



The United Church of Christ  
of Annapolis

**Sunday, March 3, 2024, 10:30am**  
**Third Sunday in Lent**  
**Hybrid In-Person & Online Worship Service Order**  
**YouTube LiveStream**

Music: Ken Kepler & Members of the UCCA Choir  
Liturgist: Joan Brannigan  
Preaching: Rev. Ellen Witko

**SERVICE NOTES:** "+" before a line is an invitation to rise as you are able.  
**Responses in BOLD are invitation for all to respond. Hymnals – Purple refers to Glory to God, the purple hymnal in the pew, Black refers to the black New Century Hymnal.**

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**PRELUDE** *Chorale Fughetta on "Darmstadt" -- Guy Hayden*

*Via Positiva*

*We share together that God is our praise  
and that all creation is blessed and holy.*

**+ CALL TO WORSHIP AND BRINGING THE LIGHT OF CHRIST**

One: Into the house of God we are called to enter,

**Many: to worship and receive the gift of grace.**

One: As we step towards this sacred space,

**Many: we acknowledge all that can distract or exploit.**

One: God calls upon us to clear our houses of all that does not find its source in God's love.

**Many: Together we give ourselves in worship and right relations with our neighbor. Let us worship God.**

One: The peace of the Lord be always with you!

**Many: And also with you.**

*— Share a sign of peace by greeting your neighbor, send a text to someone, or shout "Peace!" to the world!*

**+ GLORIA**

***Gloria, gloria, gloria: in excelsis Deo!***

**+ HYMN OF PRAISE "God's Glory Fills the Heavens" Purple #690**

**UNISON PRAYER OF INVOCATION**

**O God of temples and tables turned over, we enter this sacred space of worship seeking your transformation and healing. Make us ready for the kind of turned upside down world you are seeking to build among us. We have come to this place of worship to be changed, so turn over our tables and make us whole. In the name of Jesus our savior. Amen.**

***Via Negativa***

*A time of letting go.*

*Even our emptiness — the repressed, the evil, the nothingness —  
is all redeemed and we can let go.*

**PRAYER OF CONFESSION and ASSURANCE OF PARDON**

Trusting in God's forgiveness,  
let us in silence confess our failings  
and acknowledge our part in the pain of the world.

**{We hold silence}**

Before God,  
with the people of God,  
I confess to turning away from God  
in the ways I wound my life,  
the lives of others  
and the life of the world.

***May God forgive you, Christ renew you,  
and the Spirit enable you to grow in love.***

Amen.

***Before God,  
with the people of God,  
we confess to turning away from God  
in the ways we wound our lives,  
the lives of others  
and the life of the world.***

May God forgive you, Christ renew you,  
and the Spirit enable you to grow in love. **Amen.**

***Via Creativa***

*We are co-creators with God in the work of our time.*

**COMMUNION**

The Holy One be with you

**And also with you**

Open your hearts to the One who is Love

**We open our hearts to you, O God**

Let us give thanks to God, who gathers us together

To the One who welcomes us to the table, we give thanks and praise

**God, your invitation to come and feast in your presence is but a taste of  
the love you extend to us every day. By your very nature, you are always  
seeking us out – searching for ways to connect us and connect with us.  
You meet us in the most ordinary of places and you make them sacred.  
By your grace, we come to recognize the holiness that dwells in the  
world around us, in our neighbors, in our selves.**

On the night of his arrest, Jesus shared a meal with his companions.

He took bread, blessed it, broke it, gave it to his disciples and said:

“This is my body which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me.”

After the meal, he took the cup, blessed it, and shared it saying: "This cup that is poured out is the new covenant."

Let us pray:

Pour out your Spirit on these gifts, O God. Make these ordinary elements into the Sacred gift of your presence with us once again. May they awaken us anew to your everlasting invitation into a life of resurrection. Enliven us in our pursuit of a world where all needs are met, power is balanced, and the worth of every creature and creation is celebrated.

In collective longing for a taste of your Kingdom on earth, we join together in echoing the prayer of Jesus:

**Our Creator, 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. Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For thine is the Kingdom, the power, and the glory for ever. Amen.**

Come, for all things are ready. [*Bread of Heaven; Cup of New Life*]

**God, by the Bread of Heaven and the Cup of New Life, you make us one body. Bind us together by your spirit that we might live into your hopes for us, a community centered in Christ and rich in compassion, commitment, courage, and care. Amen.**

## **SCRIPTURE READING**

Listen now, in the reading of Scripture,  
for the word and wisdom of God.

***We open our hearts to the word and wisdom of God.***

### **Psalm 19**

The heavens are telling the glory of God,  
and the firmament proclaims his handiwork.

Day to day pours forth speech,  
and night to night declares knowledge.

There is no speech, nor are there words;  
their voice is not heard;

yet their voice goes out through all the earth  
and their words to the end of the world.

In the heavens he has set a tent for the sun,  
which comes out like a bridegroom from his wedding canopy,  
and like a strong man runs its course with joy.

Its rising is from the end of the heavens  
and its circuit to the end of them,  
and nothing is hid from its heat.

The law of the Lord is perfect,  
reviving the soul;

the decrees of the Lord are sure,  
making wise the simple;

the precepts of the Lord are right,

rejoicing the heart;  
the commandment of the Lord is clear,  
enlightening the eyes;  
the fear of the Lord is pure,  
enduring forever;  
the ordinances of the Lord are true  
and righteous altogether.  
More to be desired are they than gold,  
even much fine gold; sweeter also than honey  
and drippings of the honeycomb.  
Moreover, by them is your servant warned;  
in keeping them there is great reward.  
But who can detect one's own errors?  
Clear me from hidden faults.  
Keep back your servant also from the insolent;  
do not let them have dominion over me.  
Then I shall be blameless  
and innocent of great transgression.  
Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart  
be acceptable to you,  
O Lord, my rock and my redeemer.

