Latter

Affirmation:

One: This is the witness of The Church,
Many: thanks be to God!

MINISTRY OF MUSIC: *The Adult Choir – On Resurrection Morn*

– by McGuire/Raney

THE MESSAGE: *Empty – It's a Good Thing*

Open Hands

✠HYMN: *Jesus Christ Is Risen Today (Projected)*

VU#155

MINUTE FOR MISSION: *“Bearing the Brunt in Gaza”*

MINISTRY OF MUSIC: *Soloist – Dennis Watson – The Holy City*

– Weatherly and Adams

INVITATION TO OPEN HANDS (*Leader*)

OPPORTUNITY TO OPEN HANDS

with our Tithes, Offerings, & Prayers.

(Please print clearly and place your Prayer Slips in the Prayer Baskets.)

✠OFFERTORY: *Ev'ry Day Is a Day of Thanksgiving (Projected)* **MV#185**

✠OFFERTORY PRAYER (*Unison, Projected*)

God, we thank you for our new life in the risen Christ. The stone the builders rejected has become the cornerstone. You have built a foundation for our church, our community of faith. We offer our gifts to you today. Take them and make them opportunities for new life to grow in you. Amen.

CALL TO PRAYER: *Don't Be Afraid (Projected)*

MV#90

PASTORAL PRAYERS & PRAYER OF JESUS

Open Hearts to Each Other and the World

SACRAMENT OF COMMUNION (Insert)

✠COMMISSIONING and BENEDECTION: (*Leader*)

✠HYMN: *The Day of Resurrection (Projected)*

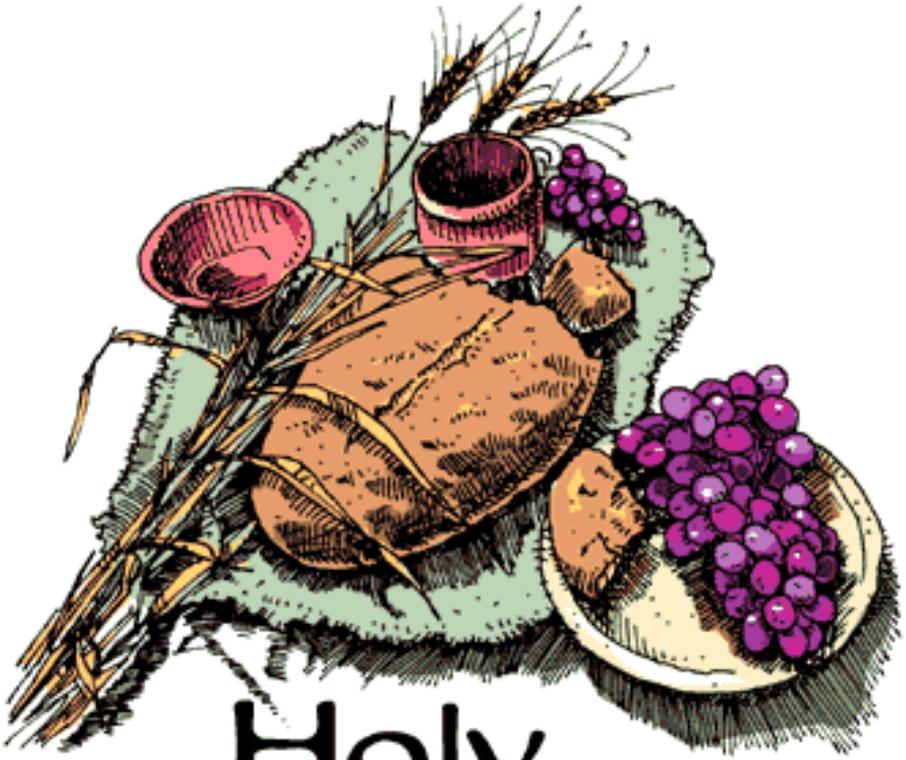
VU#164

POSTLUDE

Participating in worship leadership today: Rev. Tracy, Rev. Bob, Kari Orosz, The Adult Choir, Dennis Watson, John Latter, Jeff McLean, John McCrea, Roger Anderson, David Robertson, Diane Paley, Mark Wagner.



