

## Order of Worship: “With Glad Hearts”

April 19, 2020

### SPEND TIME

#### Gaye:

Easter is not just a day. It is a whole season of time when we remember that Jesus’ Spirit lives on in each one of us. In the Bible, the early church was described in this way:

*“Day by day, as they **spent much time together** in the temple, they **broke bread at home** and ate their food with glad and generous hearts, **praising God** and **having the goodwill** of all the people.” (Acts 2: 46-47a)*

So over the next few weeks, we are following our ancestor’s traditions. We are creating a “temple” of worship in our hearts whether we can be physically together or not. By sharing in words and music and breathing and eating and moving together, we will stay connected. The earliest Christians worshiped in their homes before they had churches, and so will we, until we can meet again in our sanctuaries. Because at the “heart of the matter,” we are connected through the Spirit that makes us one in love.

#### Opening Act of Centering Our Hearts as One

#### Gaye:

We are going to center our hearts as one to begin.

Let’s take a deep breath together

I invite you to place your hand on your heart and let’s lightly tap together in a slow heartbeat rhythm

Holy Living God,	Heartbeat of Creation,
help us to take this time	to center on you,
for you made us,	you gave us life,
and you continue to be with us	every moment...
every breath...	
every step.	

Hear this assurance from God: *[tune of Amazing Grace]*

**Be still, O heart, you're not alone,  
your beat is shared with me.  
Come now, and calm, and center here,  
you're mine, secure and free.**

Let's take another deep breath, making sure our shoulders and any tension we feel in our bodies is letting go with the breath.  
Let's take another one.

Let us pick up our heart stone, sometimes called a "worry stone," and let our touch on its surface remind us that God's touch is within us, between us, and around us.

As close and real as this object is in our hands right now, is how close Love is to us always.

Let us imagine letting go of our worries for now into God's heart of love. We offer a prayer song of letting go:

*[tune of Amazing Grace]*

**Into your care, we offer now,  
our worries, fears and strife.  
We turn to you and know you're near—  
Your light, our love and life.**

Let's light our candles now and set our heart worry stones next to it.

## Opening Song to Join Our Voices As One

NCH 522 V.1,4

*I Love to Tell the Story*

1 I love to tell the sto - ry of un - seen things a - bove.  
 2 I love to tell the sto - ry; more won - der - ful it seems  
 3 I love to tell the sto - ry; it's pleas - ant to re - peat  
 4 I love to tell the sto - ry, for those who know it best

Of Je - sus' ra - diant glo - ry, of Je - sus' end - less love.  
 than all the gold - en vi - sions of all our gold - en dreams.  
 what seems, each time I tell it, more won - der - ful - ly sweet.  
 seem hun - ger - ing and thirst - ing to hear it, like the rest.

I love to tell the sto - ry, be - cause I know it's true;  
 I love to tell the sto - ry, I tell it now to you  
 I love to tell the sto - ry, for some have nev - er heard  
 And when I sing in glo - ry, I know the new, new song

it sat - is - fies my long - ings as noth - ing else can do.  
 be - cause I want to share it, be - cause I know it's true.  
 the mes - sage of sal - va - tion from God's own ho - ly Word.  
 will be the old, old sto - ry that I have loved so long.

*Refrain*

I love to tell the sto - ry; and when I am in glo - ry

I'll tell the old, old sto - ry of Je - sus' end - less love.

## BREAK BREAD

### Blessing the Meal

**Gaye:** We have gathered with food to nourish our bodies even as we nourish our souls together in worship.

This is very much what our spiritual ancestors did as they gathered in those early days in houses.

They would bring what they had and share with each other. It's no wonder that "pot luck" is in our Christian DNA!

Let us pray this prayer of blessing together...

**Holy Peace-Giver, We gather in your name  
invited by Jesus bound together with your Spirit  
in union with each other.**

**Feed our bodies and our spirits  
with your comforting presence  
so that we might be your comfort to others...**

**Bless this food and break open our hearts  
Bless this drink and pour out your love. Amen.**

And now I invite you to pick something up on the table and let us say the one word that is at the heart of the matter in every blessing we do at our tables, repeating after me...

"Grateful!"      **"Grateful!"**

Let us begin to "break bread" while we "break open the Word" in our scriptures.

## Breaking Open the Word with Scripture

**Gaye:**

This week we read a passage from the account of the Acts of the Apostles that is a wonderful encouragement and reminder that death never is the last word:

**Dayna Cooper:**

God raised him up! God freed him from death's dreadful grip,  
since it was impossible for death to hang on to him.

David says about him,

I foresaw that the Lord was always with me;  
because he is at my right hand I won't be shaken.  
Therefore, my heart was glad and my tongue rejoiced.

Moreover, my body will live in hope,  
because you won't abandon me to the grave,  
nor permit your holy one to experience decay.

You have shown me the paths of life;  
your presence will fill me with happiness. *Acts 2: 24-28*

**Gaye:**

The "David" referenced in this passage is the Psalmist, and the quote is from the 16th Psalm:

**Dayna Cooper:**

You, Lord, are my portion, my cup; you control my destiny.  
The property lines have fallen beautifully for me;  
yes, I have a lovely home.

I will bless the Lord who advises me;  
even at night I am instructed in the depths of my mind.

I always put the Lord in front of me;  
I will not stumble because God is on my right side.

