



THE
WILDERNESS
will lead you
to your heart
where I will speak.

Maple Street Congregational Church, UCC

We share God's love, hope, and healing and serve our neighbors.

THE ORDER OF WORSHIP

for March 7, 2021

Third Sunday in Lent - “Stories”

Gather

People gather around Jesus as his reputation becomes known from town to town. As we gather virtually, we too are yearning for his presence, for peace and for help

Prelude

Ji Hye Jung

Welcome

Invitation

Leader: We continue our Lenten “season of restoration” as we focus on health as essential to our spiritual lives.

Theme refrain is sung once through, freely:

**Vessels, holy and whole
Broken, needing the One
Open, body and soul
Healer, come.**

Leader: Those who collect beach glass often become “archeologists”—seeking out any markings or clues as to the story of the original piece. It often takes much time to bring out the truth behind it. This week we acknowledge the power of truth-telling as a healing property. There are stories that have shaped our lives, leaving us without the ability to see who we truly are in the eyes of God and leaving us without the ability to speak the depth of our stories of struggle. We focus on the importance of recovery of mental health, reclaiming our sense of who we are and being able to proclaim new redemptive stories of divine worth.

Musical Refrain:

**Vessels, holy and whole
Broken, needing the One
Open, body and soul, come.**

Opening Prayer of Confession

Leader: Let us acknowledge our need to restore, repair, renew our Holy Vessels, and that the health of our minds deeply affects our physical and spiritual health.

Let us pray...

Centering and Calming Divine Breath of God,

You gifted us with amazing minds, capable of so many things. You gave us the ability to think and feel, imbuing us with discernment of thought and emotion.

Like our physical bodies, sometimes this aspect of our selves is beleaguered.

We struggle under the strain of disappointment, despair, and delusion.

Too often we hide this, afraid of what others might think of our difficulties in managing or moving forward, even in the face of devastating circumstances.

Too often we perpetuate the stigma of a less-than-perfect state of mind

by shaming ourselves and others. Millennia of misunderstanding compounds our fear. We label and belittle, all the while turning the hatred upon ourselves, for no one is immune from troubles of the mind at some point. So many are suffering now, God, weary and distraught, grieving and at the end of their rope. We cannot fathom the proportions of loss and so we look away, sometimes even from the need in our own community. Help us, Healer. Show us our capacity for compassion. Forgive our inattention. Move us to move one step at a time toward greater care for one another. In this silence, we sense and acknowledge our yearning for wholeness.

Musical Refrain:

**Vessels, holy and whole
Broken, needing the One
Open, body and soul
Healer, come**

Assurance of God's Presence

I invite you to imagine and search for a warmth at the core of your body. It may help to keep your eyes closed. This warm orb of light is deep within you, although sometimes it feels dulled, even cold. If it feels this way now, allow this. Do not judge yourself. Perhaps you DO feel this warmth and all feels right with the world. This just is. You likely will not always feel that way. Whether or not you feel the warmth of peace and assurance right now, this does not make you right or wrong, good or bad. It just makes you human. And you are not alone. Perhaps you can imagine the warmth coming from someone whose presence fills you with comfort. See it radiate from them to you, as it does when you need it most.

Know this: You are accepted. No. Matter. What. Accepting the truth of our difficulties is part of the journey of recovery. Sharing our stories of difficulty can open the way for healing.

For you, for me, for all. Take a deep breath in to let this truth fill you... and breathe out with the relief of assurance.

Peace of Christ

I invite you to imagine the warmth that surrounds you extending to those who may be next to you in close proximity. Imagine it extending beyond your walls to the neighborhood...the wider community... the church... and seeing it spread like the rising sun, let it expand to all the world. Let this be our peace. Amen. Let the piece of Christ be with you. Amen

Special Music

When Peace Like a River

Philip Bliss, arr. Jay Althouse

Kathy Gross, flute

Ji Hye Jung, piano

Believe

People were fortified by Jesus' words and deeds that revealed care for all-especially those marginalized. We strengthen our beliefs in the possibility for renewed health and vigor for all.