The Sacrament of



Holy Communion

SACRAMENT OF COMMUNION

Through all the seasons
and changes of our lives
there is one that stands above all others:
this Season of Easter,
in which we celebrate with unbridled joy
the presence of the risen and living Christ
in our midst.

No matter where we have been,
or where we find ourselves today,
we are bold to gather in joy
knowing that our living
is tied up with that of Christ
who lives forever.

**With joy we gather
at this sacred table
to be sacred community:
to be the people called by God
into new and everlasting life.**

We celebrate the joyous opportunity
to share good news with all the world:
that Christ's resurrection is for all people,
that God's love is for all people,
that this table and this meal
are for all people.

**We remember Jesus gathering
with his closest friends
yet knowing they would scatter,
leaving him alone.**

Still, he gathered with them
and shared this simple meal,
taking bread and juice
and infusing them with new life;
taking ordinary things
and making them extraordinary in their new use.
And so we take the ordinary –

bread and juice –
and make it extraordinary by offering it to you.

We take this simple bread,
and as it is broken we think of Jesus' words:
"Take and eat; this is my body broken for you."

All: It is broken that we may live in fullness and wholeness.

We take this simple cup,
and as it is lifted up we think of Jesus' words:
"Take and drink; this is my blood, poured out for you and many for the
forgiveness of sin."

All: It is poured out that we may know ourselves forgiven.

We know that in this meal
we are gathered by a great community
that has gone before us.

We are bold to gather at this table
with Thomas, and Lydia,
with Paul and Ananias,
and all those men and women
who dared to join with one another
in those first days,
and boldly remember the presence
of the living Christ in their midst.

Bless us now in the sharing of this meal,
that we may be enlivened to share your gifts
with those who hunger and thirst
for acceptance, for new life, for wholeness.

Prayer After Communion:
**Loving God, you have gathered us here
out of love for you,
and reminded us at this table
that we are one people.
Send us out, now, into a hurting world
to share the good news
that Christ is alive for *all* people. Amen.**

CONFIRMATION

Introductory Words

In this worship service today, we celebrate those who choose to make a place for faith in their lives. We gather to provide them with our blessing and our best wishes as they affirm their faith. We give thanks for their thoughtful consideration of our church, its practices and its history, and offer them our support and friendship.

Introduction of Candidates:

Over the past six weeks, three youth in our congregation have been gathering to explore and share their faith with one another. We recognize that we are not alone on our faith journeys. The group has had one prayer partner and we'd like to acknowledge and thank Roger Anderson for his ongoing prayers.

On behalf of the congregation of St. Thomas United Church, I present the following people who seek to renew the faith proclaimed in their baptism: Amanda Sherwin, Janae Ruzicki, and Nolan Ruzicki.

Questions for Youth Presented for Confirmation:

Having participated in the Confirmation classes here at St. Thomas, and given thought to your own faith journey, are you ready to be confirmed into full membership in this community?

We are.

Do you believe in God who created and is creating and will you be open to the Spirit's nudging in your lives, turning to the example of Jesus as a model?

We will.

Youth presented for Confirmation: **We promise to continue our journey of faith by being open to God's Spirit alive and at work within us.**

Congregation: We promise to stand with you and by you. We will support you, care for you, and pray for you. Together may we all be strengthened in our faith and bound together as God's people in this place.

Presentation of Gifts

On behalf of the congregation of St. Thomas, we present you with these special prayer shawls offered to you from the prayer shawl ministry of St. Thomas. When times are good, may you enjoy them. And if days ever darken for you, remember the loving hands that prepared them, and may that memory bring you back to peace and happiness. Please also accept these bibles from the Faith Formation Committee. May they help answer some of your questions.

(Gifts are presented.)

Blessing

Holy Spirit, be with us as we journey. Be with us, guide us, fill us with Holy Mystery. May we always have open minds, open hearts, and open hands. May we seek you always, and know strength, happiness, peace, and joy. Amen.