That's why my heart celebrates and my mood is joyous;  
 yes, my whole body will rest in safety  
 because you won't abandon my life to the grave;  
 you won't let your faithful follower see the pit.

You teach me the way of life.

In your presence is total celebration.

Beautiful things are always in your right hand. *Psalm 16: 5-11*

## Tithes & Offerings

Stevie Astley

### *He Gave Me Love*

#### *Gaye:*

It may feel odd to have moved into the season of Easter, a season of celebration, in the midst of these difficult times. Perhaps it is an opportunity to really take into consideration that, at the heart of our Christian faith, we are called to live our lives in the belief that death is not the final word.

This is why Christians are called "Easter People." The tomb becomes the womb of new life. What would we do differently if we really believed that we are loved beyond all endings? That there was nothing to fear?

Today we imagine Jesus at our "right hand," counseling us throughout our days, with these words, "Peace be with you." This is what he did when he appeared to the disciples after his resurrection. They were in a locked room, fearing for their lives. Sound familiar? Let's let Jesus speak these words to us as well. Here is how the story from the Gospel of John goes:

#### *Dayna Cooper:*

“It was still the first day of the week.  
That evening, while the disciples were behind closed doors  
because they were afraid... Jesus came and stood among  
them. He said, “Peace be with you.”  
After he said this, he showed them his hands and his side.  
When the disciples saw the Lord, they were filled with joy.  
Jesus said to them again, “Peace be with you.  
As [Abba, God] sent me, so I am sending you.”  
Then he breathed on them and said, “Receive the Holy Spirit.”  
- *John 20: 19-22*

### **Gaye:**

Two things Jesus wanted the disciples to have in their moment of fear was peace and the Spirit.

“Taking a breather” is one way to see what Jesus offered to them. He wanted them to take his breath so that they would feel his spirit living in them.

### **Message**

## Action Response

### Gaye:

I invite you to lean over and whisper toward someone,  
“Peace be with you.”

If you have several people around the table, let it go around like when we play “telephone,” passing it around to the next person when it gets to you.

If you are alone, text someone right now that you want to share this with, or if you don’t usually use text, plan to call when this worship is over and tell someone, “Peace be with you.”

## Breaking Open our Lives with Discussion

### Gaye:

Our theme scripture says, “they ate their food with glad and generous hearts.” One way we can be glad and generous is to share about how we are finding strength, hope, love and peace in these days. This is part of “breaking bread” with each other as we break open our hearts to one another as well. This week, since Jesus has said he wants us to feel peace, let’s talk about peace.

Think about what sights, sounds, words, and actions, (nature, birds, taking a walk, for example) are things that act in your life as a “voice in your ear” that says, “Peace be with you.”

When have you felt peace this week?

Or if you haven’t experienced much peace, what do you have in your memory as something that brings you peace?

Let’s take some time at our tables to talk about this question.

We’ll take \_\_\_ minutes to talk.

## Breaking Open our Hearts with Prayer

### Gaye: Hurts & Hallelujahs

**Glenn:**

It is difficult in this moment not to be near some of the people we love and might be worried about. Take a moment and say out loud *[or in chat/comments]* the names of people you wish were right there next to you at your table today. As we name them, they are present with us in our hearts.

We also want to call to mind, the people we cannot name, whose names we do not know. But we know they need our prayers and God's comfort.

For those who have lost loved ones...

For those who are sick and recovering...

For those who are caring for loved ones who are sick at home...

For those who are caring for persons in medical care...

For those who are separated from loved ones...

For those who are feeling alone and isolated...

For those who are helping and are so very tired...

For those who are struggling to find friends, food, and comfort...

For those who are afraid...

Let us take another breath of Spirit as our "Amen."

We know that God sends out our prayers and the Spirit, Breath of God, is blowing from within us outward, as a Spirit of Compassion and Presence.

## **PRAISE GOD!**

**Robyn Firth:**

It is time to praise God and raise our endorphin levels to improve our heart-health, both physically and spiritually!

So whether your “dance” is in your bed, in your chair, or all over the living room, it’s time for the Easter Season Dance Party!

If you are going to dance standing up, go ahead and get ready. And let’s start with this affirmation,

**We know Jesus is present among us  
even in this very home  
We will not let fear be louder than love  
but with glad hearts and rejoicing souls  
we will sing God’s praise  
for we are Easter People!**  
Let’s get on the Peace Train!  
Dance Party!

Dance Party Song

Stevie Astley

## ***Peace Train***

***Cat Steven’s “Peace Train”***

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vjUyM\\_xd6IA](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vjUyM_xd6IA)

## HAVE GOODWILL

### **Gaye:**

That was great! I hope you feel some good vibes right now.

So while we have our energy up, let's decide to send some energy out to the world that needs it! What message does the world need?

Perhaps you will decide to create a way to let more and more people know the message of Christ,

“You are not alone. I am here. Peace be with you.”

What can we do to create more peace in our household, in our family, in our relationships with those we cannot be with right now?

How can we offer peace to those who are working so hard right now? How can we offer peace to those who feel no peace or comfort? Make your own plan today.

### **Benediction** *(based on Psalm 16)*

As we close this time together, remember:

God is always with you. No matter what you face,  
no matter what trials or hardships come your way,

God is right beside you, whispering “Peace be with you,”  
guiding and directing your path.

So do not live in fear, but in joy.

Take heart! This is the heart of the matter.

**Amen.**

### **Postlude Jam**