



# **BETHLEHEM UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST**

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**Sunday, April 19, 2026**

**Third Sunday of Eastertide**

**Worship Leader: Rev. Randall Koppenhaver**

**Musician: Polly Jeanty**

The white peace candle on the altar is lit in solidarity with all peoples of the world affected by armed conflict, civil war, oppression, tyranny, exploitation and discrimination. God, bring them peace.

**\*= Please rise in body or spirit**

**CENTERING BREATH PRAYER:** as you inhale, say the first part of the prayer to yourself, and say the second part as you exhale. Repeat 5x

***I call on the Lord's name :: Lord, save me!***

**RINGING OF THE BELLS**

**CALL TO WORSHIP #554**

**"Holy Ground"**

**We are standing on holy ground, And I know that there are angels all around**

**Let us praise Jesus now, We are standing in his presence on holy ground**

**WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**PRELUDE**

**\*CALL TO WORSHIP:** (inspired by Psalm 116)

**One:** We call upon the name of the Holy One who hears our cry and responds to our prayer. What shall we return to the Holy One for all the blessings we receive?

**Many:** **We will call upon the name of the Holy One for as long as we live.**

**One:** The Holy One has been our Companion in suffering and our Comforter in anguish. What shall we return to the Holy One for their presence among us?

Many: **We will serve the Holy One and be companions and comforters for God's people.**

One: The Holy One has given a new covenant of salvation, redemption, and restoration for the world. What shall we return to the Holy One for the gift of covenantal love?

Many: **We will declare the goodness of God with praise and thanksgiving. Hallelujah! Bless the name of the Holy One!**

\*OPENING PRAYER

**Living God, you are the fire that burns within us. You open our hearts to your presence, revealed in word and song, in hospitality and friendship, in sacrament and presence. Open our minds again so that we may recognize you when you meet us in unexpected moments. Let us encounter you in every phase and movement of worship that we might know you and love you more than before we gathered. And, may that love burn brightly like the sun cutting through the gloom of the storm to inspire us to go on with renewed hope and spirit. Amen.**

\*OPENING HYMN #199

"Alleluia! The Strife is O're"

PRAYER OF TRANSFORMATION AND NEW LIFE

Remembering Christ's loving kindness and mercy, let us confess our sins:

**Loving God,**

**we confess that we have sinned against you in thought, word and deed; by what we have done and left undone.**

**We have not loved you with our whole heart, body, mind and soul and we have not loved our neighbors as we love ourselves.**

**In your mercy, forgive what we have been, amend what we are and direct who we shall be.**

**in Jesus' name we pray, Amen.**

(time of silence)

WORDS OF GRACE

On the Emmaus road,

Jesus met friends who were discouraged and distracted by his death.

**Yet when he spoke God's word to them, their hearts burned within them.**

Hear God's word of forgiveness today.

**May the fire of God's love warm our hearts with God's promise of peace and new life. Amen.**

\*CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE #571

"Halle, Halle, Hallelujah"

## PRAYER OF ILLUMINATION

### SCRIPTURE LESSONS

#### **Psalm 116: 1-4, 12-19**

I love the Lord because he hears  
my requests for mercy.

**2 I'll call out to him as long as I live,  
because he listens closely to me.**

**3** Death's ropes bound me;  
the distress of the grave<sup>[a]</sup> found me—  
I came face-to-face with trouble and grief.

**4 So I called on the Lord's name:  
"Lord, please save me!"<sup>[b]</sup>**

**12** What can I give back to the Lord  
for all the good things he has done for me?

**13 I'll lift up the cup of salvation.  
I'll call on the Lord's name.**

**14** I'll keep the promises I made to the Lord  
in the presence of all God's people.

**15 The death of the Lord's faithful  
is a costly loss in his eyes.**

**16** Oh yes, Lord, I am definitely your servant!  
I am your servant and the son of your female servant—  
you've freed me from my chains.

**17 So I'll offer a sacrifice of thanksgiving to you,  
and I'll call on the Lord's name.**

**18** I'll keep the promises I made to the Lord  
in the presence of all God's people,

**19 in the courtyards of the Lord's house,  
which is in the center of Jerusalem.**

**Praise the Lord!**

#### **Luke 24:13-35**

**13** On that same day, two disciples were traveling to a village called Emmaus, about seven miles from Jerusalem. **14** They were talking to each other about everything that had happened. **15** While they were discussing these things, Jesus himself arrived and joined them on their journey. **16** They were prevented from recognizing him.

<sup>17</sup> He said to them, “What are you talking about as you walk along?” They stopped, their faces downcast.

<sup>18</sup> The one named Cleopas replied, “Are you the only visitor to Jerusalem who is unaware of the things that have taken place there over the last few days?”

<sup>19</sup> He said to them, “What things?”

They said to him, “The things about Jesus of Nazareth. Because of his powerful deeds and words, he was recognized by God and all the people as a prophet. <sup>20</sup> But our chief priests and our leaders handed him over to be sentenced to death, and they crucified him. <sup>21</sup> We had hoped he was the one who would redeem Israel. All these things happened three days ago. <sup>22</sup> But there’s more: Some women from our group have left us stunned. They went to the tomb early this morning <sup>23</sup> and didn’t find his body. They came to us saying that they had even seen a vision of angels who told them he is alive. <sup>24</sup> Some of those who were with us went to the tomb and found things just as the women said. They didn’t see him.”

