



ZION UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST  
**LENT WORSHIP @ HOME**  
**HOLY VESSELS:**  
**A LENTEN SEASON OF RECOVERY**

[www.zionuccindy.net/worshipathome](http://www.zionuccindy.net/worshipathome)

*Holy Vessels: A Lenten Season of Recovery*  
*Wednesday Worship*  
March 3, 2021

## PRELUDE

### 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

"There is no power for change greater than a community discovering what it cares about." — **Margaret J. Wheatley**

"In every community, there is work to be done. In every nation, there are wounds to heal. In every heart, there is the power to do it." – **Marianne Williamson**

"The greatness of a community is most accurately measured by the compassionate actions of its members." – **Coretta Scott King**

"Alone, we can do so little; together, we can do so much." – **Helen Keller**

"I am of the opinion that my life belongs to the whole community and as long as I live, it is my privilege to do for it whatever I can. I want to be thoroughly used up when I die, for the harder I work the more I live." – **George Bernard Shaw**

"I alone cannot change the world, but I can cast a stone across the waters to create many ripples." – **Mother Teresa**

## **HYMN**

*They'll Know We Are Christians By Our Love*

## **WE HEAR GOD'S WORD**

*Matthew 8:5-13*

When he entered Capernaum, a centurion came to him, appealing to him and saying, "Lord, my servant is lying at home paralyzed, in terrible distress." And he said to him, "I will come and cure him." The centurion answered, "Lord, I am not worthy to have you come under my roof; but only speak the word, and my servant will be healed. For I also am a man under authority, with soldiers under me; and I say to one, 'Go,' and he goes, and to another, 'Come,' and he comes, and to my slave, 'Do this,' and the slave does it." When Jesus heard him, he was amazed and said to those who followed him, "Truly I tell you, in no one in Israel have I found such faith. I tell you, many will come from east and west and will eat with Abraham and Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven, while the heirs of the kingdom will be thrown into the outer darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth." And to the centurion Jesus said, "Go; let it be done for you according to your faith." And the servant was healed in that hour.

## RITUAL ACTION FOR THE WEEK

The words of Jesus we heard in this week's healing story were "I will come..." When faced with a request, Jesus makes a move to seek out, to come to help one who was previously seen to be outside of help's embrace. He moves outward to gather in and heal someone unlikely to have crossed his path otherwise. All are within God's circle of Safe Keeping.

I invite you to take all your pieces of broken glass and put them in a bowl. As you do so, think about the people you have encountered or heard about in the last few months who are suffering lack of support. What could we do to reach out and to focus on healing of the parts of the human community we don't spend time thinking about enough? To what part of our community shall we say "I will come..." ?

Then shift your thinking to your need to be cared for. What do you need to feel safe? What connections do you need to strengthen to heal any isolation you may feel? If you are in need of something, consider this an invitation to let someone know what *you* need without feeling embarrassment or shame about it. Jesus invites us, always, to ask.

Take a moment to think on this and then when you are ready, pick up the container of broken pieces and breathe ("*spirare*") deeply, inviting that Spirit to live and move in you in a special way to strengthen your connection to others and your role in making someone's life more safe. Keep the bowl in a place you can see regularly this week... perhaps on your dining table.



## WE RESPOND TO GOD'S WORD WITH OUR GIVING

**Invitation** – God has gathered us as one body in Christ, holding us together in all our brokenness and fragmentation. As a community, when we come together, we can do even greater things than when we are alone. Tonight, we come bringing our gifts to God. We share the gifts of our time, our talents, our resources, and our very lives so that together we can do the work Christ

has called us to. We give thanks that your generosity enables us to do Christ's work. Let us bring our gifts to God.

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** – God, we give you thanks that you sent Christ into this world to be a boundary-breaker and community-maker. We bring to you these gifts that you might use them to bring healing to our community and the world, as together we serve our neighbors and serve you. Bless these gifts that they might be a blessing. Amen.

## **PRAYERS 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 broken pieces scattered and separated, we trust that you are seeking us, gathering us into wholeness, and calling us to join you in the quest. We pray especially for those who have experienced the loss of livelihoods and economic

security and are feeling helpless to care for their families. We pray for those whose businesses have gone under or are on the precipice between survival or closure. We pray for those whose disparity of resources has been made even more pronounced during this pandemic. We pray grateful thanks for the efforts of all who have been searching for solutions and have given generously for months of their time and resources to alleviate the suffering of those they know and do not know. We ask for encouragement and passion to re-evaluate how we as a church can help now and into the future.

God in these moments of quite, hear the prayers of our hearts and open us to the moving and leading of your Spirit...*(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.  
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## **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**

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