



ZION UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

**LENT WORSHIP @ HOME  
HOLY VESSELS:  
A LENTEN SEASON OF RECOVERY**

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*Holy Vessels: A Lenten Season of Recovery*

*Wednesday Worship*

March 3, 2021

**PRELUDE**

*Spirit of God, Descend Upon My Heart*

**GATHERING PRAYER**

*Lenten Anthem: "Holy Vessels," Virtual Choir*

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

Help us, Healer. Show us our ability to grow and change. Forgive our inaction. Move us to move one step at a time toward greater care. In this silence, we sense and acknowledge our yearning for wholeness. *Silence...Amen.*

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

**CONTEMPORARY WORDS TO PONDER**

"True wisdom is like an ocean; the deeper you go the greater the treasures you'll find." — Matshona Dhliwayo

“Bad things do happen; how I respond to them defines my character and the quality of my life. I can choose to sit in perpetual sadness, immobilized by the gravity of my loss, or I can choose to rise from the pain and treasure the most precious gift I have - life itself.”— **Walter Anderson**

“Some people spend so much time hunting treasure that they fail to see it all around them. It's like sifting through gold to find the silt.”— **Richard Paul Evans**

“It is by going down into the abyss that we recover the treasures of life. Where you stumble, there lies your treasure.”— **Joseph Campbell**

“Where there is ruin, there is hope for a treasure.”— **Rumi**

## HYMN

*The Old Rugged Cross*

## WE HEAR GOD'S WORD

*Matthew 8: 1-4*

When Jesus had come down from the mountain, great crowds followed him; and there was a leper who came to him and knelt before him, saying, “Lord, if you choose, you can make me clean.” He stretched out his hand and touched him, saying, “I do choose. Be made clean!” Immediately his leprosy was cleansed. Then Jesus said to him, “See that you say nothing to anyone; but go, show yourself to the priest, and offer the gift that Moses commanded, as a testimony to them.”

## RITUAL ACTION FOR THE WEEK

The words of Jesus we heard in this week’s healing story were “I do choose. Be made clean!” Faced with a request, and given the choice, Jesus chooses to say “yes.” And he says “yes” to each precious and treasured life. Recovered wholeness is offered to everyone and will look different for each one. I invite you to take up a piece of beach glass now and examine it closely, noticing the worn edges and the color, feeling the texture and thickness.

Examine it as a treasure that is completely unique, which of course it is.

Then shift your thinking to your own rough edges. What broken edges in your own life need help? What will you do in this Lent season to focus on healing of body, mind, and spirit?



Take a moment to think on this and then when you are ready, enclose the broken piece in your hand and hold it to your heart, breathing (“*spirare*”) deeply and inviting that Spirit to live and move in you in a special way over the next six weeks. Keep your piece close at hand... perhaps on your desk, nightstand, or pocket where you can feel it regularly this week.

## **WE RESPOND TO GOD’S WORD WITH OUR GIVING**

**Invitation** – With gratitude and thanksgiving we bring our gifts to God. Jesus chose to be our friend and our Savior, and so we rejoice, too, that we have been chosen to be his followers. There is much that we can bring to God this night—our financial resources, our spiritual resources, the resources of our time and talents and love. To some these gifts may seem small, but with them, God can do great things.

You can mail your offerings to our office. We check the mail regularly.  
Zion United Church of Christ  
8916 E. Troy Ave.  
Indianapolis, IN 46239

Or, you can donate through our website through our secure PayPal button at [www.zionuccindy.net/donate](http://www.zionuccindy.net/donate). Please know that PayPal receives a 2.2% processing fee and a \$0.30 transaction charge. You are able to set up reoccurring, monthly payments.

**We Give Thanks** – Healer God, may the gifts we offer today be signs of our trust in you. They may be a little rough and worn, but they are the treasures of our lives. Bless these gifts, those who give, and those who receive. Amen.

## **PRAVERS OF THE PEOPLE**

*Song of Preparation: “Make Us Holy, Make Us Whole,” Martha & Michael Main*

*In your love, make us whole.*

*May we rest in your compassion.*

*Calm the lost, weary soul*

*in the warmth of your love.*

*May your peace fill our hearts.*

*May we know the love of Jesus.*

*By your grace, you console.*

## ***Make us holy, make us whole.***

Healer of our every ill, especially our malady of separation and fear, we come before you to make our petitions known. Hear our cries for healing of body, mind, and spirit. We know that already you are at work among us, showing us the way to recovery from the toxicities and grief of our time. As demolished pieces that are treasured when found, we trust that beauty from brokenness is possible when we seek to bind together that which is wounded. We pray especially for those who have experienced the physical loss of family and friends in the pandemic and those who are still suffering the consequences of the illness. We pray for each person who suffers in body in other ways—weariness from inactivity or weariness from overactivity in this time. We pray for those whose treatment of maladies have been put on hold and those who suffered isolation in their illness, whatever the cause. We pray grateful thanks for the medical staff everywhere around the world who have shown unbelievable strength and stamina and we mourn the demise of too many caregivers who risked their lives for our sake. God, in the quite of our hearts, hear our prayer...*(A time for silent prayer)*

**The 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 debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

***In your love, make us whole.***

***May we rest in your compassion.***

***Calm the lost, weary soul  
in the warmth of your love.***

***May your peace fill our hearts.***

***May we know the love of Jesus.***

***By your grace, you console.***

***Make us holy, make us whole.***

## **CLOSING PRAYER**

*Lenten Anthem: "Holy Vessels"*

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

Holy Healer, we give you thanks for our time together. Let us hold one another in love like the Holy—though sometimes broken—Vessels that we are. Let us hold all of Creation as precious works of your divine grace. Amen.

Go in peace...

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

## **POSTLUDE**

*With Contrite Heart*

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