<sup>25</sup> Then Jesus said to them, “You foolish people! Your dull minds keep you from believing all that the prophets talked about. <sup>26</sup> Wasn’t it necessary for the Christ to suffer these things and then enter into his glory?” <sup>27</sup> Then he interpreted for them the things written about himself in all the scriptures, starting with Moses and going through all the Prophets.

<sup>28</sup> When they came to Emmaus, he acted as if he was going on ahead. <sup>29</sup> But they urged him, saying, “Stay with us. It’s nearly evening, and the day is almost over.” So he went in to stay with them. <sup>30</sup> After he took his seat at the table with them, he took the bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them. <sup>31</sup> Their eyes were opened and they recognized him, but he disappeared from their sight. <sup>32</sup> They said to each other, “Weren’t our hearts on fire when he spoke to us along the road and when he explained the scriptures for us?”

<sup>33</sup> They got up right then and returned to Jerusalem. They found the eleven and their companions gathered together. <sup>34</sup> They were saying to each other, “The Lord really has risen! He appeared to Simon!” <sup>35</sup> Then the two disciples described what had happened along the road and how Jesus was made known to them as he broke the bread.

## CHILDREN’S TIME

## FIVE MINUTES OF PRAISE

## SERMON

\*HYMN #65

“My Jesus I Love Thee”

## PRAYER CONCERNS

### PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE...THE LORD'S PRAYER

Petitions end with: God, in your mercy, **Hear our 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.**

### POST PRAYER RESPONSE

**Open our eyes, Lord, we want to see Jesus,  
to reach out and touch him, and say that we love him.**

**Open our ears, Lord, and help us to listen.  
Open our eyes, Lord, we want to see Jesus.**

### INVITATION TO THE OFFERING

OFFERTORY (Jingle Change for April supports One Great Hour of Sharing, a Special Mission Offering of the UCC that supports partners worldwide with ministries that fund health, education, and agricultural development, emergency relief, refugee ministries, and both international and domestic disaster response.)

\*OFFERTORY RESPONSE Tune "Doxology"

**Let trumpets sound and voices sing!  
Let all on earth their praises bring!  
For Christ has conquered sin and death  
And given life eternal breath.**

\*PRAYER OF DEDICATION

**Generous God, you bless us with life, purpose, and opportunities to serve in the world you love. We offer you our gifts in Christ's name, not seeking greater gain, but desiring to enrich life around us with your love. Amen.**

\*CLOSING SONG "Go Now in Peace"

*Go now in peace. Never be afraid.  
God will go with you each hour of ev'ry day.  
Go now in faith. Steadfast strong and true.  
Know he will guide you, in all you do.  
Go now in love, and show you believe.  
Reach out to others so all the world can see.  
God will be there, watching from above.  
Go now in peace, in faith, and in love. A-men, A-men, A-men.*

BENEDICTION/COMMISSIONING

POSTLUDE

*\*\*liturgies and prayers for this morning were used with permission from:  
[presbyterian.ca/worship/](http://presbyterian.ca/worship/) and [ucc.org/worship](http://ucc.org/worship) ways.*

### **Bethlehem Announcements:**

□ **Wellness Mini retreat at Bethlehem UCC**

On Saturday, April 25, all are invited to participate in a mini retreat featuring psychologist and author, Dr. Cary Knier-Johannes at Bethlehem. Dr. Johannes' seminar will lead participants to improved spiritual wellness through centering, guided meditation, journaling, and more. The retreat will run from 9am-12pm. The cost is \$10 and includes a copy of Dr. Johannes' book, *The Missing Peace*. RSVP's are encouraged.

### **Community Announcements:**

- Friday, May 8 – Fish Fry – 4p-7pm – Dine in or Carry Out – Community UCC, 174 N. East Street, Elkhart Lake – See flyer

# IN OUR Thoughts and Prayers

## **Those dealing with health concerns:**

Judy Brockway	Davin Horneck
Dayton Horneck	Jackie Voland
Louie Bowe	Dawson Horneck
Heidi Konen	Darlene Horneck
Jessica Horneck	Margaret
Sofia	Willow
Hubert	Larry
Chase Goekes	Tyler Smith
Molly	Linda Skinkis (sister of Judy Brockway)

## **Those unable to worship with us:**

Merlin Ninmer      Helen Henning

## **This Week at Bethlehem:**

**Today, Sunday 4/19:** 8am Sunday School; 9:30am Sunday worship; \*\*SPIRIT NEWS DUE\*\*

**Monday 4/20:**

**Tuesday 4/21:** 6:30 pm United Church Men/Women mtg @ St. Peter's

**Wednesday 4/22:** *Happy Birthday Amy Wempner!!*

**Thursday 4/23:** *Happy Birthday Kaye Radder!*

**Friday 4/24:**

**Saturday 4/25:** 9am Wellness mini-retreat at Bethlehem

**Sunday 4/26:** 8am Sunday School; 9:30am Sunday worship w/ Baptism and Confirmation

**Mar/Apr Panty Item: Pasta, Rice or Crackers**