**John 2:13-25**

The Passover of the Jews was near, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. In the temple he found people selling cattle, sheep, and doves and the money changers seated at their tables. Making a whip of cords, he drove all of them out of the temple, with the sheep and the cattle. He also poured out the coins of the money changers and overturned their tables. He told those who were selling the doves, "Take these things out of here! Stop making my Father's house a marketplace!" His disciples remembered that it was written, "Zeal for your house will consume me." The Jews then said to him, "What sign can you show us for doing this?" Jesus answered them, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up." The Jews then said, "This temple has been under construction for forty-six years, and will you raise it up in three days?" But he was speaking of the temple of his body. After he was raised from the dead, his disciples remembered that he had said this, and they believed the scripture and the word that Jesus had spoken.

When he was in Jerusalem during the Passover festival, many believed in his name because they saw the signs that he was doing. But Jesus on his part would not entrust himself to them, because he knew all people and needed no one to testify about anyone, for he himself knew what was in everyone.

For the Word of God in Scripture,  
for the Word of God among us,  
for the Word of God within us,  
***thanks be to God.***

**PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION**

**SERMON "Sweeter than Honey"**

Rev. Ellen Witko

**SILENT MEDITATION** (3 Minutes)

**+ HYMN OF INCLUSION "Christ is Made the Sure Foundation"** Purple #394 v.1-3

***Via Transformativa***

*transforming passion for the world is borne of love. Having given praise, been reminded that we are loved, and participated in the building up of love together, we now prepare ourselves to be transformed by that love to do God's work in the world.*

**COLLECTION FOR THE WORK OF THE CHURCH IN THE WORLD**

We are deeply appreciative to receive the offering for the life and work of this beloved community. To support the ongoing work of our church, we ask that you please continue to give via the offering plate, online at our website or via text as described below:

[www.uccannapolis.org/giving](http://www.uccannapolis.org/giving)

**Text to Give: Text "Give \$25" to (410) 376-5446**

We thank God for the gift of this church and its many blessings in our lives!

**Offertory Choir anthem "Speak Peace" -- Lisa Edele**

**+ DOXOLOGY AND PRAYER OF DEDICATION**

***Praise God from whom all blessings flow,  
Praise Christ all creatures here below;  
Praise Holy Spirit evermore;  
God in all three whom we adore. Amen***

**PRAYER OF DEDICATION AND THANKSGIVING FOR THE OFFERING**

**O God, whose richness is not found at the tables of those willing to exchange goods for the sake of acquiring earthly riches, but rather is found at the table of extravagant love for neighbor, we entrust these gifts to your care that they may abound in your steadfast love for all persons. Use them for the building of your beloved community here on earth as it is in heaven. Amen.**

**PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE**

*We share our prayers of hope and concern together.*

*We will conclude our prayers with:*

***O Loving God, spirit of hope and peace,  
lead us from death to life.***

***Lead us from falsehood to truth.***

***Lead us from despair to hope, from fear to trust.***

***Lead us from hate to love, from war to peace.***

***Let peace fill our hearts, our world, our universe:***

***Peace ... Peace ... Peace,***

**CHORAL RESPONSE** *John L. Bell*

***Amen, Amen, Alleluia, Amen!***

**+ HYMN OF DEDICATION "What Wonderous Love Is This" Black #223**

**BENEDICTION**

***May the grace of our Lord, Jesus Christ,  
and the love of God,  
and the companionship of the Holy Spirit,  
be with us all evermore, Amen***

**POSTLUDE Excerpt from "Voluntary" -- Pietro Andrea Ziani**

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**The United Church of Christ of Annapolis**

[www.uccannapolis.org](http://www.uccannapolis.org)

6 Carvel Circle, Edgewater, MD 21037

office@uccannapolis.org

(410) 266-8596 x200

We give thanks to God that you could join us today.

**Announcements and Upcoming Events**

**Pastor Hours:** The pastor will observe days of rest on Tuesday and Friday. Appointments are available by contacting the pastor or the church office.

**Choir:** Weekly choir rehearsals are Tuesday evenings and Sunday mornings. New voices are always welcome! See Ken Kepler, Director of Music for more information.

**Home Communion:** The UCCA will be taking communion to those who are ill or infirm and not able to attend church on the first Sunday of the month. If you would like to have home communion, please contact Ellen Witko or the church office.

**Sunday School:** Sunday School meets during service, for children aged 11 and younger, following the children's conversation. We look forward to having your child grow with us!

**Fellowship Following Services:** Please join us after the 10:30 service for a cup and conversation!

**Living The Questions:** Adult Study group that meets on the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday of each month at 10:30am Currently on hiatus so all can participate in the All Church Book Read. For more information contact Kathy Walker.

**Pastoral Care:** If you would like more information about pastoral care or arrange a meeting, please contact Rev. Ellen Witko at [ellenwitko@att.net](mailto:ellenwitko@att.net) or (908)-425-6362.

**All Church Book Read – "How to Be an Antiracist" by Ibram X Chapters 11, 12 and possibly 13 will be discussed this morning. Meets every Sunday after the morning service.**

**Easter Choir** – members and friend of the congregation are invited to join the choir for a seasonal anthem! This is a great opportunity to show off your vocal talents. There will be three 20 minute after-service rehearsals starting March 10. For more information see Music Director, Ken Kepler.