Prayers of the People

Rev. Douglas Vooyo

Lord's Prayer

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name.

Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses,

As we forgive those who trespass against us.

And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil.

For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever. Amen.

Offering and Dedication

Stewardship Moment

Casey Brennan

Anthem

He Will Hold Me Fast

Chancel Choir Recording 2019

Scripture—Matthew 9: 27-33

Message

“Where Ever You Are On Your Journey”

Rev. Pam Cochrane

(Musical Refrain)
Vessels, holy and whole
Broken, needing the One
Open, body and soul
Healer, come

Hymn

Let Us Break Bread Together

Chancel Choir 2019

Sacrament of Communion

Closing Hymn

God Our Author and Creator tune: HYFRYDOL words: Carl P. Daw

1. God our Author and Creator, in whose life we find our own,
Make our daily witness greater, by our lives make your love known.
Help us show how love embraces those whom fear and greed down-trod;
In all yearning hearts and faces let us see a child of God.
2. Like those first apostles, Savior, give us strength to love and serve:
When our fainting spirits waver, fire our hearts and steel our nerve.
Teach us wisdom and compassion: bid our restless hearts be still;
By your guidance help us fashion lives conformed unto your will.
3. Keep us faithful, Holy Spirit, help us bear the message true,
That at last all lands may hear it: "God is love; Christ died for you."
Join our lives in mighty chorus till we come from every place,
With all those who went before us, to the fullness of God's grace.

Benediction

Postlude

Ji Hye Jung

*The altar flowers this Sunday are in loving memory of
Blenda & Eugene Acheson
Given by Karen Kane*

*The chancel flowers are in honor of
Spencer's 8th birthday & Calla's 6th birthday
Given by the family*

*The steeple is lit this week in loving memory of
George & Della Bradstreet
Given by Bill & Adrienne Bradstreet*

Announcements & Events

Sunday, March 7 at 10am: *Third Sunday of Lent*

Monday, March 8 at 7pm: *Accessibility Team Mtg on Zoom*

Tuesday, March 9 at 7pm: *Deacons Mtg on Zoom*

Wednesday, March 10 at 6:30pm: *CE Mtg on Zoom*

Thursday, March 11 at 7pm: *Building Reopening Team Mtg on Zoom*

Sunday, March 14 at 10am: *Fourth Sunday of Lent with special guest musician Robert Humphreville*

Tuesday, March 16 at 7pm: *World Service Mtg on Zoom*

Sunday, March 21 at 10am: *Fifth Sunday of Lent*

Tuesday, March 23 at 7pm: *Trustees Mtg on Zoom*

Thursday, March 25 at 7pm: *Small Group Movie Discussion on Zoom*

Sunday, March 28 at 10am: *Palm Sunday Worship & Parade of Cars after the Service*

Sunday, April 4 at 10am: *Easter Sunday Worship*

Email the Church Office for the Zoom meeting links: info@maplestreetchurch.org

Every Tuesday at 6pm: Prayer & Table

Every Wednesday at 12noon: Chat with the Pastors via Zoom

Every Thursday at 12noon: Virtual Bible Study

World Service Committee

Palm Sunday & Sharing with the Community

Sunday, March 28th

Parade of Cars and Palm Sunday Procession

After the service, hop in your car and bring:

Money/Checks for the Danvers Food Pantry

(Remember no food, they are under construction and are only collecting money.) Checks should be made out to Maple Street Church with Danvers Food Pantry in the memo. You can also mail your donation to the church by March 28.

Cereal for Bootstraps

Please bring adult & children's name brand cereals (not store brands)

The parking lot will be set up so you can drive in, drop off your donations from your car, and continue back onto Charter Street. To receive palms and join in the Palm Sunday procession, limited parking may be available in the parking lot or you can park in the lot across the street or in front of the church on Maple Street.

So remember:

**Palm Sunday is
Sunday, March 28th
Money for Food Pantry
Cereals for Bootstraps
Pick up your Palms &
Join the Procession
See you there!!
The World Service
Committee**

